



THE WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK

Global Issues,
Local Challenges
& Ways Out

Fola Soboyejo

with combined authors

KEYNOTES

Community engagement is more than just discussing issues. It is about understanding the diverse perspectives shaping our shared reality. This is the core principle of the TurningPoint Foundation's annual webinar. We provide a platform for everyday citizens to share their unique perspectives because their insights are invaluable in understanding social challenges and devising strategies for the common good. Over the past five years, TurningPoint Foundation has assiduously drawn upon the expertise of everyday people. We have hosted conversations between speakers and participants across continents that address both local and global issues, with direct and indirect impacts on all of us.

- **Esther Awosoga**, *Professional Educator, Community Service Leader, Lethbridge, AB, Canada*

COVID-19 is a disease of public health importance and vaccination is the cornerstone of prevention, in addition to other public health measures: hand hygiene, physical distancing, and mask wearing. For a successful vaccination program, among other strategies is, increasing motivation through open and transparent dialogue and communication about uncertainty and risks, including the safety and benefits of vaccination.

- **Dr. Adebola Lambo**, *Physician & Professor of Medicine, Speaker on Understanding COVID-19 Anti-Vaccination Misinformation, 2021 October Webinar.*

Newcomers to Canada are healthier than the Canadian population but this declines over time as well as those of their children and grandchildren. The immigrant experience has the potential to trigger a variety of psychological problems.

- **Toyin Oyebola**, *Public Health and Immigrant Wellness Advocate, 2018 October Seminar Speaker*

I have it on good authority that AI is already advanced enough to trace the source of offending content...I would advise those who are in authority that they should rely more on advancing technology to help them out rather than bothering their head in pushing legislation to fight misinformation.

- **Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu**, *Registered Engineer, Public Affairs Analyst, Speaker on Fake News & Technology, 2021 TURNINGPOINT October Webinar.*

The upkeep of world peace and security is a universal concern that is vital to the accomplishment of all Sustainable Development Goals. Organizations such as the United Nations peace building initiatives are meant to help post-war nations, lessen the chance that they may relapse into violence, and provide the groundwork for long-term stability and growth with the African Union supervising the formulation and implementation of policies to make sure that Africa accomplishes Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063, which calls for “A peaceful and safe Africa.”

-Soji Adesina, *International Relations researcher, speaker at the 2022 webinar*

In Alberta, an enduring opioid epidemic dating to 2018, and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022) preceded an ongoing housing crisis dating to 2022. The convergence of these events occurred amidst unprecedented economic decline, setting the stage for the exponential growth of the number of homeless individuals and those perceptibly combatting addictions. Politicians and a section of the press tend to trivialize or conflate the complex overlapping problems and promote intervention policies that do not help the affected population.

-Dr. Yale Belanger, *professor of Political Science and expert on public policy impacts on First Nations; 2023 Speaker TURNINGPOINT October Webinar.*

Everyone, especially journalists owe themselves and society the duty of Critical Thinking based on the CRAAP drivers: C -Currency- timeliness of the information; R – Relevance – how the information fits your needs; A – Authority – the source of the information; A - Accuracy – reliability and correctness of the information; P – Purpose - the reason the information exists.

- Kris Hodgson–Bright, *Digital Communications and Media Instructor, Lethbridge College, author Fake News & Misinformation, Speaker 2021 October Webinar*

How To Avoid Being Fooled – Practical: Look For Cues – appeal to emotions, unlikely stories, encouragement to spread, obscure source; Psychological: Limit exposure, evaluate information like a Beysian, think Slowly – consider possible outcomes and consequences.

- Dr. David Logue, *Professor of Psychology, University of Lethbridge, author, Psychology of Fake News, 2021 October Webinar speaker*

An individual's fear can significantly impact the entire society, increasing or decreasing aggressive behaviours and tendencies. Nigerians residing in Canada have needs that drove us here, e.g. peace of mind, security or opportunities. We like to see a better Nigeria, but we tend to use ineffective tools driven by fear – anger, social media, talking down, complaints and reactions. The ability to solve problems depend on cognitive capacity, logical reasoning, citizen engagement and duty, as well as mass orientation and mobilisation for change and development.

– **Adejare Popoola**, *Behavioural Psychologist, speaker at the 2022 TURNINGPOINT Webinar.*

Borders, and the stories they tell us, are fictions that people had to invent at certain times, and have to keep repeating to justify other national policies. These borders came into being with other, nastier jobs to do, from justifying imperial expansion and exploitive economies, genocides and the Doctrine of Discovery, to racist migration policies. The nation states that descended from and continue to benefit from those policies are based on that history, and their borders have to keep telling. A belief that there is an “us” and “them” has to be created, often out of the flimsiest threads.

Prof. Sheila McManus, *author, “Who is “us”? Who is “them”? Challenging the lies borders tell”; Professor of History, University of Lethbridge, 202 October Webinar Speaker.*

The type of democracy being practised drives the socio-economic development of countries. It basically implies majority rule. These options are also directed by trends, our belief system and values. There are challenges to democracy, however, these brief descriptions tend to fit the familiar Western democracy model. Question is: with its challenges can this be replicated in developing countries?

– **Billy Ogunyemi**, *Speaker 2019 TURNINGPOINT October Seminar, erstwhile president Nigerian – Canadian Association of Lethbridge*

Forging strong relationships with the client is a key factor in supporting individuals to begin making healthier choices and staying committed to their goals. Supporting a greater understanding of homelessness in the community is critical in lending better outcomes for those affected and is part of our dedicated work at Alpha House .

– **Kathy Christiansen**, *Executive Director, Alpha House, Calgary, speaker at the 2023 TURNINGPOINT Webinar*

Not too far from today's experiences across the world, over 2,000 years ago, the scarcity of food and high prices sometimes led to riots but also to migration in search of food, or to the cities or to places where food was still available.

In the parable of the Rich Man & Lazarus, the rich man was expected to be generous with his bounty (especially considering his own dress and meals). Likewise, the Rich Fool is a fool not only for relying on his wealth, but also stockpiling it for himself and his own pleasure and not sharing it. In the same vein, some argue today, "Anyone unwilling to work should not eat."

Or, what if the poor, the homeless, do not really 'deserve' it, do not deserve our help? The Biblical answer: help them anyway. Jesus often asked people who came to Him for healing a question that seems self-evident: 'do you want to be healed?', thus implying that there was a choice. This simple question of choice is often compounded or impacted by issues of mental illness and/ or addictions, a tremendous dilemma for government, charities and communities to work assiduously together on, to save lives, just as in other human dis – ease and struggles.

– Emeritus Archdeacon Sir Michael Stonhouse, *Retired Social Worker, President Men's Shelter Lloydminster, Alberta, Speaker 2023 October Webinar.*

"GLOBAL MIGRATION: DO GENDER AND 'RACE' MATTER?"

- Dr. Glenda Bonifacio, *Associate Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of Lethbridge Author, Speaker 2018 TURNINGPOINT Inaugural October Seminar.*

"GLOBAL POPULATION AND MIGRATION: THE PUSH, THE PULL, AND THE CHALLENGES"

- Dr. Alex Darku, *Associate Director Prentice Institute for Global Migration and Economy, Associate Professor, Economics Department, University of Lethbridge , Speaker TURNINGPOINT Inaugural October Seminar*

THE WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK

Global Issues,
Local Challenges & Ways Out *Vol. 1*

Fọla Şoboyejo

with combined authors

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DEDICATION

To dad, Jacob Adekunle Şoboyejø (1919 - 1985), mom, Omolara Abeke Şoboyejø (1925 - 2021) for their open doors, open hearts, and to all devotees of community and educational development, at home and abroad.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For *The World TurningPoint Book* which covers a myriad of our hybrid seminar themes, we are thankful and feel honoured by the authors and presenters who allowed us to compile their presentations upon the 5th anniversary of the seminar series into a book. Credit for the large scope of presentations must primarily go to the authors, namely:

2018 - Prof. Bonnie Lee, Prof. Alex Darku, Prof. Glenda Bonifacio, all of the University of Lethbridge, and Oluwatoyin Oyebola, a dynamic community organizer in Lethbridge.

2019 – Adesola Awoderu, a community leader, Billy Ogunyemi the pioneer president of the Nigerian-Canadian Association of Lethbridge, Dr. Victor Wutor, president of the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association and James Moore, a social justice advocate.

2021 – Dr. David Logue of the University of Lethbridge, Roy Weasel Fat, President of Red Crow College, Elder Calvin Williams, an elder of the Natisnappi Blackfoot First Nation, Kris Hodgson-Bright of the Lethbridge College Media Department, Dr. Adebola Lambo professor of medicine and physician, and Rev. Dipo Olasaju, Solicitor and Minister of the Gospel in the United Kingdom. Others are Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu, a Fellow of the Academy of Engineering Nigeria, and James Moore

2022 - Professor John von Heyking, Professor Sheila McManus, both of the University of Lethbridge, Adesoji Anthony Adesina an International Relations expert, and Adejare Popoola, a behavioural psychologist.

2023 – Archdeacon Sir Michael Stonhouse (Rtd.) of St John Minster Anglican Church Lloydminster, Prof. Yale Belanger of the University of Lethbridge, Hon. Dan Williams, Alberta Minister of Mental Health & Addiction, as well as Engr. Yetunde Holloway of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations and the Nigerian Society of Engineers.

We are grateful to the following who made meaningful contributions to the success of the seminars:

Seminar moderators Art Haverhals, Dr. Brian Black, Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu, Biola Ogungbe, and James Moore.

Public media partners: The Lethbridge Herald, Miracle Channel's BridgeCity News for their wide and consistent coverage and feature of our public enlightenment events, as well as our charity projects.

Our volunteers, organizers and supporters: Esther Olayinka Awosoga, David Awosoga, Ife Oyedotun, Tolu Awoderu, Clement Esene, as well as Jonathan Mpere and members of the RCCG Freedom House media team.

Our co-sponsors: Association of Nigerians in Lethbridge and the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association (SAEA) – owners of the venue in Lethbridge used for our webinars. The SAEA president Dr. Victor Wutor and executive director Anastasia Sereda did a lot in making it possible to have a stable home with modern live streaming facility for our hybrid seminars.

We are thankful to the team that put together our 5-year webinar presentations and papers in The World TurningPoint Book, led by Prof. Oluwagbohunmi (Olu) Awosoga, the Editor-in-Chief, and the editorial assistant Oluwatobi (Tobi) Soboyejo. As well, we acknowledge the help with the final script review of sections of the book provided by volunteer Refilwe Sole of Johannesburg, whom with Julenda Yalo are making efforts to propagate our message of community and educational development in South Africa. Prof. Awosoga was the one who led me to his faculty colleagues and friends who later became our distinguished authors and presenters and now my friends. The connections made by Olu remain delightful and invaluable, for which I am grateful.

The production and graphic designer of The World TurningPoint Book, Moshood Saliu of DoPlus Studio, Lagos, Nigeria for their patience and diligence in the intense back and forth involved in the editorial and graphic revisions before the final production and inclusion of the ISBN barcode.

Our volunteer poster designer and graphic artist Rotimi Soboyejo of PrintAssure, and Paul Pickles who helps to update our promotional materials.

My darling wife Titilope who encouraged me and participated and endured the long nights planning, communicating and implementing the events.

Being that our educational development projects in Nigeria and the webinars in Canada and online are mutually complementary, we will seize this opportunity to acknowledge the immense work done on Ogan School project and still being done on the proposed Ogan Women & Youth Entrepreneurship Centre project by all our volunteers supporters and donors, some of whom are: Canadian Architects Brad Goss (retired), and Alvin Fritz (Alvin Reinhard Fritz architect Inc), as well as Nigerian Architects, Arch. Akintunde Akiyode (Lineswork Architects) and the late Arch Babajide Dada (Design Haus) who volunteered their services for design of the project. Others on the school project design and management team were Engr. Ade Adewole, Engr Aanu Egbedayo, Pintrust Associates, Palfe Associates and Plan-Eng Consulting Inc. In the village of Ogan, Chief Ajana Tunde Soboyejo the number 1 village development advocate, assisted by Apostle Ahmed Balogun exercised on-site quality control and had some fights with vendors who attempted but were prevented from supplying sub-standard products on the school project.

We remember the Village Traditional Chief Muiwa Patrick Okelola who among a few others took advantage of a slight opening during Covid-19 lockdown, to conduct the commissioning of the school project in June 2020. Others from the village who regularly fight for the progress of the village and protect the projects, namely, Lanre Soetan, Mrs. Ranti Solanke, Chief Mrs Olaitan Akinsola, and Mrs Dupe Taylor-George, the school headmistresses over the years, the Community Development Associations (CDAs), the respected erstwhile CDA Joint Chair Alhaji Busari Sasheye, and last but not the least, the Project Grounds Caretaker Committee.

Without the support and kindness of several individuals, some churches and groups who made generous donations, the projects may just remain on paper. We are thankful that the school has been completed and being enjoyed by hundreds of boys and girls, with the new Women and Youth Entrepreneurship Centre project turning of the sod already conducted. Our gratitude goes to all our donors, St. Augustine's Anglican Church Lethbridge, the steadfast One Life Church Lethbridge and our advocate Pastor Stuart Thomas. We are also grateful to philanthropists Dr. Sola Taiwo (Entrop Water Drilling), Dr & Mrs. Biodun Olusanya, Engr. Tayo Olusanya, as well as our executive advisor, the indefatigable Engr. Pastor Afolabi Oladele and his friends. Our

heart goes to Rev. Abayomi Oladipo of GreenLove Not-For Profit for their kind unforgettable collaborative efforts at every stage of our initiatives and projects in Ogan Village.

The thoughtfulness of Archbishop Greg Kerr-Wilson in issuing the Bishop of Calgary citation in recognition of the work of our Foundation is touching to us, and fondly remembered.

We cannot thank enough our fundraiser concert volunteers choirs and musicians, especially Keith Griffioen, Mary Lee Voort, Baritone Bamise Banwo, Dr. Wayne Burton, Soprano Dami Banwo and Temi Soboyejo. We also sincerely thank our event volunteers, Cecilia and Kofi Odei-Wuntomi, Temi Olayinka, Allison Kittleson, Femi Jo Adekunle, Dick Indenbosch, Bill Ginther, Gladys Mwanza, Ann Melton, Cheryll Gruninger, the late Wayne McCune and others too numerous to mention. Our charity fundraising and project financial administrators, the Bridges of Hope (www.bridgesofhope.ca) who made our project work easy to run, and we are appreciative for the support of their operations manager Marsha Graveland and director Dr. Daniel Zopoula.

In a similar way, for helping to meet our educational objective through the TurningPoint seminar – webinar series, we are grateful for the support and co-sponsorship of the Association of Nigerians in Lethbridge led by president Osaro Egharevba, and the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association under the leadership of president Dr. Victor Wutor.

As we move forward after the 5th edition of the seminars, the Soboyejo – TurningPoint Foundation counts on the continued engagement of the public and individual citizens in every community to discuss and learn ways out of global issues and community challenges for a better world. Blessings.

ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

Fola Soboyejo

Founder of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation

From his days in England in the era of anti-apartheid and African liberation struggle in the 70's, Fola has been active in organizing and mobilizing awareness and inspiring public consciousness on issues of the day. As the pioneer President of the Pan-African Society at the University of Portsmouth, Hampshire in England, he organized with partners the gathering of books and shipments to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. They invited frontline freedom fighters such as Dr. Dzingai Mutumbuka of the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front to give lectures and enlighten the British public on the real suffering and challenges of European colonial oppression in the Southern African region. In the same period, Fola fought and forced BBC-TV to withdraw an absurd derogatory advert that projected Africa as the jungle where their British audience should always carry Dettol antiseptic for their survival.

After serving as a pioneer in the Electrical Division and subsequently as the Chairman of the Nigerian Society of Engineers Lagos Branch in 1993, he organized training courses in management, accounting, marketing and operations management for engineers from various industries.

Fola's membership in the Lions Clubs International at local and national level as Deputy District Governor brought close to home the enormous humanitarian work involved in ameliorating the social dysfunction in society that leaves millions of people behind, struggling with physical challenges, illiteracy, hunger, diseases, etc, despite increasing global wealth.

In pursuance of the educational commitment of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation which he founded about 10 years ago, in association with partners such as the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association and the Association of Nigerians In Lethbridge, a series of seminars and webinars on Global Issues, Local Challenges, Ways Out, are organized to celebrate

Nigeria's National Day in October, annually. With speakers drawn from the academia, civil societies and professional practitioners in Canada, Nigeria, and the UK in various fields of human endeavours, the seminars create public awareness, promoting understanding of different perspectives, as a means to community peace and development.

The Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation with patrons and donors in Canada, USA, the UK and Nigeria completed a block of 3 classrooms, a computer lab, cased and pumped water borehole and storage tanks at Ogan School in Ogun State SW Nigeria which was commissioned on Fola's visit in 2020 . A new Women & Youth Centre project is now underway to provide a safe place for after-school skills-acquisition programs, to prevent idleness and protect children and youth from the lure of gangs, drugs and prostitution. For more information and support, please visit www.ogandev.org

In order to commemorate the 5th anniversary of the TurningPoint seminar – webinar series, a compilation of the presentations is being released with the support of the authors. The publication with the distinguished Prof. Oluwagbohunmi Awosoga as Editor-In-Chief, with data processing assistance by Tobi Soboyejo, will be available Online for free, to the public especially our webinar participants across the world in response to their inquiries, for reference, for research by scholars and for greater audience outreach. The 2023 publication is another humble step in giving back on the occasion of the 70th birthday celebrations of Fola Soboyejo, to society that has helped him to thrive. Profound thanks go to the Foundation's volunteers, speakers, sponsors, project donors, and supporters who continue to make a difference, finding world turningpoints for peace and progress.

A graduate of Ibadan Polytechnic, Yaba College of Technology Lagos, Nigeria and Portsmouth University in England, Soboyejo is a professional engineer in Canada, chartered engineer in the UK, and registered engineer in Nigeria where he is a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers. He is certified in Accounting and Finance for Non-Accounting Managers by the ACCA (UK). He is a member of the Nigerian Institute of Management, an Energy Management Professional, and Project Management Professional since 2005. Fola Soboyejo is the founder of Plan-Eng Consulting Inc, a firm of electrical engineering, energy management and project management

consultants with landmark projects - AP Plaza in Abuja FCT, Nigeria, the Bible Camp at Lomond Alberta, and 74-Suite Cavo Condominiums, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada.

He is married to Titilope, a Registered Social Worker, with their children in Canada, the USA and Nigeria. The unflinching support of Fola's family, and the patrons' continuing support keep his charity initiatives alive.



The association of STPCF through the Ogan Development projects with the Bridges of Hope registered charity in Lethbridge has been such a blessing. The collaboration helps in alleviating the burden of project financial management systems and strengthening our accountability to donors. It is so appreciated.

Soboyejo is a Board Member of the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen. He volunteers with Northwest Territories Association of Engineers on the Membership and Enforcement Committee. He is a chorister at St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Lethbridge and a Lions Clubs International Melvin Jones Fellow. He enjoys good music especially, Jazz, Organ Music, Afrobeat, traditional folk music, golfing, table tennis. He is an essayist, and the author DUE SEASON – To Whom It May Concern. He led the publishing of CEMTECH journal at Yaba

Tech. Fola's pastime includes travelling which has taken him to 8 Canadian provinces and territories, 38 of US states, 8 European countries, 11 African countries, 30 of Nigeria's 36 states; and lately, Brazil and South Africa.

The WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK which is being unveiled in June 2024 is a compilation of the TurningPoint October webinar series to commemorate its 5th anniversary. The goal shall remain to stimulate citizen engagement in the quest for world turningpoints for understanding, peace and development. It is hoped that members of the public, and especially the patrons of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation will continue to join in celebrating Nigeria's National Day and foster future webinars and subsequent volumes of The WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK. Glory be to God.

PREFACE

The WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK – Global Issues, Local Challenges & Ways Out

As long as there is humanity, there will always be issues and challenges. Conversations, and communication in all its ramifications open the way to understanding and the enablement to explore and possibly work together to find ways out.

In accordance with the mission of the Soboyejo – TurningPoint Charity Foundation, the promotion of educational and community development, we have over the years made the organization of seminars and webinars a major activity. Erudite scholars, community activists and subject matter experts have worked with us to make the webinars a reality.

Every year since 2018, except Covid year 2020, we have staged seminars in our community Lethbridge with the extension of collaboration through the worldwide web, with presenters and audiences in different countries. Our presenters have freely shared their knowledge, expertise and views on various subjects. In our humble efforts to share, learn and contribute to a better world, we have conducted webinars on the following themes of Global Issues, Local Challenges and Ways Out, namely -

- 2018:** Global Migration and Canadian Immigration Challenges and Opportunities – Searchlight into Human History & Periscoping The Future
- 2019:** Can Western Model Of Democracy & Socio-Economic Development Work For Developing Countries? - What Then? What Now? What Next?
- 2020:** No Event due to Covid-19 Restrictions
- 2021:** Fake News, Disinformation, Belief System & Truth – Navigating A Polarized World For Peace, Development & Happiness

- 2022:** One Government's Enemy or Terrorist is Another's Hero or Ally – Perspectives on Communities, Nations and Superpowers Co-existing in Disagreement For World Peace
- 2023:** Addictions & Homelessness Are Not Fun But human Struggles – Advocacy, Awareness & Action To Save Lives.
- 2024:** Corruption: Same Coin, Two Faces of Wealth Looters And Custodians of the Loot – Perspectives on Illicit Flows of Money, Ethics, Immunity, Consequences, and Loot Recovery For Development.

MIGRATION

For several centuries, people move from place to place around the world for a myriad of reasons. The bottom line for practically all migration is better life or safety from war, persecution, hunger or environmental disaster. There are pros and cons for the migrants who are practically 'uprooted' from their homeland as well as the host communities and countries which do not have unlimited capacity to care for hundreds of thousands of migrants. In 2018, our first webinar examined historical trends and current hurdles being faced by refugees, official migrants, and undocumented people, and creative options being provided by countries with aging population, low birth rates, and under severe pressure to solve the problem of manpower shortages especially in healthcare.

UNIVERSAL DEMOCRATIC MODEL?

The world may seem to be a global village with one United Nations organization, and even have global standards agencies aimed at the common good. The reality is that 'one man's meat is another's poison'. Besides jurisdictional autonomy, there are numerous peculiar factors that influence the choice countries make for the brand of democracy and pace of development, such as history, culture, literacy, colonial experience, demographic variations and national aspirations. The TurningPoint webinar of 2019 examined cases from around the world in terms of socio-economic ideologies of capitalism, free market, individualism on the one hand, and on the other communism, socialism, centralised regulated economy, welfarism and monarchy. The

big deal overall is the right of the people to choose and make changes constitutionally on what works for them from time to time rather than foreign imposition.

FAKE NEWS, THE SCOURGE

The impact of fake news and disinformation on the lives of millions of people appears to be alarming. These vices could raise the emotions of their victims and drive them to frustration, resentment, anger and move them to hate, violence on others, self harm and suicide. The prevalency of fake news was compounded by Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, mandatory vaccination because of its high degree of infectiousness. From religious beliefs to public mischief and conspiracy theories, a sizable number of people were misled to deny the existence of the killer pandemic, refuse medication of all types, and thousands of people died needlessly. In spite of this downside of increasingly popular social media, their many benefits of instant information, communication, socialization and mobilization for good causes make social media inevitable in our lives. For our survival in the world wide web of information sharing, vigilance is our first tool, caution, sharp suspicion are needed to move us to ensure the avoidance of the rush to click – click – click, and practice fact-checking which may involve obtaining computer applications that filter and flag fake news or dangerous messages.

SUPERPOWERS' CO-EXISTENCE IN DISAGREEMENT

Within human memories of the last several decades, since the 2nd World War and the advent of the United Nations, the last decade appears to have been the most polarized with all kinds of wedges being driven among the faiths, communities, and countries, with attendant wars and threats of war being our daily experience. The hidden hands of the superpowers and their increasingly aggressive rivalry could be traced into all the conflicts, tensions, terrorism, killings and displacement of people around the world. Our webinar highlighted the issues and explored the fact that there must be a standard of conduct for the superpowers, and communities to work together in their own overarching interest for peace which is the enabler of human progress.

ADDICTIONS & HOMELESSNESS

The 5th edition of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Perspectives webinar centred on Addictions and Homelessness which are two big issues that plague practically all nations of the world. Whereas homelessness could be readily attributed to poverty, addictions know no bounds by afflicting different high and low segments, as well as the conservative and the liberal among the people, killing thousands everyday across the world. The aspects of government policies, the role of non-profit agencies, increasing funding for support programs, shelters, addiction treatments, preventative public education, and the needs for unrelenting law enforcement efforts on racketeers and criminal cartels and gangs came up in discussions at the webinar. A highlight of the event was the need to tackle the issues of addictions and homelessness as public health rather than criminal or stigma matter, with the recognition and preservation of human life and dignity of those who are suffering as the centrepiece of policy and program implementation.

CORRUPTION - 2024 OCTOBER WEBINAR THEME

The 2024 edition will be the 6th in the webinar series. The theme is Corruption – Same Coin, two Faces of the Looters and the Custodians of the Loot. While everyone has an opinion on the subject, the contributors would examine the rising demand for equal exposure given to looters, to be given to the receivers and financial institutions and countries that provide custody for illicit flows of money and other assets. Could the use of multilateral agencies strengthen law enforcement, effective penalties, forensics, paper and electronic trailing and flagging? What about the confiscation of stolen money and assets for quicker recovery and return to the countries of origin for development? Lessons from the role of the culture and practice of good corporate governance, fraud prevention controls as well as the development and enforcement of the rule of law to deter corruption will be deliberated upon.

GENERAL

Over the years, besides Canada where our webinars are convened, we have had amazing contributors and audiences from Nigeria which is our homeland being celebrated in the October event, as well as the United Kingdom, the United States and the Middle East. We are eternally grateful to our presenters and speakers and participants in general, as well as our volunteers. The encouragement and inspiration that we receive continually boost our energy and commitment to keep moving and doing more to enrich community understanding which is a condition for peace and progress.

GRATITUDE

Our sincere gratitude goes to our authors, presenters, moderators, editors, supporters, donors and numerous volunteers of the Soboyejo - TurningPoint Charity Foundation as detailed in the acknowledgements.

Thank you for your attention.

God bless.

Fọla Soboyejo

Executive Director

SOBOYEJO – TURNINGPOINT CHARITY FOUNDATION

Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

SOBOYEJO-TURNINGPOINT CHARITY FOUNDATION

DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

In accordance with Canada Truth & Reconciliation 94 Calls To Action 2012

We acknowledge that we are gathered on the lands of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pays respect to the Blackfoot people past, present and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land. The City of Lethbridge is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

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SOBOYEJO - TURNINGPOINT
CHARITY FOUNDATION

FOREWORD

We are very grateful to God Almighty for allowing us to compile the educational activities of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation. We thank Engr. Fola Soboyejo for entrusting us - Oluwatobiloba Soboyejo and Dr. Oluwagbohunmi Awosoga - with this laudable booklet project. This work combines all the events held yearly in the last five years (2018-2023), including the just concluded 2023 presentation. It may be noticed that no event was held in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The vision for the Ogan Development Project work of the STPCF was conceived in 2012 when Fola and his family visited his home village of Ogan and saw the dilapidated state of the elementary school and how several able-bodied youths were jobless, roaming about the village with no purpose for life and no future ambition. To train and redirect the upcoming generations for a hopeful future, Engr. Soboyejo discussed his vision and plan with the Bridges of Hope charity organization in Canada, where the master plan for the program was supported, and fundraising for the Charity Foundation ensued. Yearly Concerts have been held since then with the support of various religious organizations and the Red Deer Central Lions Club International, District of Alberta for their continued support of the project.

Mrs. Titilope Elizabeth Soboyejo has been one of the pillars behind this project. She made food and snacks available, along with the Awosogas, Oyebololas, Aramides, the Allison Kittleson and the Odei-Wuntomi families to name a few, who made the fundraising programs delightful.

The webinar series as a tool for discussion, understanding and peace in the Lethbridge Alberta community where he is domiciled, and beyond, is pursuant to the educational mission of STPCF. Our acknowledgments would be incomplete without the musical talents of Temitope Soboyejo, who always volunteered her time to present melodic tunes during every fundraising event in the last few years, along with many musicians and choirs with the spirit of charity. Without the Ogan development project, the Foundation may not have been born and the webinar series may not have been inspired. The St. Augustine's Anglican Church Choir as a major supporter, among a few other groups, is specially acknowledged. We use this opportunity to thank all the

Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation board members, donors, patrons and volunteers without whom this charity may not exist. We appreciate their precious time and resources devoted to the fundraisers, the projects and the webinars. In HIS Infinite Mercy, we pray that God will continue to meet all your hearts' desires for good in Jesus Name.

The yearly presentation began in 2018 to celebrate Nigeria's Independence Day in Canada, which the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association, the Association of Nigerians in Lethbridge, and the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation jointly sponsored. Several dignitaries and scholars have been invited to present talks at the event. We have compiled the talks together in this booklet, and reports of the projects completed under the Ogan Development program to date are included at the end of this booklet. Information on donations and how to contribute to the project is also provided on the last page of this booklet. You are invited to visit www.ogandev.org.

- Prof. Oluwagbohunmi Awosoga

Editor-In-Chief, The World TurningPoint Book

Chapter 1

2018

GLOBAL MIGRATION & CANADIAN IMMIGRATION
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Searchlight into Human History and Periscoping the Future

**NIGERIAN – CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF LETHBRIDGE
& THE SOBOYEJO TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION**

present

**NIGERIA'S 58TH NATIONAL DAY
ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER SYMPOSIUM**

TOPIC:

**GLOBAL MIGRATION & CANADIAN IMMIGRATION
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Searchlight into Human History and Periscoping the Future

SPEAKERS:

Dr. Bonnie Lee - Keynote Speaker

Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Lethbridge

Dr. Glenda Bonifacio

Women and Gender Studies, University of Lethbridge

Olutoyin Oyebola

BSc, Comp. Sc., B.Sc Public Health

Dr. Alexander Darku

Economics Department, University of Lethbridge

MODERATOR:

Dr. Brian Black

Faculty of Arts, University of Lethbridge

VENUE: Main Public Library, Downtown, Lethbridge, AB

DATE: Saturday 27th October 2018 **TIME:** 2 pm – 5 pm

FREE ADMISSION. ALL ARE WELCOME



NIGERIAN – CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION LETHBRIDGE
C/O MULTICULTURAL CENTRE 401 6th AVE. S.
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**SOBOYEJO-
TURNINGPOINT**
Charity Foundation

PROGRAM 2018

1. WELCOME – Fõla Şoboyejõ – Director, SOBOYEJ0 TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION.
2. INTRODUCTION OF MODERATOR & SPEAKERS

3. SESSION 1

3.1 1st Presentation – KEYNOTE:

“THE CIRCLE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING – TRADITIONAL CONCEPTS IN A NEW GLOBAL ORDER”

By Dr. Bonnie Lee, Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Lethbridge

3.2 2nd Presentation:

“GLOBAL MIGRATION: DO GENDER AND ‘RACE’ MATTER?”

By Dr. Glenda Bonifacio, Associate Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of Lethbridge

3.3 3rd Presentation:

“HEALTHY IMMIGRANT EFFECT: PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVES”

By Olutoyin Oyebola, B.Sc Computer Science, B.Sc Public Health of University of Lethbridge – Public Health Practitioner and Community Builder in Lethbridge

4. COFFEE / WATER BREAK

5. SESSION 2

5.1 4th Presentation:

“GLOBAL POPULATION AND MIGRATION: THE PUSH, THE PULL, AND THE CHALLENGES”

By Dr. Alex Darku, Associate Director Prentice Institute for Global Migration and Economy, Associate Professor, Economics Department, University of Lethbridge

5.2 MODERATOR’S REMARKS

5.3 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

6. CLOSING – Billy Ogunyemi, President Nigerian – Canadian Association of Lethbridge
7. 'POSTLUDE' - POSITIVE REFLECTION: A SIDE-SHOW OF NIGERIAN FASHION AND FINE ART

Masters of Ceremony – Esther & David Awosoga

SPEAKERS' PROFILE

Dr. BONNIE LEE

Keynote Presentation Title: The Circle of Giving and Receiving: Traditional Concepts for a New Global World

BIO

Dr. Bonnie Lee is Board of Governors Research Chair (Tier II) at the University of Lethbridge and an Associate Professor in Health Sciences. Her research and teaching focus on addiction treatment, life-span development and immigrant integration. She is also a Marriage and Family Therapist and Social Worker active in practice and services in the community. An international trainer of an integrative Congruence Couple Therapy model she developed, her articles are published in leading journals in addiction and family therapy.

Prof. GLENDA BONIFACIO

Title of Presentation: Global Migration: Do gender and 'race' matter?

BIO

Prof. Glenda Tibe Bonifacio is an associate professor at the Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of Lethbridge. She also teaches with the Asian Studies minor program. Her main research areas relate to gender, feminism, and migration. Glenda is the author of *Pinay on the Prairies: Filipino Women and Transnational Identities* (UBC Press 2013). She has edited three international publications: *Global Currents in Gender and Feminism: Canadian and International Perspectives* (Emerald Press, UK 2018), *Gender and Rural Migration: Realities, Conflict and Change* (Routledge, New York 2014), *Feminism and Migration: Cross-Cultural Engagements* (Springer, New York 2012). Glenda co-edited four collections: *Women and Religion:*

Contemporary and Future Challenges in the Global Era (Policy Press, University of Bristol, UK

2018), *Canadian Perspectives on Immigration in Small Cities* (Springer 2017), *Migrant Domestic Workers and Family Life: International Perspectives* (Palgrave Macmillan, UK 2015), *Gender, Religion and Migration: Pathways of Integration* (Lexington Books, US 2010).

Glenda completed her PhD from the School of History and Politics, University of Wollongong, Australia; an MA in Asian Studies and a BA in Social Sciences (magna cum laude) from the University of the Philippines.

Mrs. OLUTOYIN OYEBOLA

Title of Presentation: The Healthy Immigrant Effect: Public Health Perspective

BIO

Toyin's passion for the vulnerable population motivated her career change from Computer Science to Public Health. Toyin is a graduate of Public Health with distinction from the University of Lethbridge and has since taken up employment in community living support services within our community.

Toyin is also an entrepreneur as she is the CEO of Genesis Exotic Market (GEM). This is a store that provides commercial services to meet the dietary and fashion needs of immigrants with nostalgia, and to the generality of Canadians with adventurous taste. Toyin's motto in life are equity, justice and fairness.

Olutoyin can be described as an exotic mix of different continents. Born and raised in Nigeria, she migrated - after her first degree - to Denmark in 2003 to be with her husband who as at that time resided there. They are blessed with 3 daughters. Toyin integrated into the Danish system by diligently learning Danish language and obtaining the Danish citizenship. In her quest to see more of this world, Toyin and her family decided to take another leap of faith by relocating to Canada in 2015.

Dr. ALEXANDER DARKU

Title of Presentation: Global Population & Migration: The Push, The Pull, The Challenge

BIO

Dr. Alexander Bilson Darku is an Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Lethbridge and the Associate Director of the Prentice Institute for Global Population and the Economy. Prior to his present position, Dr. Darku taught at McGill University and Concordia University. Dr. Darku holds a PhD in Economics with specialization in Economic Development and International Trade and Finance from McGill University. He also holds a Masters degree in Economic and Public Policy Management from McGill University, and M. Phil and BA (honors) degrees in Economics from the University of Ghana. In addition to his 18 years teaching experience, Dr. Darku has served as a Consultant to the World Bank (Washington DC) between 1998 and 2002. He has also spent two years (1995-1997) working with PricewaterHouseCoopers, Accra, Ghana as an Economist. Dr. Darku teaches and researches in the fields of Economic Development and Public Policy, International Economics, and Monetary Economics. Dr. Darku is the author of 3 books and numerous articles in international peer review journals and background papers to policy documents at the World Bank.

Dr. BRIAN BLACK (*Symposium Moderator*)

BIO

A native of Montreal, Brian Black is Associate Professor of Music History at the University of Lethbridge. He earned his Bachelor of Music and Ph.D. from McGill University. He is also an Associate of the Royal College of Music and a Licentiate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. He is presently the Chair of START, the Syrian Refugee committee at St. Augustine's Church and is also a member of the Lethbridge Resettlement Collaboration which brings together three Anglican Churches, a group of doctors and the University of Lethbridge in support of the resettlement of an extended Syrian family in Lethbridge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITH THANKS

This is to acknowledge with sincere gratitude, the wonderful contributions of our Speakers and the Moderator who made the first October Symposium Series a huge success. We thank the audience for the active participation without which the event may not be fun. We appreciate the media, all our volunteers, our special guests, and well-wishers for their unflinching support over the years, and the Lethbridge City Public Library for making available to us this great facility for public enlightenment. We thank God above all for making it all possible. Seeing you next time.

PRESENTATION 1

“The Circle of Giving and Receiving – Traditional Concepts in a New Global Order”

Dr. Bonnie Lee, Associate Professor, Faculty of
Health Sciences, University of Lethbridge.

The Circle of Giving and Taking: Traditional Concepts in a Global World

KEYNOTE

**NIGERIA’S 58TH NATIONAL DAY ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER SYMPOSIUM
October 27, 2018**

Bonnie K. Lee, PhD

Board of Governors Research Chair (Tier II) Health Sciences, Associate
Professor University of Lethbridge

A bird sings not because it has an answer; A bird sings because it has a song.

Credit: © gerwbosma / Fotolia

A bird sings not because it
has an answer

A bird sings because it has a song



Credit: © gerwbosma / Fotolia

The Cycles



Three Cycles

- The cycle of Domination and Subordination
- The cycle of Mentorship
- The cycle of Old and New Cultures

Acknowledgements

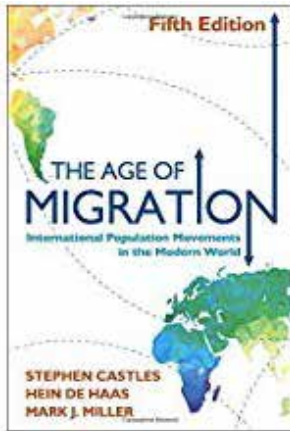
This presentation is based on Dr. Bonnie Lee MSW Thesis: Lee, B. (2015). *Mosaic of Spaces: Social Integration of Chinese Immigrant Women in Toronto* (Master's thesis, Graduate Studies).

https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Mosaic+of+spaces%3A+Social+integration+of+Chinese+immigrant+women+in+Toronto.+Master+of+Social+Work+Thesis.+Calgary%2C+AB%3A+University+of+Calgary&btnG=

The research was funded by:

- University of Lethbridge, Interdisciplinary Research Development Fund (2012- 14)

The Age of Migration



The Age of Migration – International Movements in The Modern World (5th Edition) – Stephen Castles, Hein De Haas, Mark J. Miller



Government of Canada – 2020 Horizon Migration Call “A joint initiative between SSHRC and Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the European Union”

Top 5 Countries of Birth of Recent Immigrants, (Statistics Canada, 2016)

Top 5 Countries of Birth of Recent Immigrants, (Statistics Canada, 2016)

	number	%
Recent Immigrants	1,212,075	100
Philippines	188,805	15.6
India	147,190	12.1
China	129,020	10.6
Iran	42,070	3.5
Pakistan	41,480	3.4

The Face of Canada (2016 census)

- 7.5 million foreign-born people came to Canada through the immigration process.
- They represented more than 1 in 5 (20%) people in Canada.
- Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal
- Social and economic development of the country, immigrants and their descendants play a significant role in shaping and enriching the ethnic, cultural and linguistic composition of the Canadian population.

African Immigration to Canada (Statistics Canada 2016)

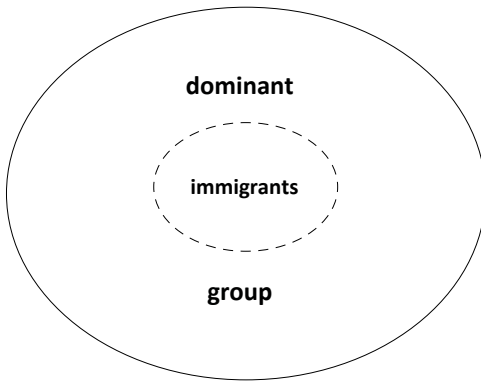
- 13.4% of Canada's population
- Fourfold increase compared to 1971
- Top five countries of birth of recent African-born immigrants to Canada were [Nigeria](#), [Algeria](#), [Egypt](#), [Morocco](#) and [Cameroon](#).

One way: Assimilation

- Identify with institutions and values of receiving country

- Absorption
- Conform to culture and value of dominant group

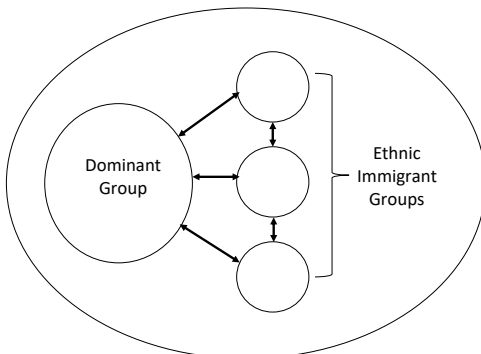
Assimilation



Two-way street: Multiculturalism

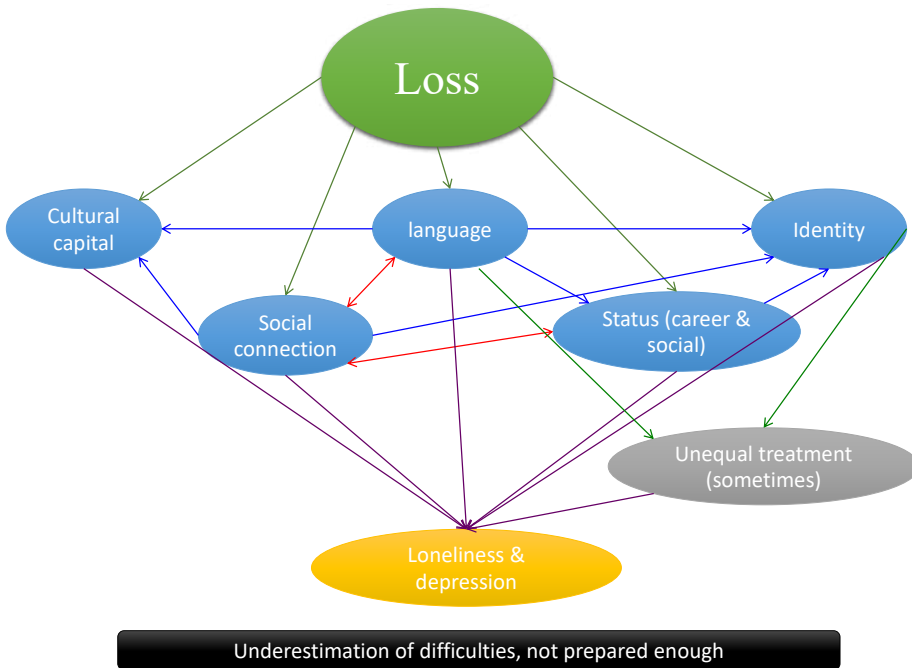
- Mutual adaptation
- May not be symmetrical

Multiculturalism



Escape from Oppression

- Oppression: blocked from opportunities, self-development, self-determination, excluded from full participation in society, does not share in rights and resources of other groups
- Patriarchy – education, opportunities, family violence, control
- Corporate
- Personal safety and security -- class conflict, social unrest
- Political oppression
- Economic oppression



Oppression

- **Interaction** between different cultural or racial groups
- **Dominant-subordinate** relationship
- Subordinated group is treated in an oppressive and **devalued** manner (Mullaly, 2010).
- Marginalizes any outside groups' **culture, language, and history** – positioning the subordinated group as an inferior “other,” creating a social hierarchy (Keating, 2009; Speight, 2007).
- Inequality is reinforced through **historical and institutional** practices, **social construction in discourse, symbolic representation, and media**
- An implicit ideology many hold as a **valid reality** without conscious awareness.
- Oppression is subsequently internalized when stigmatized individuals incorporate negative messages that profess their inferiority, or the inferiority their group, into their **own assessment of their intrinsic worth, capacities, and rights to self-determination** (Jones, 2000; Mullaly, 2010).

White Doll – Black Doll Experiment

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WG7U1QsUd1g>

Internalized Oppression

- Oppression can be explored on three levels (Jones, 2000)
 - Institutionalized – legal and structural
 - Personally mediated -- personal
 - Internalized -- internalized
- Individuals subjected to constant institutionalized or personal oppression start to internalize or accept negative messages about their abilities or self-worth

Internalized Oppression

- Unconsciously internalized a worldview, an attitude, a belief or set of values.
- Operates on an individual or a group level to maintain power structures that benefit the oppressors (David, 2014)
- When combined with institutional and personal racism, internalized racism and other forms of oppression can have multiple social and health consequences.
- Perpetuates and colludes in the cycle of Domination-Subordination paradigm.

Breaking the Cycle of Oppression

- Increase self-awareness
- Making conscious the unconscious
- Choosing new attitudes and communication

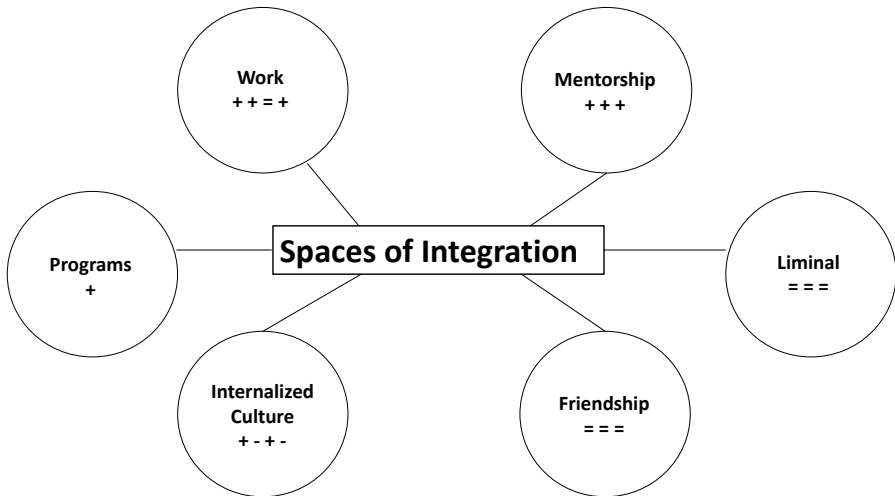
Structural vs Socio-Cultural Integration

- Structural: Institutional participation in socio-economic, legal and political dimensions
- Measures: Employment rates, income, access to resources, education, housing, health and health care utilization, voting
- Socio-cultural: atmosphere of welcome, belonging, racism and discrimination, competencies, values and culture, role models of immigrant origin, diversity in occupations, media portrayals; actions and dispositions of immigrant and non-immigrant groups; frequency and intensity of interaction between diverse individuals and groups
- Measures: Less studied and reported

Social Capital

(Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 2000; Putnam, 2000; Lin, 2001)

- Social networks that have value
- Resources: social, cultural, spatial, economic, political
- Benefits of trust, reciprocity, information, cooperation



Mentors

- Crack the culture's code
- Open doors – social, spatial, network, technical, cultural
- Role models
- Acceptance and inclusion
- Point out discrepancies and enlarge perspective
- See the potential
- Translate and defend with words and formulations

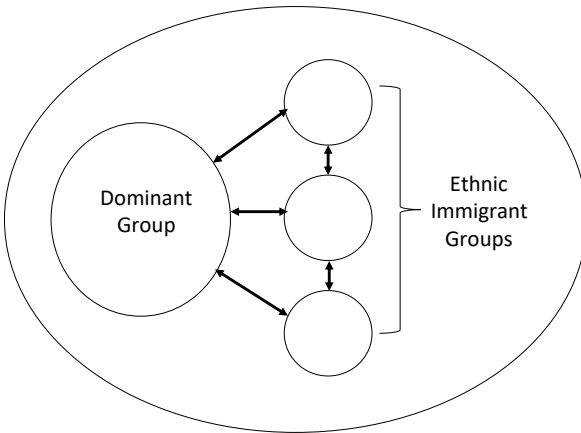
The cycle of Taking and Giving

- Mentees becoming mentors
- The broken cycle of mentoring
- Paying it forward

If they have 20 teenagers who have relationship issues, I will help them right away...

There are many full-time moms who can help with making donations and with the auction...I feel I am very useful and have a certain value in this kind of group [teenagers]. (P2)

Multiculturalism



Cycle of Old and New Cultures

- Immigration as secondary socialization
- Contrast, comparison and conflict
- Symbolic capital
- *"I am a Chinese and it has nothing to do with geographic location. It is something in my blood and bones."*

- Values: support, filial piety, making room for others, Confucianism values, non-linearity, materialism vs essence, contribution, trust, equality
- Revising values: Perfectionism; Competition; Patriarchy
- “I am living in-between.”

Re-Negotiating Cultural Values

- *I liked to join some groups, such as book club, retirement group and retreat groups. By joining these groups, I interact with local people growing up in the Western culture. I realized that as human beings, we are the same. We just have different social standards and limitations. We are exactly the same. I thought my family was so violent and dysfunctional, but some of their families were even worse than mine. I did not have a lot of support, and they did not have either in their lives. I am ashamed of talking about sex, and they did not feel comfortable either. This is against what I thought about Western people. I thought they are very open and their lives are like what are shown the Hollywood movies: fathers are always the heroes... there are also some other therapeutic groups, such as voice treatment, art groups, and energy work and bodywork groups. (Lee, 2015; P3)*

Re-Negotiating Cultural Space

- *When I first came to Canada, I really wanted to be Canadian. Now I know that being Canadian means being who you are and be yourself. I look at people from other ethnic groups who also have accents when they are talking; I feel that they are Canadian too. I am becoming more accepting. I do not need to fight against my own culture, and I do not need to worship other cultures either. It is the [multicultural] political system. It cultivates “trust” and respects “individuality”. It is a peaceful environment, and it is close to my heart. In Canada, I can be myself, which is natural. In this environment, it is natural for me to develop my own potentials, which in turn can benefit the country. (Lee, 2015, P5)*

Social Integration Cycle of Giving & Taking

- Psychological and social awareness and process
- Interactive Spaces
- Affective bonds with others
- Sifting through values and ethos
- Desire for contribution

Thank you!

bonnie.lee@uleth.ca

<https://www.uleth.ca/dspace/handle/10133/546>



PRESENTATION 2

Global Migration: Do gender and 'race' matter?

**Dr.Glenda Bonifacio, Department of Gender
Studies, University of Lethbridge**

Not obtainable at the time of the publication

PRESENTATION 3

The Impact of Immigration on Migrant Health Outcome; the Healthy Immigrant Effect (Public Health Perspective)

Mrs. Olutoyin Oyebola

What is immigration?

Immigration is the action of coming to live permanently or temporarily in a foreign country (Oxford Dictionary)

Reasons for migration

- ▶ Immigrants come to Canada to better their lives and that of their families, possibly to unite with family members who have already migrated, some are fleeing wars, political prosecution, and environmental disaster. Some are seeking better work opportunities to support themselves and their loved ones.

The link between Immigration and Health



What is HEALTH?

According to the World Health Organization, Health is holistic. It is not the absence of diseases but the state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

Healthy Immigrant Effect

- There has been an observed time path in which the health of immigrants just after migration is substantially better than that of Canadian-born but worsens with additional years in the new country.
- Newcomers to Canada are healthier than the Canadian population but they decline over time, as well as their children and grandchildren.
- There is a transition from good health to poor self-reported health.
- The immigrant experience has the potential to trigger a variety of psychological problems.

Healthy Immigrant Effect

Reasons for declination in health

- Putting others first
- Changes in social standing and social economic status
- Separation from family
- Separation from custom and traditions
- Exposure to a new environment
- Exposure to different diet
- Language barrier
- Inability to navigate the system
- Some Immigrants do not seek help for their stress or psychological problems.

Social Determinants of Health (SDH)

These are the economic and social conditions that shape health outcomes. The recognition of health determinants outside of health care system. The inequitable distribution of these SDH cause health inequalities

This includes but not limited to

- ▶ Income
- ▶ Employment and unemployment
- ▶ Food security
- ▶ Social exclusion
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Physical and social environment
- ▶ Education

What can be done to reduce health declination among immigrants?

- ▶ Government role
- Continue to bridge the gap- equity – fair opportunity to attain full potential.
- Address the social determinants of health.
- Make resources available and accessible in the community.
- Southern Alberta Ethnic Association

What can be done to reduce health declination?

- ▶ My Role-
- My network, social capital
- Always ask questions
- Find a family doctor you like
- Ask for a second opinion

- Know your government, the constitution and politicking in the community
- Volunteer
- Vote when you become eligible.

What can be done to reduce health declination?

Still on my Role:-

- Retain the essence of my culture.

TASK

How can I retain my culture while assimilating the new

How can I retain my culture?

- ▶ Genesis Exotic Market and many others (Business Centers that provide commercial services to meet the dietary and fashion needs of immigrants with nostalgia, and to the generality of Canadians with adventurous taste).
- ▶ Nigerian Canadian Association
- ▶ Association of Nigerian Health professionals
- ▶ Afro-Caribbean Association

Take Away

- ▶ Maintain your support system as an immigrant.
- ▶ Be the connector; don't wait or expect someone else to do it. Take the lead and show example. Just do it! (like Nike slogan)

PRESENTATION 4

**Global Population & Migration: The
Push, The Pull, The Challenge**

DR. ALEXANDER DARKU, Economics & Population
Studies, University of Lethbridge

Presentation not available at the time of publication

5. SEMINAR MODERATOR

DR. BRIAN BLACK

———— Chapter 2 ————

2019

**CAN WESTERN MODEL OF DEMOCRACY AND
SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORK FOR
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

What Then? What Now? What Next?

**NIGERIAN – CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF LETHBRIDGE
& THE SOBOYEJO TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION**

present

NIGERIA'S 59TH NATIONAL DAY ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER SYMPOSIUM

TOPIC:

**CAN WESTERN MODEL OF DEMOCRACY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT WORK FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

What Then? What Now? What Next?

SPEAKERS:

Adesola Awoderu

Economist, Actuarist

Victor Wutor

Pharmacist, Community Organizer

James Moore

Internationalist, Social Justice Advocate

Abiola (Billy) Ogunyemi

President Nigerian-Canadian Association of Lethbridge

MODERATOR:

Art Haverhals

VENUE: Main Public Library, Downtown, Lethbridge, AB

DATE: Saturday 19th October, 2019 **TIME:** 2 pm – 5 pm

FREE ADMISSION. ALL ARE WELCOME



NIGERIAN – CANADIAN
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4038490033 abajinka@ncaforum.com



**SOBOYEJO-
TURNINGPOINT**
Charity Foundation

2019 PROGRAM

1. WELCOME – Engr. Fọla Şoboyejo – Director, SOBOYEJO TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION.
2. INTRODUCTION OF MODERATOR & SPEAKERS
3. SESSION 1
 - 3.1 1st Presentation – Mr. ADESOLA AWODERU
 - 3.2 2nd Presentation – Mr. BIOLA (BILLY) OGUNYEMI
 - 3.3 3rd Presentation – Mr. JAMES MOORE
4. COFFEE WATER BREAK
5. **SESSION 2**
 - 5.1 4th Presentation – DR. VICTOR WUTOR
 - 5.2 MODERATOR’S REMARKS – Mr. ART HAVERHALS
 - 5.3 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD
6. CLOSING – Mrs. Esther Olayinka Awosoga, Secretary, Nigerian-Canadian Association of Lethbridge
7. POSTLUDE: Mix and Mingle and Further Discussion

SPEAKERS' BIOS & SYNOPSIS

ADESOLA AWODERU

BIO

Adesola is a Nigerian that migrated to Canada in 2012 and prior to his migration he had a distinguished career in insurance. As risk manager he rose to become the head of technical of NSIA Insurance Company Ltd in 2007 and voluntarily retired in 2008 to start his own company Flettons Insurance Brokers Ltd.

A graduate of Obafemi Awolowo University in 1985 and an associate member of the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria and member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing of London by examinations. Adesola for many years and up till now is a consultant and has trained so many professional insurers . He is presently a manager with Chartwell at the University of Lethbridge.

He is married to Omobolanle and blessed with 5 children. For many things about the progress of society, as well as Nigerian politico-economic analysis, Adesola is a go-to leader in the community.

SYNOPSIS

Africa should define its own way of leadership and define its destiny. Societies have grown through civilization taken account of their history and culture. The West does not understand Africa and wants all to be like them, which is not sustainable.

The West must understand the context that everyone is unique, and we have fundamental difference in history, politics, and visions of progress.

Mr. BIOLA (BILLY) OGUNYEMI

BIO

Mr. Biola Ogunyemi is married to Crystal Neufeld, Father of Alejandro, Ariana, Araceli, and Ariela. Loves the community I reside in and huge soccer fan. Billy obtained his Masters in Management from the University of Lethbridge. He has been the President of the Nigerian-Canadian Association of Lethbridge in the last few years.

SYNOPSIS

Can western model of democracy and socio-economic development work for developing countries. What Then? What Now? What Next? For me, I ask, what's different? Democracy means the rule of the people which sometimes is interpreted as rule of the majority thereby encouraging choices. These choices drive the socio-economic development of countries. These choices are also directed by trends, our belief system and values. There are challenges to democracy, however, the brief description above fit the western democracy model. Question is: with its challenges can this be replicated in developing countries?

Mr. JAMES MOORE

BIO

Mr. James Moore has a background in Justice Studies, is a pianist and a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant. He has travelled extensively in Europe, Canada and Turtle Island and spent some months in Central Asia and the USA. He has a life-long curiosity about human beings, their relationships with each other and with the other lifeforms on our beautiful planet. He has written for the Manitoba Keewaitoni Okimakinak (Manitoba Northern Chiefs). It is a great honor to be asked by Africans to speak about Africa. Asante Sana. Amandla Awetu.

SYNOPSIS

Can the “Western” model of democracy and socio-economic development work for developing countries? What then? What now? What next?

Cui bono? Who benefits from this model? For whom does it work?

Let’s review the historical record...from the papal bull of Nicholas V in 1454 to October 19, 2019: a time span consistent with the ascendancy of the model and try to answer the question: Cui bono?

With credit and respect to H. C. Anderson...” the Emperor has no clothes”

DR. VICTOR WUTOR

BIO

Dr. Victor Wutor is originally from Ghana, migrated to Canada in 2006.

Holds a PhD in Biotechnology, MSc Applied Microbiology, MBA (entrepreneurship management) and B.Pharm (Hons). He is currently working on a second PhD (business management). Dr Wutor worked for the government of Canada as a post-doctoral Fellow for nearly 3 years at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Center, Lethbridge. Currently, the Pharmacy Manager at Costco, Lethbridge. A visiting Professor/ Collaborator of Biotechnology at the University of Ghana, Rhodes University and University of Peshawar.

Victor is the owner/CEO of Viva Atlantis Pharmacy, Feyiase Hospital and Hoof and Horns livestock farm, all in Ghana. Victor has instituted an annual scholarship scheme that fully sponsors two students from his home village to any public University in Ghana for the duration of their degree program.

Dr. Wutor is the President of the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association, an umbrella association for over 50 ethnic groups. Victor has passion for volunteerism, to make this world a better place! He is married to Valerie (a Pharmacist) and blessed with two wonderful kids – Selali and Dela!

SYNOPSIS

Majority of Africans want to live in democracy, live in open and freer societies. We want more dividends from democracy, less corruption, more transparency, less impunity, more economic opportunity for the growing young population. What form of democracy do we yearn for, that will work and transform the continent from relying on donor aid to 'Africa beyond aid'?

Democracy contrasts absolute monarchy, totalitarianism, dictatorship, oligarchy and several other forms of government where power is centralized to an individual or a particular group of individuals. There are various forms of democracy although they all advocate for similar governance.

The question that we have asked ourselves over the years is this – is the Western type of democracy ideal for Africa? In the next couple of hours, we will attempt to answer this question! Stay tuned!

Art Haverahls (MODERATOR)

BIO:

Art was born in 1942 in a border town, Hudson, of no consequence, smaller now than then, South Dakota, and has been living 'on the fringes', in a no-man's-land, without a permanent 'home here on Earth' ever since. He was raised on a farm, where he did not want to be, in an Iowa County named Sioux, pronounced /soo/, which had no Indian population, when the Dutch moved in from 1870 until the Great Depression, also called the Dirty Thirties, where the population in the 'kolonie' then and still is 95% of Dutch extraction today. He was educated in a number of Christian schools, until studying at a university level in church-related 'colleges,' Dordt and Calvin, totally unknown and meaningless to you, unless you happen to be from Jos and the surrounding region and the Hausa, Nigeria.

After graduating, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, and spent one of those two years overseas at Chunchon, Kangwando, Korea, and when released from that form of incarceration, he returned to Calvin and earned his teaching credentials. It was the Viet Nam Era and War, ... protests in the streets and on university campuses, and he had had enough of America and its need to fight for its own

interest. Art came to live in Canada and became a 'landed immigrant,' as many of you have, also. It was on 31 Aug 1968; he was 26 years of age, alone, in a strange land. Art is married to Christa. Their home is in Taber. Art sings Tenor in the St. Augustine's Anglican Church Choir. He is very well informed about world affairs and passionate about the issues of alleviation of oppression and human misery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITH THANKS

This is to acknowledge with sincere gratitude, the wonderful contributions of our Speakers and the Moderator who made the 2nd of October Symposium Series a huge success. We thank the audience for their active participation without which the event may not be fun. We appreciate the media, all our volunteers, our special guests, and wellwishers for their unflinching support over the years, and the Lethbridge City Public Library for making available to us this great facility for public enlightenment... We thank God above all for making it all possible. Seeing you next time.

PRESENTATION 1

CAN WESTERN MODEL OF DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT WORK FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: What Then, What Now, What Next

Adesola Awoderu

1. Before the advent of western incursion into Africa, the people ruled and organized themselves for order, governance, development.
2. Kanem – Borno Empire (1396-1893) was a medieval African state of Niger founded by Sayfawa Dynasty- part Nigeria, Chad, and Camerouns
3. Made up of Kanuris that are naturally endowed with leadership
4. They built one of the most organised government in Sudan areas
5. There were three trans- Sahara trade routes
6. The empire had control of the third route stretching from its capital city at Njimi to Tripoli in Libya
7. Resources from this route were used to wage wars of conquest against rural states
8. Spoils and revenues were used to advance the trade and increase prosperity of the empire
9. Europeans finding it difficult to partake in the Trans- Sahara trade instigated political upheavals in North Africa that destabilized trade and commerce
10. Other empires that existed before western incursion include, Oyo kingdom, Benin kingdom. All have their impacts on governance and development of their empires
11. Then major European powers (England, France, Germany, Portugal) sponsored their explorers and missionaries to explore Africa and mapped and documented the vast untapped resources and this

led to imperialism that led to the 1885 Berlin Conference and how these imperialists under developed Africa (Walter Rodney "How Europe underdeveloped Africa" 1972)

12. After World War 2 nationalistic agitations developed in Africa leading to political emancipation and to guarantee their control and access to Africa resources neo colonialism was born- a practice of using capitalism, globalization and cultural imperialism to influence developing countries instead of direct control under the colonial method.
13. Foreign capital was used in the exploitation rather than development of developing countries
14. Investment under neo colonialism increases the gap between rich and poor countries. Such capital are now used to impoverish these countries. Governments not favorable to them were toppled and replaced with puppets.
15. Democracy is a propaganda by the colonizers of Africa and countries can actually do good but not the same as it is written in the book of democracy
16. Africa should define its own ways of leadership and define its destiny
17. Societies have grown through civilization taking account of their history and culture
18. The west do not understand Africa and want them to be like them- that is not sustainable
19. West must understand the context that we are not like West and we have fundamental differences in history and politics
20. Most African states are made up of inherited states, traditions inspired, different languages, different cultures and are controlled by center which continued to create frictions
21. Africa is deep in history, so we have one country in Africa but many systems

22. The West thinks of multiparty system we are not for such. The power is from family units and our thoughts are mainly based on traditions.
23. Our culture, religion, and language say a lot about ourselves- ancestral worship and our food are all our identity.
24. Instead of one nation-state, Africa should have been organised around a country with many systems (sovereignty).
25. Most wealthy nations have not always been prosperous. The United States was desperately poor, rife with corruption and chaotically governed and was more impoverished than Angola was in 1850. Infant mortality was 150 deaths per 1000 child birth and 3x worse than sub Sahara Africa infant mortality was in 2016. America then without stable institutions and infrastructure looks like nothing it is today.
26. That is why the story of America offers help to poor nations everywhere.
27. Reducing poverty has been suggested in fixing infrastructure, education, health and transportation and improving institutions and boosting foreign trade.
28.

Country	1960s	2015	Change
Burundi	\$470	\$315	-33%
Gambia	\$677	\$339	-50%
Niger	\$1108	\$393	-65%
Liberia	\$1447	\$468	-68%
Zimbabwe	\$2207	\$1037	-53%

Source: IMF economic outlook database per capital income from 1960-1969 was averaged to get a 1960s per capital income values adjusted for inflation.

29. Since 1960, \$4.3 trillions in official development assistance trying to help poorer nations but the intervention have not had impact. More countries still poorer today than in 1960.
30. Poverty stops here (Efosa) raised money to build wells in various parts of Nigeria but breaks down after 6 months. Fixing these wells were

problems because there are no technical people in the rural areas to fix the wells.

31. Prosperity is a process by which more and more people in a region improve economically, socially, and politically.
32. These are the focus on prosperity, education, healthcare, safety and security, good governance, access to gainful employment.

Upward Social Mobility

33. Democracy does not equal good government- United Arab Emirates, Peoples Republic of China, Qatar, Saudi Arabia.
34. Good governance is often not a function of the system of government but the quality of leaders they produce.
35. We have military governments, totalitarians system, and monarchies that have engendered good government.
36. Democracy can only be genuine and real when you have informed electorates.
37. A situation where majority of the people are illiterates and ignorant cannot give birth to genuine democracy and good government.
38. 70% of electorates in Nigeria do not understand why they are voting and nothing about the person they are voting for.
39. They do not know the basic knowledge of the role those they are voting for are supposed to play in positions they are vying for reveals the inadequacy of the present democracy system.
40. It is not about the systems but the operators which must be qualified.
41. Electorates must eschew religion, tribal, communal, financial and other considerations and by so doing will vote quality leaders.
42. Democracy ignores the historic and cultural differences among developed and developing nations. Most developed nations are not democratic at the time of their economic take off. Hence the struggle of most developing nations grappling with balancing the true concepts.

43. Democracy comes in all forms, shapes and sizes. Each country will have to negotiate compromises with its historical, cultural, and political challenges.
44. This is where good governance will find its relevance and the will to demand accountability by the governed.

References

Poverty stops here - Efosa Ojomo

Prosperity paradox - How innovation can lift nations out of poverty: Clayton M Christensen, Efosa Ojomo, Karen Dillon: 9780062851826: Amazon.com: Books

Dr Muiz Banire (SAN)- collections of posts on Linkin 2019

PRESENTATION 2

Biola (Billy) Ogunyemi

Presentation not available at the time of publication

PRESENTATION 3

CUI BONO? WHO BENEFITS? FOR WHOM DOES THIS MODEL WORK?

James Moore

I came late to my first 2018 Soboyejo-Turningpoint event in 2018, having only seen the poster the evening before, and having a prior commitment for the Saturday of the event. The topic was refugees and immigration. I asked a question: “Did the countries which created the refugee crisis have any obligation to those refugees, any responsibility for the refugees which their actions had created...for example, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan?”

I was invited to speak at the next event in 2019, where the topic was: ***“Can the ‘Western’ model of democracy and socio-economic development work for developing countries?”***

I had twenty minutes to contextualize 560 years of human history within the parameters of the topic. Fortunately, I know of and much appreciate the oral tradition in Indigenous cultures in Canada and the Griot tradition in West Africa. ‘Speaking from the heart’ might describe an oral presentation, which is what I did.

Below, I try to capture in writing some salient points, landmarks on that voyage from 1454 to 2019, which guided my talk.

.....

Let’s start with the ‘doctrine of discovery’ (DoD. The papal bulls of Pope Nicholas the Fifth in June of 1452 and January of 1454 (cited below) are documents which granted moral and legal justification for Europeans to “take everything from other peoples and subject them to permanent slavery”. One might be tempted to think that such documents would be irrelevant 550 years later, but the DoD was cited in 2005 by the US Supreme Court in a decision denying the Oneida people the right to their traditional territory.

“We [therefore] weighing all and singular the premises with due meditation, and noting that since we had formerly by other letters of ours *granted among other things free and ample faculty to the aforesaid King Alfonso – to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit*”

The Western Economic Model of development might be said to begin here with the DoD cited above, which was horrible for West Africa. <https://aila.ngo/issues/doctrine-of-discovery/>

Leaping ahead 430 years to the 1884-1885 Conference of Berlin, I described this event as “The European powers threw Mother Africa on a table in Berlin and took out their knives to divide her up amongst themselves...of course there was no African representative there; and 25 years later, 90% of the continent was “European”. Another example of the working of the western model of development. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/11/15/berlin-1884-remembering-the-conference-that-divided-africa/>

Moving forward another century we come to the “Washington Consensus” and its infamous “structural adjustment policies”. One example was the forced imposition of school fees as a condition of education, a policy dictated to West African Nations by this example of western economic development. The result was a generation of under educated or uneducated African children, especially girls, with all the implications that has for development. Here I referred back to and underlined a previous speaker’s point about the importance of education in developing countries. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Consensus

I concluded with the thought that the Western Model did not work for developing countries except as a form of wealth transfer to the European powers (We were asked to focus on Africa and more particularly Nigeria in our presentations). I wondered aloud if the Western Model was good for much at all. Cui Bono?

2020

No Symposium due to COVID-19

Chapter 3

2021

FAKE NEWS, DISINFORMATION, BELIEF SYSTEM & TRUTH

*Perspectives on Navigating a Polarized World for Peace,
Development and Happiness*

**THE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE, SOUTHERN ALBERTA
ETHNIC ASSOCIATION & THE SOBOYEJO TURNING POINT FOUNDATION**

PRESENT

NIGERIA'S 61ST NATIONAL DAY ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER SEMINAR / WEBINAR

TOPIC:

**FAKE NEWS, DISINFORMATION, BELIEF SYSTEM & TRUTH –
PERSPECTIVES ON NAVIGATING A POLARIZED WORLD FOR PEACE,
DEVELOPMENT AND HAPPINESS**

SPEAKERS:



Dr. J Adebola Lambo
MD, Professor of Epidemiology &
Public Health, School of Medicine
Avalon University, Curacao,
Dutch Caribbean



Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu,
FAEng, FNSE
Telecommunication Consultant
& Blogger



James Moore, MA
Social Justice Advocate &
Instructor, Lethbridge College



Roy Weasel Fat, MA
President
Red Crow Community College



Oladipo Olasoju, Esqr
Minister of the Gospel
& Solicitor (UK)



Kris Hodgson-Bright, MA
Digital Communications
& Media Instructor
Lethbridge College



Dr. David Logue
Professor of Psychology
University of Lethbridge



Calvin Williams
Natissnappi Elder
Blackfoot First Nation

CO - HOSTS:

ORAND EGHAREYBA - PRESIDENT ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE
DR. VICTOR WUYOR - PRESIDENT SOUTHERN ALBERTA ETHNIC ASSOCIATION
MODERATOR: YINKA AWOBOLA, M.Sc - EDUCATOR & COMMUNITY BUILDER
CONVENER: FOLA SOBOYEJO, P. ENG, FNSE

VENUE & DATE:

SAEA MULTI-CULTURAL CENTRE ROUND STREET ROOM
421 - 6TH AVE. S. LETHBRIDGE, AB T1J 0Y7, CANADA
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021. 1PM MST
ADMISSION: FREE. FOR SEAT OR ZOOM DETAILS
MUST PLEASE RSVP TO: STPCFOUNDATION@GMAIL.COM OR +1 5676880066

CO SPONSORS:



ASSOCIATION
OF NIGERIANS
IN LETHBRIDGE



SOUTHERN ALBERTA
ETHNIC ASSOCIATION



SOBOYEJO - TURNING POINT
CHARITY FOUNDATION

2021 PROGRAM

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION OF THE MODERATOR – Fọla Şoboyejo
2. OPENING – Blackfoot First Nations Elder Calvin Williams
3. ABOUT SOBOYEJO TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION – Fọla Şoboyejo, Executive Director - 5mins
4. ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE – Osaro Egharevba, President – 3mins
5. ABOUT THE SOUTHERN ALBERTA ETHNIC ASSOCIATION – Dr. Victor Wutor, President – 3 mins
6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SPEAKERS – 2 mins

1. SESSION 1

6.1 1st Presentation

“UNDERSTANDING COVID-19 ANTI-VACCINATION MISINFORMATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR TREATING AND PREVENTING COVID-19.”

By Dr. Jonathan Adebola Lambo Professor of Epidemiology & Public Health, School of Medicine, Avalon University, Curacao, Dutch Caribbean & Session Professor, University of London, England

6.2 2nd Presentation

“TECHNOLOGY & REGULATORY PERSPECTIVES ON FAKE NEWS, DISINFORMATION, BELIEF SYSTEMS & TRUTH”

By Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu, Telecommunication Consultant & Blogger – Nigeria

6.3 3rd Presentation

“OUR BELIEF & TRUTH – KEY TO FREEDOM OR TRAP?”

By Oladipo Olasoju Esqr, Minister of the Gospel & Solicitor – London, England

6.4 4th Presentation

“FAKE NEWS & FALSE NARRATIVES – WHO BENEFITS?”

By James Moore, Justice Studies Instructor, Lethbridge College

2. COFFEE WATER BREAK - 5 mins.

3. SESSION 2

6.5 5th Presentation

“HOW MESSAGING AND COMMUNICATIONS ARE RELAYED IN FIRST NATION CULTURE”

By Roy Weasel Fat, MA - President, Red Crow College, Standoff, Alberta & Elder Calvin Williams, Blackfoot First Nation

6.6 6th Presentation

“FAKE NEWS & MISINFORMATION - THE JOURNALIST’S CRITICAL THINKING PERSPECTIVE”

By Kris Hodgson-Bright, MA. Digital Communications and Media as well as Multimedia Production instructor at the Lethbridge College, Lethbridge, Alberta

6.7 7th Presentation

“THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAKE NEWS*”

By Dr. David Logue, Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta

4. MODERATOR’S REMARKS (Presentation Keynotes) - 7 mins
5. QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD – 10 mins
6. CLOSING – Fọla Şoboyejo
7. VOTE OF THANKS- Clement Esene, Vice-President, Association of Nigerians In Lethbridge

SPEAKERS' BIOS

Dr. JONATHAN ADEBOLA LAMBO

B.Sc. (Biology), MSc. Immunology, MSc. Epidemiology/Public & Population Health; MD, Professional Specialization Certificate in Population Health Data Analysis, Diplomate of the Royal College of Physician London in Tropical Medicine, and Infectious Diseases. Medical Officer & Consultant (UNICEF Sudan), Medical Officer & Consultant (World Health Organization Pakistan). Practiced family medicine in Vulcan. Held various faculty positions at several universities in Canada and in the Caribbean. Joined University of London in 2015 where he teaches and supervises graduate students in Epidemiology and Public Health.

Dr. Lambo teaches medical students in epidemiology and evidence-based medicine at the Avalon University School of Medicine, Dutch Caribbean where he also directs a Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) Project. His research focuses on all aspects of epidemiology of pregnancy, infancy, and childhood.

His studies include any factors that influence that influence maternal health and the health and development of children, from their conception through their adolescence.

Engr. TITI OMO-ETTU, FAEng

B.Sc, FNSE, FTEMIC, MACEN, MNIM; telecommunication engineer; Graduated University of Lagos 1973; Telecom Executive Management Institute of Canada; Team Leader. Counterpart Staff, World Bank Funded. Lagos Network Diagnostics, 1988 retired from public service into private practice. 1990; He was Managing Partner, Telecom Answers Associates, 1991-2000; Currently CEO. The Executive Cyberschuul, Lagos; Member Council, Nigerian Society of Engineers; Past Director OGBC/TV board of directors, Published: Options for affordable internet services in developing Economies, COREN and the World Federation of Engineering organisation.

Paper: Interconnection and Pricing: Ensuring that ISP's do not lose out. A conference paper for African telecommunications summit, Accra. Ghana, March 2001' Fro many years served as a Consultant to the National Communication Commission – the communication regulator in Nigeria. Titi is an active blogger on social and development subjects. He is a Director of the Advisory Board of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation.

Mr. OLADIPO OLASOJU

Mr. Oladipo Olasoju was born and bred in Nigeria. He is a proud product of the Baptist Boys' High School, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria, an interest educational institution which happened to be the incubator of a number of prominent Nigerian leaders: Past President Olusegun Obasanjo, and Late Bashorun MKO Abiola.

Oladipo attended Olabisi Onabanjo University, in Ogun State, where he studied law. He was called into the Nigeria Bar in 1990 and practiced law in Lagos until 2000, when he moved to England. He was enrolled as a Solicitor of England and Wales in 2004. He currently practices as a Criminal Defence solicitor, and he is a Director at his own law firm.

Oladipo was ordained as Pastor whilst he was in Nigeria, and he had combined this with his practice both in Nigeria and England. He is no longer pastoring, whilst he is waiting on God for a new direction. Oladipo is married to Funmi and with their two beautiful daughters live in England.

Mr. JAMES MOORE

At 17 James Moore left his hometown in the boreal forest and completed an undergraduate degree in psychology and philosophy. Recognizing a deficiency in the occidental (colonialist) worldview, he embarked on a larger exploration of cultures, music, and languages... travelling extensively in Europe, Central Asia, and Turtle Island. He has been a contributing writer to the Manitoba Keewaitoni Okimakinak.

After moving to Lethbridge with his spouse Arlene and their two sons, James completed a Master of Education degree and became an Instructor in the

School of Justice Studies at Lethbridge College and a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant.

Chief ROY WEASEL FAT

Chief Roy Weasel Fat is the President of the Red Crow Community College a post-secondary institution in Standoff, Alberta. “Namahkan (hunting and bring back coup)” was born and raised in Kainai and continues to live and be involved in community initiatives. He was a Kiipiitapoka from a young age. He lived with his grandparents for three summers and during that time he really learned about being a Niitsitapii. He attended St Paul’s Residential School for four years.

Kiipaitapiiysinnoni (Our Way of Life) is where Roy learned that change in a human being can begin to take place. Kiipaitapiiysinnoni is an interconnected Blackfoot value system. It takes time to learn about the Kiipaitapiiysinnoni values, but eventually it comes, and you realize what elders have been telling or showing you.

Roy is a society member in the Brave Dog Society (Kanatsumita). He was inducted into this society at the annual Sundance ceremonies in the summer of 2011. It was suggested by the elders of the Kainai community to become a member of this society to further his learning journey to being Niitsitapi. He credits his learning and journey of being Niitsitapi to Kainai elders; Andrew Black Water (Ahtsootoaa), Alan Prairie Chicken (Aotahkoisaapo’p), Pete Standing Alone (Nitakaisaamailoan), Louise Crop Eared Wolf (Sakowohtaomaahkaa), Rosie.

Mr. CALVIN WILLIAMS - MAH TSA OH TAAN - PRETTY SHIELDS

Calvin is from the Many Children clan of the Blood Tribe. He is a promotor of the Kainai Way of Life. He was a past member of Sacred Big Holy Society for 23 years and is a current member of the Brave Dog Society. He is a Board member/Elder Representative of Red Crow Community College, was a member of the 1986-88 Blood Tribe Chief and Council, former Crime Prevention Coordinator of the Blood Indian Reserve, and former member of

FNMI Advisory Council for Lethbridge Community College. He has worked in following fields: Childcare, Juvenile Corrections, Correctional Officer and Community Release Officer (Social Worker 1) for Alberta Solicitor General, and Emergency Medical Response. He possesses a broad range of knowledge and awareness and understanding of the history, culture, world views, and contributions of Blackfoot People. He is very familiar with tribal governance both Traditional and Contemporary and has knowledge of the terms of Treaty 7 negotiated by Chief Red Crow with the Crown. He is also familiar with Blood Tribe history, holistic healing, storytelling, Blackfoot Legends, traditional math, peacekeeping, physics and worldviews.

KRIS HODGSON-BRIGHT

Kris has solid media background that includes nine years instructing courses in the Digital Communications and Media and Multimedia Production diploma programs, 20 years in the media industry, five years in economic development and three years in community capacity building encouraging renewable energy adoption. I am fascinated with 360-degree/VR journalism (immersive storytelling) for the potential it holds. In my spare time, I play a handcrafted electric cello and enjoy competing in runs and triathlons.

DAVID LOGUE

David Logue is an associate professor and department chair in the Department of Psychology at the University of Lethbridge. A biologist by training, he studies how tropical birds use songs to communicate. David became interested in the psychology of judgement and decision making while researching how female birds compare song quality from prospective mates. He now teaches a senior level course on judgement and decision making, in addition to various courses on animal behaviour. David is the author of 37 peer reviewed journal articles on animal behaviour. He lives in Lethbridge with his wife, the artist April Matisz, and their two children.

Topic: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAKE NEWS

Synopsis

The online news landscape presents a mixture of true information, misinformation, and disinformation, also known as “Fake News.” Fake News is designed to manipulate viewers’ judgement about the true state of the world. Seen through the lens of Judgement and Decision Making (JDM) Psychology, Fake News exploits natural weaknesses in human judgement. A solid understanding of these weaknesses can help us recognize when they are being exploited so we can better resist manipulation. JDM also offers tools to make more rational judgements about the true state of the world.

Esther Olayinka Awosoga, MA (MODERATOR)

Esther Awosoga is a resident of Lethbridge Alberta after a number of years in the US where she commenced her career as a professional educator. She volunteers with local community groups in the City of Lethbridge. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the Soboyejo – TurningPoint Charity Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITH THANKS

We thank God above all for making this grand event possible.

This is to acknowledge with sincere gratitude, the wonderful contributions of our Speakers and the Moderator who made the 3rd in our October Seminar Series a huge success. We thank the audience from across the world especially our folks in Nigeria and the UK - where it is about midnight at the end of this great event - for their active participation without which the event may not be fun. We appreciate the news media, all our volunteers, our special guests, and well-wishers for their unflinching support over the years. We are grateful for the support of our co-sponsors: the Association of Nigerians In Lethbridge, and the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association for making available to us this great facility for public enlightenment, as well as our Technical Team and the Freedom House Parish of the

Redeemed Church for the live streaming system, as well as our silent donor of the Zoom Link provided for this event. Seeing you next time. Good-bye from the Soboyejo TurningPoint Foundation. God Bless.

PRESENTATION 1

Understanding COVID-19 Anti-vaccination misinformation: Implications for preventing and treating COVID-19

J. Adebola Lambo, MD, Professor of Epidemiology & Public Health University of London & Avalon University School of Medicine, Dutch Caribbean.

Conflict of Interest Declaration – None

Structure of Presentation

- ▶ Goals
- ▶ Statement of Problem
- ▶ Obstacles: Misinformation
- ▶ Solution
- ▶ Conclusions
- ▶ Key Messages

Goals

- ▶ To understand the issues around COVID-19 anti-vaccination information.
- ▶ To understand the effects of anti-vaccination misinformation on prevention and treatment of COVID-19.

Statement of Problem: *what is at stake?*

- ▶ COVID-19 is a disease of public health importance and vaccination is the cornerstone of prevention, in addition to other public health measures: hand hygiene, physical distancing, and mask wearing.

- ▶ Vaccines can be considered as a public good being provided not only for the benefit of the individual but also for public protection.
 - ▶ Although, vaccines largely have been demonstrated to be safe, there have been *clear instances of vaccine-associated harm???*
 - ▶ Monitoring of COVID-19 vaccination coverage in all age and risk groups is important to determine *if adequate levels of protection is achieved in the population???*
 - ▶ Reporting and monitoring of adverse events following immunization (AEFIs) is also important for addressing *COVID19 vaccine safety concerns???*
- Vaccination saves lives and prevents disease.**
 - Emerging effectiveness data but limited safety data.**
 - Monitoring the safety of COVID-19 vaccines administered is a key critical component of COVID-19 surveillance. This provides a process to identify any unusual events that were not captured in the pre-licensure clinical trials.**
 - An AEFI is defined as a serious or unexpected event temporarily associated with immunization.**

Drivers of Vaccine Uptake: Behavioural Aspects-1

- ▶ Behavioral research has shown that vaccine acceptance and uptake can be increased by adopting the three strategies below.
- ▶ **Creating an enabling environment** – making vaccination easy, quick, and affordable, in all relevant respects.
- ▶ **Harnessing social influences** – especially from people who are particularly trusted by and identified with members of relevant communities.
- ▶ **Increasing motivation** – through open and transparent dialogue and communication about uncertainty and risks, including around the safety and benefits of vaccination.

History of Anti-Vaccination & Misinformation

- ❑ The modern era of the anti-vaccination movement has been attributed to the now retracted 1998 *Lancet* study by British ex- physician Andrew Wakefield and 12 colleagues purporting a link it received widespread publicity and MMR vaccination rates sharply dropped.
- ❑ Misinformation refers to misleading healthcare information, dangerous hoaxes with false conspiracy theories, and fraud that endangers public health.
- ❑ Given that the advice and information about the COVID-19 pandemic rapidly changes, it is an especially fertile ground which draws upon individuals' anxieties and fear by those seeking to promulgate anti-vaccination ideologies.

The Obstacles : misinformation-1

- ❑ In the rapidly evolving situation with multiple uncertainties about COVID-19 vaccines, there is also danger of incorrect information filling the knowledge gap.
- ❑ With the overabundance of information circulating around COVID-19 –also known as the “infodemic” – people are inevitably exposed to misinformation, rumours, and false conspiracy theories, which may erode their confidence in vaccination.
- ❑ Infodemics are characterized by an overabundance of information – both factual and misinformation – that occurs during a health emergency such as COVID.
- ❑ Infodemics spread even faster than the virus and are characterized by an excessive amount of information. This makes it difficult for both the public, but also public authorities, to identify an actionable path to counter misinformation and rumours. They not only hamper public health responses but generate confusion and general distrust amongst the public.

The Obstacles – Misinformation - 2

- ❑ The main contemporary sources of the spread of misinformation occur on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Tencent, TikTok.
- ❑ It is notable, however, that the traditional mass media has also allegedly perpetuated this by covering misinformation. Anti-vaxxers exploit shifts in recommendations and knowledge as the political and scientific establishment's failures.
- ❑ Narratives are aloof, unrepentant and aim at what they perceive as fallible medical and scientific experts.

The Obstacles: Misinformation-3

- ❑ Conspiracy and anti-vax theories and misinformation entice individuals by linking aspects that might seem to be correlated.
- ❑ The demographics, socio-economic position, and political ideology of those who spread and believe in anti-vaxx information is heterogeneous. The anti-vaxx group has often been characterized as being the opposite of the health conscious.
- ❑ The WHO provides a 'mythbusters' site collating the main misinformation coronavirus messages.

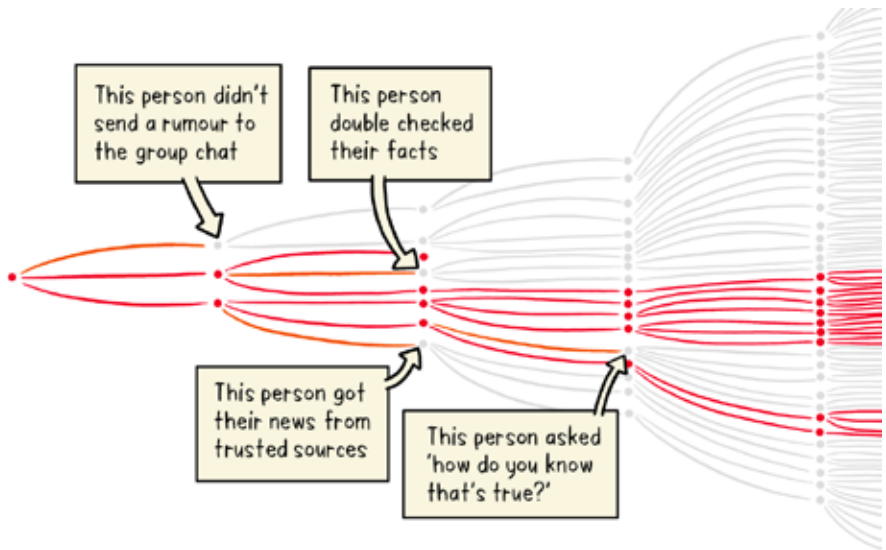
Solution 1: The anatomy of anti-vaccine misinformation

- ❑ To develop effective communication strategies to counter misinformation, it is important to understand the main strategies that are used.
- ❑ There have been a variety of vaccine and COVID-19 related conspiracy theories with the central ones summarized here, with a 'mythbusters' site collated by the WHO:
- ❑ **No vaccine is needed since COVID-19 is a hoax**
- ❑ **Bill Gates and the vaccination plots.** Multiple conspiracy theories have involved sub-plots around Bill Gates

- ❑ **COVID-19 vaccinations are a plot by big pharma and scientists to make money and, that natural medicine is more effective.**
- ❑ **The virus is caused by 5G mobile phone towers.**
- ❑ **The anti-vaccination group is heterogeneous, with misinformation characterized by: (1) distrust of science and selective use of expert authority, (2) distrust in pharmaceutical companies and government, (3) simplistic explanations, (4) use of emotion and anecdotes to impact rational decision-making; and (5) development of information bubbles and echo chambers.**

Solution 2:

- ❑ **The public needs to be empowered to spot and report misinformation, with more accountability for media companies to remove harmful information and legal consequences for individuals or groups that spread misinformation.**
- ❑ **Developing trusted sources, fact-checking and responding to misinformation through dedicated dashboards are some of the strategies suggested to manage infodemics.**
- ❑ **A narrow focus on misinformation disregards the fact that there are genuine knowledge voids, necessitating public dialogue about vaccine concerns and hesitancy rather than providing passive one-way communication strategies.**



- ❑ Source: <https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/let-s-flatten-theinfodemic-curve>: Let's flatten the infodemic curve
- ❑ We are all being exposed to a huge amount of COVID-19 information on a daily basis, and not all of it is reliable. Here are some tips for telling the difference and stopping the spread of misinformation.
- ❑ Due to COVID-19, most of us have a new word in our vocabulary: epidemiology. It is the branch of medical science that deals with the ways diseases are transmitted and can be controlled in a population. Now it is time to learn another new word: infodemiology.
- ❑ As humans, we are a curious and innovative species. We want to understand the world around us and stay up to date on the challenges we face and how to overcome them.
- ❑ One of the ways we do this is by seeking out and sharing information – lots of it. Even scientists around the world are working hard to keep up with the thousands of studies that have come out since COVID-19 appeared.
- ❑ But it is not only scientific studies. There are also official communications from governments and health agencies around the world. Then there are news articles and opinion pieces, and messages from vloggers, bloggers,


podcasters and social media influencers. You may also see information shared by friends and family on social media or messaging apps.

- ❑ All of this is called the infodemic: a flood of information on the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❑ Infodemiology is the study of that information and how to manage it.



Distributed via the CDC Health Alert Network August 26, 2021. Rapid Increase in Ivermectin Prescriptions and Reports of Severe Illness Associated with Use of Products Containing Ivermectin to Prevent or Treat COVID-19.

Summary

- Ivermectin is a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved prescription medication used to treat certain infections caused by internal and external parasites.
- When used as prescribed for approved indications, it is generally safe and well tolerated.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, ivermectin dispensing by retail pharmacies has increased, as has the use of veterinary formulations available over the counter but not intended for human use. FDA has cautioned about the potential risks of use for prevention or treatment of COVID-19. Ivermectin is not authorized or approved by FDA for prevention or treatment of COVID-19. The National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel has also determined that there are currently insufficient data to recommend ivermectin for treatment of COVID-19. [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov)  has listings of ongoing clinical

trials that might provide more information about these hypothesized uses in the future.

- ❑ **Developing trusted sources, fact-checking and responding to misinformation through dedicated dashboards are some of the strategies suggested to manage infodemics.**

Health Canada is warning the public not to use the deworming drug ivermectin to treat COVID-19 particularly the version that is used for animals. Ivermectin is not authorized to prevent or treat COVID-19; may cause serious health problems

Last updated: 2021-08-31

Summary

Product: Ivermectin (veterinary or human versions), an antiparasitic agent (tablets, paste, oral solution, injectable solution, medicated premix or topical).

Issue: Consumers are purchasing veterinary ivermectin to prevent or treat COVID19.

What to do: Do not use veterinary ivermectin for the prevention or treatment of COVID-19. If you have purchased ivermectin for this purpose, discard it immediately. Consult a healthcare professional if you have used this product and have health concerns.

- ❑ **Developing trusted sources, fact-checking and responding to misinformation through dedicated dashboards are some of the strategies suggested to manage infodemics.**

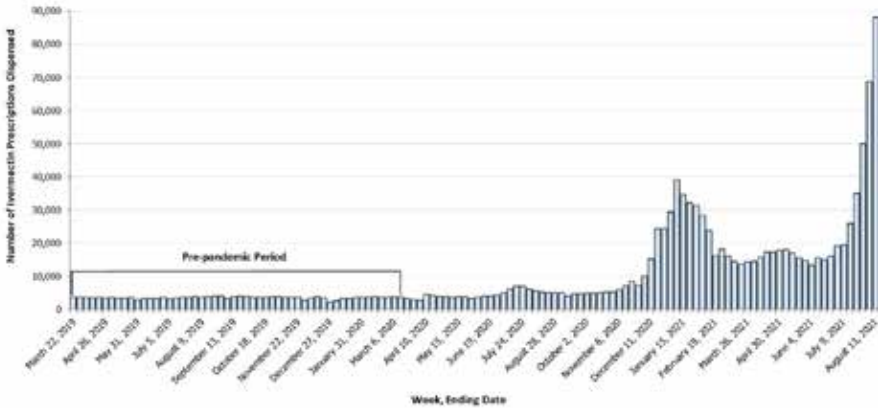


Figure: Estimated number of outpatient ivermectin prescriptions dispensed from retail pharmacies — United States, March 16, 2019–August 13, 2021*

❑ ***Data are from the IQVIA National Prescription Audit Weekly (NPA Weekly) database. NPA Weekly collects data from a sample of approximately 48,900 U.S. retail pharmacies, representing 92% of all retail prescription activity. Ivermectin dispensed by mail order and long-term care pharmacies, prescriptions by veterinarians, and non-oral formulations were not included.**

Videos:



Should Ivermectin Be Used to Prevent or Treat COVID-19 Infection? - YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z-jxauf-R48>



COVID misinformation: FDA warns about ivermectin as COVID treatment | USA TODAY - YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnol6uwyybY>

The Evidence -1

Cochrane Library Trusted evidence. Informed decisions. Better health.

Cochrane [Database of Systematic Reviews](#) [Intervention Review] Ivermectin for preventing and treating COVID-19

Maria Popp, Miriam Stegemann, Maria-Inti Metzendorf, Susan Gould, Peter Kranke, Patrick Meybohm, Nicole Skoetz, Stephanie Weibel

ABSTRACT

Background

Ivermectin, an antiparasitic agent used to treat parasitic infestations, inhibits the replication of viruses in vitro. The molecular hypothesis of ivermectin's antiviral mode of action suggests an inhibitory effect on severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) replication in the early stages of infection. Currently, evidence on efficacy and safety of ivermectin for prevention of SARSCoV-2 infection and COVID-19 treatment is conflicting.

The Evidence -2

Cochrane Library Trusted evidence. Informed decisions. Better health.

ABSTRACT

Objectives

To assess the efficacy and safety of ivermectin compared to no treatment, standard of care, placebo, or any other proven intervention for people with COVID-19 receiving treatment as inpatients or outpatients, and for prevention of an infection with SARS-CoV-2 (post-exposure prophylaxis).

Key messages

We found no evidence to support the use of ivermectin for treating or preventing COVID-19 infection, but the evidence base is limited.

Evaluation of ivermectin is continuing in 31 ongoing studies, and we will update this review with their results when they become available.

Conclusions

- ▶ Public expectation management is crucial and urgently needed to clarify the issues around vaccine safety concern, vaccine effectiveness, and population protection.
- ▶ The public needs to be empowered to spot and report misinformation, with more accountability for media companies to remove harmful information and legal consequences for individuals or groups that spread misinformation.
- ▶ The utility of available trusted sources, fact-checking, to respond to misinformation and peer-reviewed literature and databases to evaluate evidence of the effectiveness of interventions for preventing and treating COVID-19.

Key Messages

- ▶ Vaccination with COVID-19 vaccines remains the cornerstone for preventing COVID-19.
- ▶ Be alert to the dangers of misinformation and verify information using trusted sources and assess evidence for treating and preventing COVID-19 using peer-reviewed literature and databases.

Thank you

PRESENTATION 2

Technology and Regulatory Perspectives on Fake News, Misinformation, Belief System and Truth

Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu, FAEng, FNSE,

Text of a speech at the 2021 October Seminar and Webinar to celebrate Nigeria's 61st National Day Anniversary jointly sponsored by the Association of Nigerians in Lethbridge, the Ethnic Association of Southern Alberta, and the Soboyejo – TurningPoint Charity Foundation, in Canada.

Intro & Definition

- FAKE NEWS means MISINFORMATION.
- Both mean
 - “All forms of false, inaccurate, or misleading information designed, presented and promoted to intentionally cause public harm or for profit”.
- The Americans call it FAKE NEWS AU countries call MISINFORMATION.
- My interest is...
 - “the news that is tampered with to give another meaning or impression”.
 - Because it is usually done with a motive, it generally offends somebody somewhere. Yes, that makes it bad, and it must be discouraged.

Current Situation

- My Take is that social media companies already have very good ways, may be inadequate yet, may be some still substandard, to confront the evil effects of fake news.

- ❑ Governments' take: We already know that those who run failing governments all over the world are increasingly getting uncomfortable with the negative use of information especially as it relates to the passing of judgment on the quality of governance. In their own case, it does not have to be fake news to hurt them. It only needs to paint their performance in bad light. They then use fake news charges to vent their anger.
- ❑ In one country the same social media which a reigning regime used in garnering votes to come into office is, six years down the road, now being considered either as enemy of those in power or enemy of the head of government. But truth really is that at the core of the ruling party's problem is their inability to use goodwill to advantage.

Technology and Regulation

- ❑ If it were a competition I would vote for Technology although without undermining regulation
- ❑ Both are very wide to discuss.
- ❑ TECHNOLOGY helps us do things FASTER, BIGGER, NEATER, and CHEAPER.
- ❑ We are about to discuss a subject that is rooted in emerging technologies of Artificial Intelligence, AI, and machine language (learning), ML.,
- ❑ But I do not have even very low-level information let alone substantial knowledge about these stuffs. However, if you ask me, I may tell you, not authoritatively though, that it may not be that fake news are emerging more viciously than they have always been. The issue may be the advanced speed at which they can now spread and the relative cheaper access to means of sharing individual thoughts and expressions constitute the real issues that make fake news the monster we have accepted it to be.



Smart Product



Voice
Recognition



Artificial
Intelligence



VR

The Choice We Must Make

- ❑ I choose to discuss both technology and regulation pari pasu. I mean together. That is because while I see a lot to discuss in using technology to confront the widespread of fake news very little relatively is available to advance on regulation. Unfortunately, instead of opting for technology, government officials usually opt for legislation, and they continue to miss the point. I will be surprised if those who know law tell us that there are no enough in current legislation to deal will purveyors of misinformation (or fake news) once they have been identified.
- ❑ I want to advise those who are in authority that they should rely more on technology to help them out rather than bothering their head in pushing legislation to find solutions. I say this because technology moves and works faster than legislation in its process to apply solutions especially in this subject.

Developing Technology as a Solution

- ❑ I remember, for a long time, that online platform managers used to identify and blacklist words to assert decorum in published content. I once wrote “my pen is the Blackburn model” when I meant to write “my pen is the Blackburn model” and my paper was “flagged” because the word “penis” was listed as offending.



Artificial Intelligence

- ❑ That is the principle on which the idea of using technology is going to be fundamentally based.

The Issues

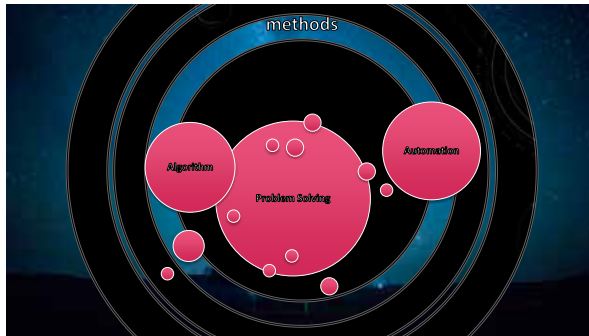
- ❑ I can say straightaway that the issues that I will identify and for which I expect to find solutions using technology will include
 - a. Getting all of us to wage a war against fake news by making sure we stop sharing one once it is identified.

- b. Substandard platform regulation,
- c. Unreasonable trust in fellow platform users,
- d. Increasing poverty in the land and
- e. Associated unrest of the mind resulting in citizens wanting to join in pulling government down.

methods

- ❑ I suggest that Technology must be relied on more than legislation and used to support the awareness of readers that what they read could be misleading if not outrightly falsehood. Therefore, the idea will be to find intelligencesupported ways of categorizing and flagging trending materials to enable the reader to get conscious of what could be in stock. The correctness of this method is an issue in which artificial intelligence science will be required.
- ❑ I have it on good authority that AI is already advanced enough to trace the source of offending content, and this can be used to create accurate alert and flagging idea for material that pass through social media company platforms. That to me defines what we mean by the primary core of a technological solution.





Caution

- ❑ Let me warn that AI as enabling science to combat fake news is really what in my native Yoruba language we call “Epe la fi nwo Epe”. That is because AI itself is the science that will hugely make creation of fake action very possible. And yet it is also the science that will enable us arrest and stop fake news before it spreads.
- ❑ Of course, we can also see it as “ole lo mo ese ole to lori apata”. In other words, ‘a robber may be best to beat and catch the thief on their common ground’. That means there is nothing strange in this challenging situation than for us to be vigilant and take caution.



Existing Technological Solutions

- ❑ My understanding is that as we speak, Natural Language Processing (NLP) is one current technology that is being used to identify fake news after it has been created by looking at the nature and tone of the content. My idea here is not to research into how many of such solutions already exist but to say they do exist.
- ❑ The other point to make is that technology as solution is a case of humancomputer symbiosis, in which we use computing power to detect and eliminate sources of misinformation, and then rely on well-informed people to spread the word, blacklist, and ignore or punish the worst purveyors of falsehoods.
- ❑ I am asking that we elevate the thinking capacity of our people. Let us guide them to question every information and avoid reusing an information if it is not found positive to development. When we use technology to help us in doing this, it is what I call TECHNOLOGY AS SOLUTION, far beyond legislation.



Conclusion

- ❑ Fake News/Misinformation is REAL, an enemy of society and it should be confronted
- ❑ Let us encourage citizen to confront fake news, use technology to detect and use legislation to punish offenders

- ❑ Caution is advised in dealing on the matter since technology the preferred solution could also be a tool for spreading it.



Thank You!

PRESENTATION 3

“OUR BELIEF & TRUTH – KEY TO FREEDOM OR TRAP?”

Oladipo Olasoju Esqr, Minister of the Gospel
& Solicitor – London, England

Presentation not available at the time of publication

PRESENTATION 4

**“FAKE NEWS & FALSE NARRATIVES
– WHO BENEFITS?”**

By James Moore, Justice Studies Instructor, Lethbridge College

Presentation not available at the time of publication

PRESENTATION 5

“HOW MESSAGING AND COMMUNICATIONS ARE RELAYED IN FIRST NATION CULTURE”

**Roy Weasel Fat, MA – President, Red Crow College, Standoff,
Alberta & Elder Calvin Williams, Blackfoot First Nation**

Presentation not available at the time of publication

PRESENTATION 6

**“FAKE NEWS & MISINFORMATION
- THE JOURNALIST’S CRITICAL
THINKING PERSPECTIVE”**

By Kris Hodgson-Bright, MA. Digital Communications
and Media as well as Multimedia Production instructor
at the Lethbridge College, Lethbridge, Alberta



Fake News and Misinformation

Kris Hodgson-Bright, MA, Lethbridge College, Digital Communications and Media instructor





Let's take a snapshot of the big topics of 2021

Vaccines

Healthcare

Freedom

Politics

When you think of those topics they usually have a trigger effect

- **You may feel one or more of these feelings**
- Positive - happy, supported, loved and taken care of by your family, your neighbourhood, professionals and your government.
- Or
- Negative - Fear, distrust, being held back from different forces and being worried about the future

**We all have a
role to play
-
Journalists**

**WITH GREAT
POWER**

**We all have
a role to play**

Public

Critical thinking

C	Currency: The timeliness of the info
R	Relevance: How the info fits your needs
A	Authority: The source of the info
A	Accuracy: Reliability and correctness of the info
P	Purpose: The reason the info exists

Global NEWS

CTV NEWS CHANNEL

The Guardian

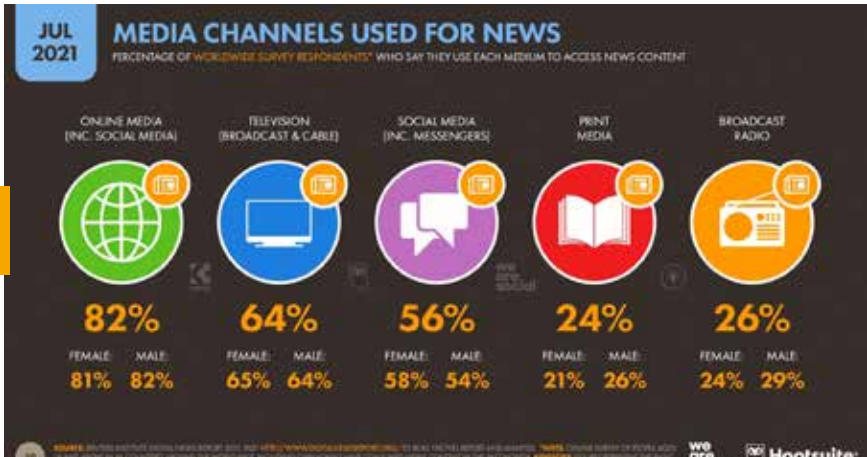
What does critical thinking look like?

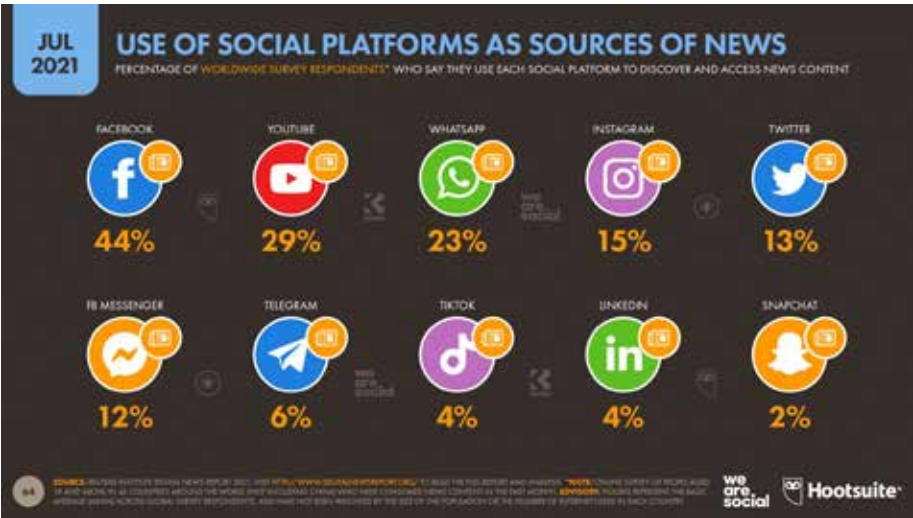
Checking out more than one site for a story



Hootsuite
July 2021
article by
Simon Kemp

**Half a Billion Users
Joined Social in the
Last Year (And
Other Facts)**





Questions?

- Kris.hodgson-bright@lethbridgecollege.ca
- Cell – 403-360-7473

PRESENTATION 7

“THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAKE NEWS”*

By Dr. David Logue, Associate Professor of Psychology,
University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta



Kait's Unsafe Space shared a post.
September 11 · 🌐

THESE PICTURES



On September 11, 2001, Donald Trump joined America's heroes and carried victims over his shoulders down the steps of the burning World Trade Center.

Meanwhile, Obama spent the whole day sitting in the Oval Office with his feet on the desk watching basketball.

SPEAK VOLUMES



HARVARD

MEDICAL SCHOOL

* Source - <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2195/AJPH.2005.079620>

PEER REVIEWED STUDY FINDS 70%* OF UNPROVOKED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS BY FEMALES. STILL THINK IT'S GENDERED???

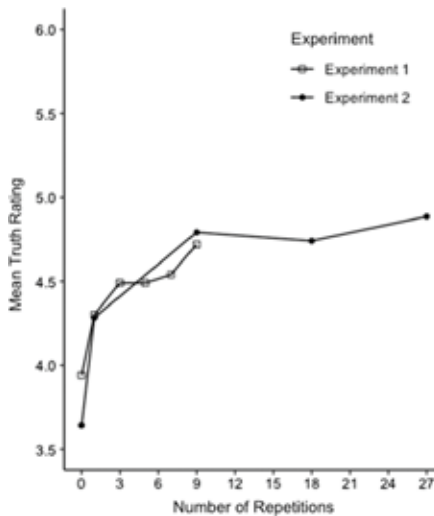


<http://www.phdjournal.com>

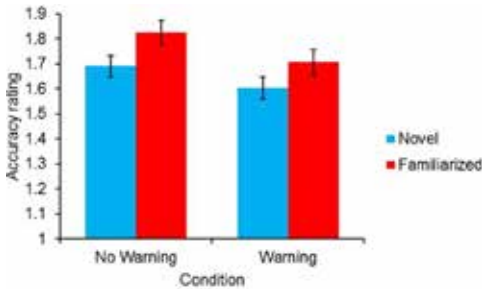


How we judge

- “Fast and frugal” heuristics
- Memory availability heuristic
 - Recall fluency as a proxy of truthfulness
 - Repetition improves recall, perceived truthfulness

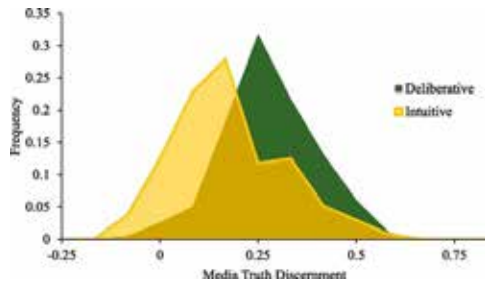


Memory availability and Fake News



Critical thinking

- Thinking “slow”
 - Consider range of possibilities
 - Weigh evidence
- Alternatives: Emotions, anecdotes, “common sense,” tradition
- Different ways to use reason
 - Lawyer vs. Judge
 - Motivated reasoning



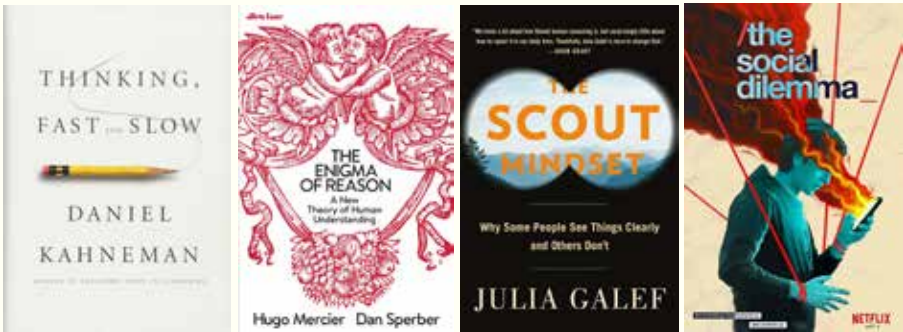
Muddying the waters

- It is impossible to evaluate all claims
 - When choices are hard, people are more likely to take the default option (often nothing)

How to avoid being fooled

- Practical
 - Look for cues
 - Appeal to emotion, unlikely stories, encouragement to spread, obscure source ...
 - Identify reputable news sources
- Psychological
 - Limit exposure
 - Evaluate information like a Bayesian
 - Think “slowly”
 - Consider all relevant outcomes and their consequences
 - Be a judge but recognize that others may be lawyers!

Want more?





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Chapter 4

2022

ONE GOVERNMENT'S TERRORIST OR ENEMY IS
ANOTHER'S HERO OR ALLY

*Perspectives on Communities, Nations & Superpowers
Co-Existing in Disagreement for World Peace*



NIGERIA'S 62ND NATIONAL DAY

**THEME: ONE COUNTRY'S TERRORIST OR ENEMY IS ANOTHER'S
HERO OR ALLY**

*Perspectives on How Communities, Nations & Super Powers May
Co-Exist in Disagreement For World Peace*

OCTOBER

15

2022

11:00 AM (MTN)
1PM EST, 5PM GMT

ZOOM ID: 841 5701 3729

NO PASSCODE REQUIRED

**In person at the Multi Cultural Centre 421 6th Ave S,
Lethbridge, AB**

ORGANIZED BY THE SOBOYEJO TURNING POINT CHARITY
PLEASE EMAIL STPCFOUNDATION@GMAIL.COM OR CALL
1(867)688-0066 TO RSVP

**THE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE, SOUTHERN ALBERTA
ETHNIC ASSOCIATION & THE SOBOYEJO TURNING POINT FOUNDATION**

PRESENT

NIGERIA'S 62nd NATIONAL DAY ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER SEMINAR / WEBINAR

THEME:

**ONE GOVERNMENT'S TERRORIST OR ENEMY IS ANOTHER'S HERO OR ALLY -
PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITIES, NATIONS & SUPERPOWERS CO-EXISTING
IN DISAGREEMENT FOR WORLD PEACE**

CONTRIBUTORS:



Prof. John von Heyking,
Chair of Political Science,
University of Lethbridge
SPEAKER



Adejare Popoola M. Sc, M.A.
Behavioural Psychologist &
Minister of the Gospel (RCCG)
SPEAKER



Adesoji Anthony Adesina,
B.A. International Relations
& Community Builder
SPEAKER



Prof. Sheila McManus,
Political Science Dept.
University of Lethbridge
SPEAKER



Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu, F. AEng,
Public Affairs Commentator -
CO-MODERATOR



Biola Ogungbe
M.A. International Relations
CO-MODERATOR

CO - HOSTS:

**OSARO ECHAREYBA - PRESIDENT ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE
DR. VICTOR WUTOR - PRESIDENT SOUTHERN ALBERTA ETHNIC ASSOCIATION
MC ESTHER AWOSOGA - EDUCATOR & COMMUNITY BUILDER
CONVENER: FOLA SOBOYEJO, P. ENG. FNSE**

VENUE & DATE:

**BAEA MULTI-CULTURAL CENTRE ROUND STREET ROOM
421 - 6TH AVE. S, LETHBRIDGE, AB T1J 0Y7, CANADA
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2022, 12 NOON MST, 2PM EST, 7PM GMT/ NIGERIA TIME
ADMISSION: FREE. ZOOM LINK: ID: 841 5701 3729
MUST PLEASE RSVP: +1 867 688 0066 STPCFOUNDATION@GMAIL.COM**

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**ASSOCIATION
OF NIGERIANS
IN LETHBRIDGE**



**SOUTHERN ALBERTA
ETHNIC ASSOCIATION**



**SOBOYEJO - TURNING POINT
CHARITY FOUNDATION**

PROGRAM

2022 OCTOBER WEBINAR:

HOW TO CO-EXIST IN DISAGREEMENT

Saturday 15th October 2022 Multi-Cultural Centre, Lethbridge AB &
on Zoom 12 Noon MST PROGRAM

1. COMMENCEMENT – MC, Esther Awosoga
2. ABOUT SOBOYEJO TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION – Fọla Şoboyejo, Executive Director
3. WELCOME – Osaro Egharevba, President, Association of Nigerians In Lethbridge
4. THE SOUTHERN ALBERTA ETHNIC ASSOCIATION IS HOME TO ALL – Dr. Victor Wutor, President
5. INTRODUCTION OF CO-MODERATORS

6. SESSION 1

Moderator – Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu

6.1 1st Presentation

“POLITICS AND PEACE-MAKING: THE ART OF TURNING ENEMIES INTO FRIENDS.”

By Dr. John von Heyking, Professor & Chair of Political Science, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

6.2 2nd Presentation

“INTERNATIONAL BODIES & DISPUTE RESOLUTION”

By Adesoji Anthony Adesina BSc International Relations, MSc International Law

7. COFFEE WATER BREAK - 10 mins.

8. SESSION 2

Moderator – Biola Ogungbe, MSc International Relations

8.1 3rd Presentation

“NIGERIA: THE UNMET NEEDS AND THE CHALLENGES OF (SOCIAL) EXPECTATIONS AND REGIONAL INFLUENCE”

By Adejare Popoola, MA, MSc – Behavioural Psychologist, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

8.2 4th Presentation

“WHO IS “US”? WHO IS “THEM”? CHALLENGING THE LIES BORDERS TELL”

By Dr. Sheila McManus, Professor of History, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

9. QUESTIONS & ANSWER PERIOD

10. MODERATOR’S REMARKS - Presentation / Discussion Keynotes.

11. CLOSING & VOTE OF THANKS - Fọla Şoboyejo

SPEAKERS' BIO DATA



PROF. JOHN von HEYKING, Ph.D.

BIO

John von Heyking is Professor of Political Science at the University of Lethbridge (Canada), where he teaches political philosophy. He is the author of *Comprehensive Judgment and Absolute Selflessness: Winston Churchill on Politics as Friendship* (2018), *The Form of Politics: Aristotle and Plato on Friendship* (2016), and *Augustine and Politics as Longing in the World* (2001).

He has coedited numerous volumes including two volumes of the *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* and, most recently, *Wherefrom Does History Emerge?*; *As well as Inquiries in Political Cosmogony* (2020). He has published scholarly articles on topics including liberal education, friendship, cosmopolitanism, empire, Islamic political thought, punishment, and religious liberty.

Theme: One Government's Terrorist or Enemy is Another's Hero Or Ally - Perspectives on How Communities, Nations and Major Powers May Co-Exist in Disagreement for World Peace

Synopsis

By characterizing politics the art of turning enemies into friends, the Dalai Lama indicates that peace among peoples is impossible without the hard work of cultivating genuine personal friendships among leaders and among

citizens. His observation is in agreement with many practitioners and theorists of statecraft, including Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas Gandhi, Winston Churchill, and Liu Xiaobo. My presentation will provide an account of peace-making and politics as the work of interpersonal friendships by considering the examples of what some of these major thinkers have said and what significant practitioners have done.



ADESOJI ANTHONY ADESINA, MA

BIO

Adesoji Anthony Adesina is a Graduate of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile - Ife, Nigeria where he bagged BSc International Relations in 1987 and MSc International Law & Diplomacy in 1991. His past research papers in this field include:

- * Domestic factors in Nigerian foreign Relations from 1975 - 1979 Military Regimes - an essay published in 1987;
- * Strategic Implications of Nigeria - Cameron border conflicts and the Law of the Sea. 1997

Furthermore, on the academic front, he is currently studying Gender and Diversity at Hamptons University. Adesoji has broad experience in various fields including Shipping, Forex, Logistics, Insurance and Marketing. He is currently a Supervisor with the Rehoboth Christian Ministries. He is married, with children. He is a Nigerian.

Adesoji A Adesina is a two times Graduate of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile - Ife, Nigeria 1987 & 1997.

Topic: Peace, Conflict and the International System.

Synopsis

The paper explores the roles of UN, Western powers, mediations in Conflict Resolution and discusses the use of Diplomacy as against War with some reference to Darfur Resolution between South and North Sudan, and other conflicts areas.



PROF. SHEILA MCMANUS, Ph.D.

BIO

Dr. Sheila McManus is a Professor of History at the University of Lethbridge. They grew up in Calgary and completed their PhD at York University in 2001. After a one-year post-doc at Yale University and a year teaching at the University of Winnipeg, they were hired at the U of L in 2003. They teach courses ranging from the first-year World History survey to senior courses in the history of the North American West. Their most recent book, *Both Sides Now: Writing the Edges of the North American West*, was published in May 2022 by Texas A&M University Press.

Topic: WHO IS “US”? WHO IS “THEM”? CHALLENGING THE LIES BORDERS TELL

Synopsis

A border's main job is to lie to you. They tell stories about who "belongs" and who doesn't; who and what can "enter" a space with little trouble or a lot of time and effort; about "identities" and enemies. But borders are just invisible lines, marked perhaps by a wall or fence or river, and the stories they tell don't hold up well when you look at them too closely. Borders and the stories they tell are constructs that empires and nations had to invent at certain times in their past and keep reinventing to justify their existence and policies. In this talk I will discuss some of my research as a historian of the borderlands of the North American West, and the lessons we can learn from history if we want to challenge our beliefs about allies and enemies.



Pastor ADEJARE POPOOLA, MSc, MA, Reg. Psychologist

BIO

Adejare Popoola has Master of Arts and Master of Science in Psychologist. He is a professional psychologist with specialization in behavioural psychology. He has studied and travelled the world with residency in Europe and citizenship in Canada. He is founding Minister of the Gospel at the Freedom House Parish of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Lethbridge, as well as a community builder.



Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu, PEng.

(Co-MODERATOR)

BIO

Engr. Titi Omo-Ettu is a Fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Engineering, Social Justice Advocate and Member of the Advisory Board of the Soboyejo-TurningPoint Foundation. He joins us from Ijebu-Ode.



Biola Ogungbe, MSc.

(Co-MODERATOR)

BIO

Biola Ogungbe holds the MSc in International Relations. She is a business analyst in Alberta in the public service with background in the private sector. She is a consistent volunteer with our Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITH THANKS

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PRESENTATION 1

“POLITICS AND PEACE-MAKING: THE ART OF TURNING ENEMIES INTO FRIENDS.”

- Friendship and Peacemaking

By Dr. John von Heyking, Professor & Chair of Political Science, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

Lecture delivered to Webinar to Celebrate Nigeria’s 62nd National Day Anniversary

Hosted by the Association of Nigerians in Lethbridge, the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association, and the Soboyejo–TurningPoint Charity Foundation

October 15, 2022

We have been asked to consider the proposition, “one government’s terrorist or enemy is another’s hero or ally.” This is an important proposition that strikes at the heart of the activity we call “politics.” Politics is often referred to as the activity of turning enemies into friends. I want to suggest the term “friend” is richer than “ally” because politics is very risky business, which sometimes requires people of strong character to unite and depend on one another. Friendship is the moral practice by which we habituate ourselves in self-sacrifice to the other. It is a moral practice of self-transformation whereby our self gets oriented to the other.

If you want peace, then you need to cultivate genuine friendships not only with those on your side but optimally with those on the other side. My study of some of the great practitioners of statecraft, including Gandhi, Mandela, Churchill, and others, and my study of some of the great thinkers of politics like Plato and Aristotle, have led me to conclude that, as an activity of turning enemies into friends, politics as conducted among persons depends for its success the ability of individuals to practice friendships of the highest kinds across political party, ideology, and even state interest. These depend on strong moral character and spiritual discernment as well.

Some of you may be familiar with Nigeria's Nobel Prize winning author, Chinua Achebe. His novels portray many of the challenges that Nigeria has experienced in the post-colonial period as it transitioned to independence. In 1966, he published ***Man of the People***, in which he compares the political dynamic of the newly independent nation to a group of people who have rushed to get indoors and out of the rain. No one wishes to go back out to the rain. He has his narrator, Odili, elaborate the political dynamic contained in this metaphor:

The trouble with our new nation... was that none of us had been indoors long enough to be able to say 'To hell with it.' We had been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us—the smart and the lucky and hardly ever the best—had scrambled for the one shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in. And from within they sought to persuade the rest through numerous loudspeakers, that the first phase of the struggle had been won and that the next phase—the extension of our house—was even more important and called for new and original tactics; it required that all argument should cease and the whole people speak with one voice and that any more dissent and argument outside the door of the shelter would subvert and bring down the whole house (***Man of the People, 37***).

Achebe's narrator describes a situation in which after the colonialists have departed, the most ambitious and ruthless—"hardly ever the best" people, he says—grab political power to dominate over the rest by suppressing dissent on the grounds that it undermines embryonic national solidarity. One's terrorist is another's hero if one understands that in such a situation anyone is a terrorist who resists the faction whose despotic hold on government power controls the rest.

Achebe's novel also portrays a deformed version of political friendship by portraying one of the main characters, a government minister named Chief Nanga, as a ruthless and corrupt politician who wields power through a blend of patronage and violence. He is a "man of the people" because he has the wealth and power to bestow favors upon others, and there is always the threat of violence towards those who do not wish to accept his patronage. He is a "man of the people" in manner of a mafioso. His patronage, which he always conducts in a friendly and charming manner, aims to turn others into

his dependents, not friends. Achebe's novel portrays despotism under the guise of democracy whereby opposition lacks power. This leaves the country caught in what Chinese dissident and Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo, referring to his own country, referred to as "the vicious cycle of forever replacing one ferocity with another." Achebe's novel does not hold out much hope that Nigeria can escape that vicious cycle but permit me to take a few moments to consider a few figures who have sought to break that cycle in their own ferocious situations, and with some success.

Gandhi

Mohandas or "Mahatma" Gandhi pioneered the strategy of active nonviolence as a form of dissidence to escape that vicious cycle of ferocity in South Africa and India. He inspired significant leaders including Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Liu Xiaobo. The term he coined to describe this strategy is "**satyagraha.**" In his most significant writing, *Hind Swaraj (Home Rule)*, he indicates that he developed **satyagraha** in opposition to those in the Indian independence movement who thought violence and terrorism was the best strategy of achieving their goals. He disagreed with them that ferocity could ever break the vicious cycle of forever replacing one ferocity with another.

Part of Gandhi's rejection of terrorism is pragmatic. It usually does not work. Further, even if it does bring about a change of regime, do you really want violent people now ruling over yourself? Violent people will likely practice violence against their own people, as Achebe's house metaphor shows.

Gandhi insisted that the goal of political activity (peace) had to match the means of obtain it, which meant peaceful means. One simply cannot obtain peace unless one uses peaceful means to bring it about. For this reason too, he insisted that "home rule" was impossible without Hindus also eliminating the "sin" of untouchability, which proved very controversial among his fellow Hindus. In terms of the scope of his vision, it would be as if the American founders like George Washington had insisted that independence from Great Britain in 1776 must also include the elimination of slavery, which did not occur until Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation.

Satyagraha is anything but passive resistance because it entails a robust non-cooperation with the government that severely inconveniences it and of course invites a violent response. Gandhi insisted that **satyagraha** needed to be supported by a rigorous commitment on the part of its practitioners to moral and spiritual virtue. His own commitment to an austere vegetarian diet and even chastity served the aim of **satyagraha**. Not only would these austere virtues help one cope with the hardships of imprisonment, but they served the aim of “home rule” which for Gandhi meant not simply national independence, but also rule of one’s self and one’s bodily desires. As with the tradition of political philosophy that goes back to Socrates, there can be no political freedom without the freedom that comes with ruling one’s own self and the cultivation of virtue.

Self-rule is not done in isolation but insofar as it instills self-sacrifice, it also prepares one to love and serve another. Gandhi is now known as “Mahatma” which is the Hindu term reserved for its saints and means “great soul.” He was first called this by one who knew him best, his best friend Pranjivan Mehta. As his friend, Mehta could see close-up the virtues that Gandhi exhibited and also understood that to be a great soul is to make personal connections and friendships with others.

Gandhi’s personal friendships are less well-known than his public actions but the two go hand-in-hand. In addition to Mehta, these included intensely spiritual friendships with Saraladevi Chaudhurani (whom he called his “spiritual wife”), Charles Freer Andrews, an Anglican priest, and Hermann Kallenbach, a Jewish architect. These were what ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle would call “sunaesthetic” friendships, a term he reserved for intense contemplative friendships characterized by a meeting of mind and heart of collaborative seekers after wisdom. These sunaesthetic friendships also constituted a micropolitics that drove Gandhi’s political action.

Gandhi understood how the unity he wished for an independent India—between Hindus and Muslims especially, but also among various other groups including with untouchables—had to be a living force in his own life. He built a series of homes for communal living and schooling, called ashrams, to serve as incubators for these goals. They were multifaith and also included untouchables.

Gandhi was also close friends with brothers Mohammad and Shaukat Ali, who were Muslim leaders in India. The three frequently worked with one another during the **satyagraha** campaigns in India. Their friendship was crucial for Hindu-Muslim relations, despite the Ali brothers' key disagreement with Gandhi over the use of violence, which the Ali brothers thought justified on account of their Muslim religious views.

Gandhi's appeal to non-violence, which he took up in his personal life, enabled him to cultivate a network of friends who could support his political vision and who were inspired by his example.

Liu Xiaobo

I am arguing that the politics of friendship helps break what's been called the "the vicious cycle of forever replacing one ferocity with another." The author of this phrase was Liu Xiaobo, a Chinese dissident and democracy proponent who won the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize and died in Chinese prison in 2017. He was a visiting scholar of literature in New York in 1989 when the protests at Tiananmen Square started, and he rushed back home participate and to lead the students. He was imprisoned for the first time afterwards, and severely regretted signing an enforced "confession" for his so-called "crimes." Thereafter he regarded his dissident work as penance and atonement for his sin and for the martyrs of June 1989.

Inspired by Gandhi and others, Liu called his strategy of non-violent dissident, "no enemies, no hatred." The English volume of his translated essays has this as its title, and it is also the title of his defence speech at his last trial in December 2009. Gandhi claimed that **satyagraha** was an appropriate strategy to use against the British because "no European nation is more amenable to the pressure of moral force than the British." By this standard, Liu's adversary—the Chinese Communist Party—is more formidable, and more brutal. Yet, Liu understood that nonviolence resistance struck at the heart of what the CCP's totalitarian rule was about. Brute violence could only be defeated by non-violence; hatred must be countered by love, which he extended even to his prison guards. He once wrote: "hatred only eats away at a person's intelligence and conscience, and an enemy mentality can poison the spirit of an entire people."

Remarkably, Liu was able to read a lot of Western writers while imprisoned in the 1990s, including religious figures and philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and St. Augustine. His wife, Xia, would visit him once per month and deliver a box of books. They both particularly loved Augustine's **Confessions**. In turn, he wrote a series of poems on various political and ethical themes and on the figures he was reading, including Kant, Augustine, and Jesus Christ. He dedicated the poems to Xia but it is probably more accurate to claim that he dedicated them "with" her because she was his full partner to his dissident work. Their marriage and partnership was a microcosm of the liberal democratic society of free and dignified persons that they aspired China to become. His last public words delivered at his 2009 trial are a moving tribute to Xia and that vision.

Having come to view his own dissident work as one of repentance and atonement, Liu came to appreciate the religious figures of the West even though he would never adopt any religious affiliation. What attracted him was their commitment to non-violence and its connection with the dignity of the person in a political community of free persons. Listing Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Jesus, he wrote:

Most important of all, Jesus exemplified opposition without hatred or the desire for retaliation; his heart was filled with boundless love and forgiveness. Completely eschewing violence, he epitomized passive resistance, serenely defiant even as he meekly carried his own cross. No matter how profane or pragmatic our world is, we will have passion, miracles, and beauty as long as we have the example of Jesus Christ.

Figures such as Christ, Augustine, and Gandhi gave Liu the means of connecting non-violence with both his dissident activity, the dignity of the person, and the type of good society to which he aspired. It was his own personal insight to regard dissident activity as a form of penance and atonement. As with Gandhi, Liu understood that political reform does not happen without reform of one's own self and in response to the other in friendship, which is an insight that, at least for those of us in the West, goes back all the way to Plato's **Republic**.

Liu was put on trial on Christmas Day in 2009, a date of no small coincidence. He was charged with conducting subversive activities against the state. Here

again one sees the political dynamic that Achebe sketches of the occupants of a house who control access by outsiders into the house by demanding that “the whole people speak with one voice and that any more dissent and argument outside the door of the shelter would subvert and bring down the whole house.”

Liu’s offence was to publish Charter ’08, which was a petition signed by numerous Chinese journalists and intellectuals demanding democratic reforms including multi-party elections. Charter ’08 was inspired by a similar document, Charter ’77, that Czech dissidents, led by Vaclav Havel, issued in protest against the Czech communist government in 1977. The irony of Charter ’08 was that, despite calling for an end to the CCP’s monopoly of rule, their demands contained nothing that had not already been demanded before and that the CCP seemed to tolerate within its own narrow bounds of acceptable discourse.

What seemed to panic the CCP this time was that here they had what seemed to be a political movement that was independent of the CCP’s power. It was what we in the West would view simply as a civil association of citizens, acting freely and independently of the government. We in the West forget how precious the freedom to organize an association without government permission really is. This is simply taboo in a regime where there can be nothing outside the regime. Liu was the key organizer of Charter ’08 who drew upon his large network of friends to create and publicize the document. More than its contents, many of the signatories signed the document because it was Liu Xiaobo who organized it. Here we have another example of the micropolitics of friendship as an agent of political change, and, moreover, serving as the standard for the type of political community that a dissident movement seeks.

I could spend more time on other practitioners of political friendship, including figures such as Nelson Mandela, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Ronald Reagan, or even former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. But in terms of the proposition that we have been invited today to consider, that of turning enemies into friends, I shall leave things with our two examples of Gandhi and Liu Xiaobo.

Each understood that they as persons had to embody and practice the very political principles that they aspired to, and that their dissident work was form of considerable self- sacrifice and spiritual discipline. Both also understood the harsh truth that their personal examples had to befriend those who would or could only return their gesture of friendship with hatred. This explains why Liu was so attracted to the example of Jesus Christ without himself being Christian, and why Gandhi, while also attracted to the example of Christ, drew deeply from the wisdom of the **Bhagavat Gita** as well as that of Socrates.

These practitioners did not do it alone. They had friends. They read widely and they contemplated deeply. The sources of wisdom from which they drew agree that the happiness of persons requires living in a good political community living in friendship with one another, which also means that persons must dedicate themselves to becoming good, and that can only happen when persons rule themselves. Through contemplation and through political experience, Gandhi and Liu learned that friendship is the form of politics.

Conclusion

Achebe's novel ends with its hero, Odili, in the hospital after getting beaten by Chief Nanga's thugs. Nanga wins re-election but must flee when the army stages a coup. Odili is pleased by this outcome but knows that sometime soon there will be a countercoup in the vicious cycle of forever replacing one ferocity with another. In the meantime, he takes the money he was supposed to use in the now-canceled election for his political campaign to defeat Nanga to pay for the dowry of his future wife. His previous idealistic opposition to corruption has given way to an acceptance to how things are done in the house.

Achebe does not present a hopeful future for Nigeria. However, the examples of the Gandhi and of Liu Xiaobo, who were sustained by their engagement with a wide array of philosophical and religious thinking about political ethics, do offer more hope.

PRESENTATION 2

“INTERNATIONAL BODIES & DISPUTE RESOLUTION”

Adesoji Anthony Adesina BSc International
Relations, MSc International Law

Abstract

The upkeep of world peace and security is a universal concern that is vital to the accomplishment of all Sustainable Development Goals. Organizations such as the United Nations peace building initiatives are meant to help post-war nations, lessen the chance that they may relapse into violence, and provide the groundwork for long-term stability and growth with the African Union supervising the formulation and implementation of policies to make sure that Africa accomplishes Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063, which calls for “A peaceful and safe Africa.” The primary goal of Agenda 2063 is to put an end to gun violence by 2020 and its supporting efforts are the key activities being implemented to ensure that Africa is a more peaceful and stable continent. NATO and the European Union also have had significant economic, humanitarian, and political influence in advancing the international response to various crises by providing funds, logistics, and training support to these affected countries. Few examples of crises include the border conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon along the Bakassi Peninsula, the crisis in Sudan’s Darfur region, the Cuba missile crisis, and Arctic Island of Hans by Canada and Denmark. These crises have been solved by various means such as mediation, negotiations for a peaceful agreement, and diplomacy in general with some having to be solved by the rule of the law in the International Criminal Justice (ICJ). It has been depicted that diplomacy continues to be a unique outlet for resolving international crises and difficulties. War is not and will never be an answer to issues or resolving disagreements.

International bodies and Dispute Resolution

The upkeep of world peace and security is a universal concern that is vital to the accomplishment of all Sustainable Development Goals. Volatile and conflict-prone areas are home to more than 600 million young people today. Young people are disproportionately impacted by the various and frequently connected types of violence, such as terrorism, organized crime, and political violence, which have severe personal, societal, and financial repercussions.

Conflicting interests and capacities, contact and salience, a significant shift in the power dynamics of individual perceptions and expectations, a disorganized structure of expectations, and a desire for confrontation are some of the significant causes of war, international conflicts, and violence. Socio-cultural diversity, cognitive imbalance, status disparity, and coercive state power all exacerbate these issues (Wallenstein, 2018). These are the main reasons for conflicts and wars, whether they involve violence, peaceful conflict, or both. Several unions have been established to handle conflicts. United Nations, African Union, European Union, etc. are a few examples.

Organizations such as the United Nations peace-building initiatives are meant to help postwar nations, lessen the chance that they may relapse into violence, and provide the groundwork for long-term stability and growth. Another organization is the African Union. By using methods that support a discussion approach to preventing and resolving conflicts and by fostering in Africa's children and youth society tolerance and understanding through peace education, the African Union supervises the formulation and implementation of policies to make sure that Africa accomplishes Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063, which calls for "A peaceful and safe Africa." The primary goal of Agenda 2063 is to put an end to gun violence by 2020 and its supporting efforts are the key activities being implemented to ensure that Africa is a more peaceful and stable continent.

Looking back in time, there have been many international crises that have been resolved by diplomacy as opposed to violence and war. Examples include the border conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon along the Bakassi Peninsula, the crisis in Sudan's Darfur region, the USCuba missile crisis, and the recent annexation of the uninhabited resource-rich Arctic Island of Hans by Canada and Denmark.

Nigeria and Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula Crisis

The causes of conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon is the oil rich Bakassi Peninsula, colonially enforced borders, despite its flaws, is one of imperialism's greatest lasting legacies, the foundation for government territorial integrity and the setting up of interstate relations on the continent. (ABUBAKAR, 2022). Because these boundaries were set by Europeans and are occasionally ambiguous and disputed, despite their ruggedness, they have frequently continued to act as either the root of or a trigger for conflict between adjacent states. One of such problematic border that has caused a long-running conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon is the one where there was a disagreement about who had control over the Bakassi peninsula.

To find a solution, Cameroon turned to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1994.

The ICJ ordered Nigeria to leave Bakassi in 2002 and gave Cameroon its former sovereignty back. Nigeria resisted following the judgment. The decision was contested by individuals claiming to be pushing for the freedom of Southern Cameroons when people of Nigerian heritage in Bakassi complained, and Kofi Annan, the UN secretary-general, intervened as a mediator. Soon after the ICJ's decision and Nigeria's refusal to abide by it, mediation commenced. To negotiate a peaceful agreement to carry out the judgment, Annan summoned the leaders of the two nations to a conference in Geneva in November 2002. This initiative culminated in the Greentree Agreement in 2006, where the terms for the transfer of Bakassi were agreed upon by the two disputants, following several meetings and summits.

On appearance, the ICJ ruling and Annan's mediation brought an end to the Bakassi crisis because they established authority over the territorial dispute and finally put an end to the war between the two countries. However, there is still a high risk of conflict because the Nigerian-born residents of the peninsula, who had been vocal in their demand to be included in the legal determination of the region's ownership, were not included in the process that led to the formal resolution. These people have lived in the contested area for a long time and make up a sizable component of the local populace. Their desire for involvement and their demand for the right to vote on whether the region should belong to Nigeria or Cameroon were not taken into account

in the conflict resolution. Instead, the Greentree Agreement gave them the choice between being relocated and resettled in Nigeria or being integrated into Cameroon, protecting their rights. The conflict has the potential to resurface and worsen as a result of confrontations and new waves of refugees leaving Cameroon for Nigeria following the accord due to the two states' failure to secure the integration of the Bakassi-affected population. (ABUBAKAR, 2022).

In addition, the activists for Southern Cameroons felt aggrieved since they were excluded from the UN General Assembly and the International Court of Justice mediation processes. Because of this unrest, Bakassi was more than just a Cameroonian-Nigerian conflict; it also involved the unresolved issue of Southern Cameroons' right to self-determination. Since Bakassi is situated in what was then Southern Cameroons, the activists claimed that any decision about the region's sovereignty should have taken their opinions into account. They believed that the Bakassi decision was invalid because it granted the Republic of Cameroon jurisdiction over the area, which it shouldn't have possessed to begin with. The Bakassi peninsula shouldn't have been a bone of contention between Nigeria and Cameroon, according to these activists, who are part of a secessionist movement, because the region is a part of Southern Cameroons. Because the Bakassi Peninsula is not a part of the Republic of Cameroon, the territory sent an interpleader to the ICJ arguing that it has jurisdiction over it.

The crisis in Sudan's Darfur region

The Sudanese rebel organizations the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) began battling the Sudanese government in February 2003, alleging that it was executing non-Arab citizens of Darfur. The conflict is also known as the Land Cruiser War. In response to assaults, the government launched an ethnic cleansing effort against non-Arabs in Darfur. As a result, tens of thousands of civilians perished, and the IJC accused Sudan's president Omar al-Bashir of massacres, extrajudicial killings, and human rights breaches. (Totten, 2017).

Except for the Janjaweed, a Sudanese paramilitary organization whose members are mostly drawn from Arabized indigenous Africans, the majority

of other Arab tribes in Darfur kept out of the conflict. A small number of Bedouins from the northern Rizeigat also joined the Janjaweed. The opposition is made up of rebel organizations, including the SLM/A and the JEM, who predominantly draw their members from the Muslim non-Arab ethnic groups of Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit. Additionally, a combined peacekeeping mission known as UNAMID between the African Union and the United Nations is present in the area. Despite the Sudanese government's official denials that it helped the Janjaweed, evidence points to the provision of weapons, money, and coordination of coordinated operations, many of which targeted civilians. Numerous hundred thousand people may have died as a result of disease, malnutrition, or fighting, according to estimates of the number of human casualties. Millions were forced into refugee camps or over the border by forced migration and mass displacement, resulting in a humanitarian crisis. Colin Powell, a former secretary of state for the United States, called the events a genocide or series of genocides.

When it comes to getting involved in the Darfur conflict, the African Union has taken the lead. The AU has made very little effort to find a solution, even though they lack the money to undertake a truly successful operation in Darfur. The African Union launched the African Mission in Sudan in Darfur, a small monitoring operation, in 2004. It consists of roughly 60 monitors and 300 troops to keep them safe. The number of soldiers reached roughly 7000 by mid-2005. It did not require the real defense of defenseless individuals. (Totten, 2017).

To ensure that a legal, well-coordinated, and resourced international response to the crisis was carried out, United Nations action was required. Since the beginning of the Darfur crisis, the UN Security Council has enacted 26 resolutions and has repeatedly warned the Sudanese government. Even though these UN Security Council resolutions were all adopted, implementing them in Darfur was incredibly challenging. Due to the Sudanese government's refusal and the lack of a UN force or even a unified army to implement and guarantee the changes, the objective of ending the conflict appeared to be lost. As a result, despite the UN Security Council's great recommendations for ending the Darfur war, the genocide was mostly unabated. On the other hand, the UN opted to send a hybrid peacekeeping mission to Sudan.

The two major international actors in the Darfur crisis settlement were the European Union and NATO. The European Union has a slightly different and more circumspect approach to the Darfur crisis than the US. To put a stop to the fighting, the African Union Mission to Sudan has received financial support from the European Union. African Mission in Sudan has received logistical and training support from NATO. NATO and the European Union have had significant economic, humanitarian, and political influence in advancing the international response to the Darfur crisis.

The US-Cuba crisis

This was a 35-day shootout between the Soviet Union and the US that did result in such an extreme situation when American missile deployments in Turkey and Italy were matched by Soviet deployments of identical ballistic missiles in Cuba. This Crisis was a critical period for US national security and nuclear war planning despite its brief length. The clash, when the Cold War was closest to being nuclear, is often viewed as the turning moment in the conflict. (Kumah-Abiwu, et al., 2020)

After the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, which failed, Cuba asked for the deployment of nuclear weapons on the island to ward against further incursions as well as the installation of American Jupiter ballistic missiles in Italy and Turkey. Nikita Khrushchev, the first secretary of the USSR, granted this request. Khrushchev and Fidel Castro secretly met in July 1962 and came to an understanding; later that summer, work on several missile launch facilities began. The White House vehemently refuted claims that it had for months ignored dangerous Soviet missiles 90 miles (140 km) from Florida during the 1962 presidential election.

President John F. Kennedy was alerted to this and convened a meeting of the National Security Council Executive Committee, which consisted of the nine council members and five additional essential advisers (EXCOMM). Before entering Cuba's interior, President Kennedy was first counseled to conduct an airstrike against Soviet missile storage sites on Cuban soil. Before deciding against issuing a formal war declaration President Kennedy thought about it for a very long time. On October 22, Kennedy issued a naval "quarantine" to stop more missiles from hitting Cuba after meeting with EXCOMM. By using

the phrase “quarantine” rather than “blockade,” which is a formal definition of an act of war, United States avoided the effects of a state of war. The US declared that it would not permit the transfer of such weapons to Cuba and requested that any destructive weapons already present in Cuba be destroyed and returned to the USSR.

After several days of tense negotiations, Kennedy and Khrushchev agreed: in exchange for a US public declaration and commitment not to invade Cuba again, the Soviet Union would candidly dismantle its lethal weapons in Cuba and restore them to the Soviet Union, subject to UN verification. The US and USSR covertly agreed to dismantle all of the Jupiter MRBMs stationed in Turkey as a deterrent to the USSR. It has been debated if Italy was a part of the agreement. The negotiations between the US and USSR made it clear that the two nations needed a quick, direct line of contact. The result was the creation of the Moscow-Washington hotline. Both sides eventually began constructing their nuclear arsenals after several years of accords reducing tension between the US and the Soviet Union. (Kumah-Abiwu, et al., 2020).

Canada and Denmark Arctic Island of Hans crisis

The Whisky Wars included a border dispute between the two countries over Hans Island. Hans Island was the center of a battle between the two countries from 1978 to 2022. A boundary that would cut through the island and separate it into the Canadian territory of Nunavut and the Danish constituent county of Greenland had been agreed upon by Canada and Denmark. A. H. (GIFT, 2018).

By raising the Canadian flag over the island and leaving a bottle of Canadian whisky in 1984, Canadian soldiers “provoked” Denmark. A bottle of cognac, a Danish flag, and a note that read, “Welcome to the Danish Island” were all carried by the Danish Minister of Greenland Affairs as he made his way to the island in the same year (Velkommen, 1984). After that, the two countries took turns raising their flags on the island and exchanging alcoholic beverages. The flags were politely and neatly folded. Even though it was serious, everything was done in a kind manner. The problem was finally resolved in 2022 after the two nations reached an agreement on a procedure in 2005.

Residents of both countries often express their sense of humor about this tiny border conflict. The amount of time it took to resolve the conflict, if for no other reason, shows how lightheartedly the conflict was handled despite the seriousness of the official nature of the subject. Both countries are founding members of NATO and have cordial relations. Apart from the two countries combined land area, hardly any noteworthy changes have been made. The decision also had the unintended consequence of giving Canada and Denmark a land border, therefore both nations no longer had a single land border.

The conflict in question hasn't been violent, unlike other conflicts throughout history. Instead, it's some lighthearted fun over a plot of land that doesn't initially seem to be worth a struggle. The rocky, half-mile-square islet, which is white, cold, and forlorn, is more than just barren. The island is difficult to reach and is frequently fully surrounded by ice due to its location and the powerful currents that surround its coasts (GIFT, 2018).

Details of the agreement were announced by the Danish Foreign Ministry. The agreement has given Canada and Denmark the world's longest maritime border, extending 3,882 kilometers (2,412 miles) from the Labrador Sea in the south to the Lincoln Sea in the north. The island will be split in half by Canada and Denmark along a stony natural barrier known as an outcrop. However, due to the island's difficult topography, neither the Danes nor the Canadians are likely to settle on the divided portion, leaving the partition primarily symbolic. More significantly, it is a sign that the Arctic NATO states are resolving their differences and working together more closely. To proceed beyond a "agree to disagree" stance about the island's status, both sides agreed to form a working group.

In a nutshell, it can be claimed that diplomacy continues to be a unique outlet for resolving international crises and difficulties. War is not the answer to issues or resolving disagreements, as demonstrated by the end of the cold war and the spread of conflict in the Balkans and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The political will of the directly or indirectly concerned parties has a significant impact on how a crisis will be handled. Nevertheless, a will that is intertwined with the idea of posing a threat to governmental interests in a certain situation. Additionally, understanding a problem, its

past development, and its potential future outcomes can help diffuse a tense situation. Due to the upsetting of the international balance and the failure to establish a new global order, diplomacy is more important than ever as we approach the third millennium. This is especially true for countries that are in a state of transition and where uncertainty about future developments, fluidity, and economic instability still prevail.

There are many ways in which we can maintain peace at different levels. To begin with humankind, it is essential to maintain equality, security and justice to maintain the political order of any nation.

It is important that we adopt a mental and spiritual ideology that embodies a helpful attitude to spread harmony. We must also recognize diversity and integration for expressing emotion to enhance our friendship with everyone from different cultures.

To sum it up, peace is essential to control the evils which damage our society. It is obvious that we will keep facing crises on many levels but we can manage them better with the help of peace.

Moreover, peace is vital for humankind to survive and strive for a better future.

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PRESENTATION 3

Who is “us”? Who is “them”? Challenging the lies borders tell

**Dr. Sheila McManus, Professor, Department
of History, University of Lethbridge**

I'm a borderlands historian. When I need to explain what that is, I will sometimes say “I specialize in the history of invisible lines.” If I need an even shorter version, I will say “borders are stupid, ask me how I know!” Because borders are just invisible lines, and the stories they want us to believe look pretty stupid when you look at them too closely. A border might be represented by a fence, a wall, border guards, customs officials, maybe even a river or a mountain range. But those are the outward, visible representations of something that is, and can only ever be, invisible. A line on a map, some combination of latitude and longitude perhaps, nothing more, and yet empires and nation states need those lines to define who is welcome and who is not, who can cross the line quickly and who can't, and to symbolize and weaponize ephemeral, invisible national identities.

And therein lies the problem: none of that, none of it, is grounded in objective material reality. Borders, and the stories they tell us, are fictions that people had to invent at certain times, and have to keep repeating to justify other national policies. The lies are more deeply rooted and insidious when a contemporary national border just happens to be the descendent of a settler colonial, imperial border, such as the borders in North America and Africa, for example. These borders came into being with other, nastier jobs to do, from justifying imperial expansion and exploitive economies, genocides and the Doctrine of Discovery, to racist migration policies. The nation states that descended from and continue to benefit from those policies are based on that history, and their borders have to keep telling the lie that it was worth it. A belief that there is an “us” and “them” has to be created, often out of the flimsiest threads.

Perhaps the most successful nineteenth-century border-making process in the North American West (as elsewhere across the globe) was the naturalization of nationalist identities that were conveniently coterminous with the new political boundaries. As historian Benjamin Johnson notes, in “an ideal world, people would not need to attach

so many of their hopes and aspirations to membership in a national community. There is nothing about being a citizen of a particular country that should entitle one to better treatment and more rights than those of another. The twentieth century, after all, is littered with the bodies of victims of nationalism.” Nevertheless, many present-day individuals do believe themselves to be members of a national category, and have positive associations with that identity, as demonstrated by the patriotic, emotional displays during many countries’ national holidays. It is easier to get your “citizens” to support a government agenda if “citizenship” itself is constituted as something one either has or doesn’t and is tied to safety, belonging, support services. Bonus points if it also means being “better than” the citizens from the country right next door. From the perspective of modern nationalism, each person is supposed to have one and only one national identity, and it is supposed to be an unquestioned, automatic, “natural” piece of who they are. National myths can only be supported if whatever one nation here says about itself appears to be totally different from what that other nation across the line is like. For example, “Canadians are nice and ‘our’ patriotism is therefore warm and fuzzy and welcoming. Americans are racist so ‘their’ patriotism is propaganda and awful.” Well, no.

The idea that certain people belong to certain nations is one of the most powerful fictions of the modern world, and the history of the North American West provides abundant evidence for how those fictions get constructed in the first place. The United States, Mexico, and Canada came into official existence at very different times (1776, 1821, and 1867, respectively) and in different ways, but all three quickly got to work on creating narratives about their new political boundaries that would feed other nationalist narratives about the supposed logic of their existence. Creating the categories “us” and “them,” whether the distinction is perceived to be one of national identity, or race, or gender, is not easy or immediate no matter the historical context. However, borders have to function as if the binaries they are supposed to create are real. The current borders across the North American West were invented by treaties in 1818 and 1848 and surveyed in the 1850s and 1870s; the first border guards and custom posts arrived in the 1870s and 1890s, and passports came even later. Those borders can now “be patrolled as if” they are fixed lines “between firmly established nation-states, but this is only possible because of a long history in which government officials, corporate interests, and local citizens made that border seem natural.”¹

1 Benton Cohen

After the borderlines were surveyed in the 1850s and 1870s all three nation states could now point at their maps and say, “this is ours and that is yours.” Each set of surveyors took pains to reassure their superiors that the line was indeed perfectly placed to support nationalist fantasies about everything from prettier landscapes, to racial purity and moral superiority. For example, Mexico’s chief surveyor, José Salazar Ylarregui, noted that “the unsurpassed beauty of the Mexican landscape ... filled him with national pride.” William Emory, chief surveyor for the American team surveying the border with Mexico, “concluded in his official report, ‘it is fortunate that two nations, which differ so much in laws, religion, customs, and physical wants, should be separated by lines.’” Captain W. J. Twining, the chief astronomer for the 49th parallel’s American survey team, happily asserted that “the northern border of the United States was perfectly located because the land and people north of that line had little value, and the land and people south of the line were blessed with every advantage.” The head of the Canadian team, Captain Donald R. Cameron, insisted that the Canadian West was superior because the Canadian government treated Western Indigenous peoples better than the Americans did, and had made better policy decisions, thus avoiding the so-called Indian Wars that the Americans had brought upon themselves.

Officials in all three national governments genuinely believed that imposing their own invisible lines across vast spaces and Indigenous territories would make their sovereignty visible, and help create the nationalized spaces and identities that would serve as markers of mature nationhood. Yet because of their sheer length, the lack of “natural” geographical features to divide the landscapes, and the complex Indigenous worlds they were being inscribed upon, the borders of the North American West were not remotely capable of doing all the work officials wanted them to do. No border is. Other strategies were soon needed, and the quick-and-dirty tools used to create and enforce nationalist beliefs and identities, around the world, pretty much always include some combination of race, ethnicity, gender, and religion.

In the North American West in the mid-nineteenth century, Anglo-American and Mexican narratives had to find ways of distinguishing between communities that were deeply intertwined and shared the same borderlands territory; such distinctions enabled them to make claims about which government was more entitled to claim that territory. In the 1850s, the borderline between the US and Mexico became a convenient shorthand, retroactively justifying the United States’ seizing the northern third of Mexico and claiming it as “American” territory with a range of imagined racial divisions. U.S. politicians and journalists portrayed Euro- Americans as “pure whites,”

and Mexicans were “mongrels”; Euro-Americans were “industrious,” and Mexicans were “lazy”; Euro-Americans were rational Protestants, and Mexicans were superstitious Catholics. English-language newspapers told their readers that Mexico’s “mixed racial heritage” was a “disquieting hybrid” that was “much closer to savagery than civilization.”

Newspapers also “frequently printed articles that used gender and sexuality to declare Mexicans unfit for full U. S. citizenship,” and “Mexican women became a particular target in assessing” New Mexico’s “moral fitness.” An essential element in the performance of Anglo-American masculinity was denigrating women in general and Mexican women in particular. Mid-nineteenth-century records from Texas show marriages between Anglo men and Tejana women, but never the other way around, because “Anglo-American conceptions of womanhood and cultural purity made marriage between Tejano men and Anglo women difficult. While Anglo-Texans and Tejanos shared the social and political stage, they still drew ethnic distinctions between each other. For Anglo-Texan men, consciously or not, marrying Tejanas stood as an additional step in the ‘conquest’ of Texas.” Unlike earlier Indigenous-settler marriages that kept the racial divide porous, the marriages between Anglo-American men and Spanish-speaking women wound up helping to create the new racialized international border. Nor were these gendered and racialized stereotypes used exclusively by Anglo-American men to bring the borderlands’ power structures they wanted into existence. Elite White women in New Mexico also needed to shore up their Whiteness, which was at risk from living so close to the border and its Others, so they created a role for themselves as the key actors in fighting gender “‘disorder’ along the border.” For example, hiring Mexican women to clean their houses was a statement of Whiteness, Americanness, and superior gender norms: it “was not just about reducing white women’s own domestic work;” it was seen as a “form of charity because it trained those same Mexican women to be good wives and mothers in American fashion.”

In the early 20th century, against the violent backdrop of the Mexican Revolution, the U.S. found a new way to codify this new racialized perception of Mexican Americans by removing them from the “White” category on the national census. In the nineteenth century the U.S. had a “dizzying array of mathematical equations” for calculating countable racial identities, but by 1930 “all suggestions of race mixing were officially erased.” In 1930 the US Census created the new category of “Mexican” after decades of counting them as “White.”

Mid-nineteenth century Spanish-language newspapers returned the favor by portraying Texans as “criminal,” “corrupted,” “depraved,” and “perfidious.” White Anglo women were immoral because of how little time they spent inside patriarchal households. The vigorous debates in Northern Mexico about the proper roles of women and men had more to do with contrasting “aggressive American women with an idealized Mexican woman. American women were not content to modestly submit to men’s authority. As a result they became clownish and undesirable. Mexicans could therefore claim a greater morality than Euro-Americans because they more carefully ensured that women ‘behaved.’”

Late nineteenth century efforts to forge a more robust Mexican national identity seemed to pay off when a new “Mexico for the Mexicans” nationalism began to spread across Northern Mexico on the eve of the 1910–1920 Mexican Revolution. This new nationalism took various forms, including for the first time an explicitly racialized national identity that excluded Chinese and Black Mexicans, who were now seen as foreign and unwelcome.

In contrast to the many rich analyses of the construction of identities and nationalities in the US-Mexico borderlands, historians know much less about how Canada and the United States used the 49th parallel’s borderlands to help create and shape their national identities. Both are settler colonial nations dominated by English-speaking White Protestants, so the border lacks the perceived differences of language, skin color, and religion that have shaped the historical and contemporary perceptions of the US-Mexico borderlands. Nevertheless, the 49th parallel’s borderlands did create an odd blend of opportunities and obstacles for the new Canadian government when it came time to invent, and try to impose, a “Canadian” identity out West beginning in the 1870s. Canadian officials needed to create a “Canadian” identity that could unite their massive, newly claimed territory, and being not-American was the first readily identifiable national trait that Canadian officials talked about in the western borderlands. The “Americans-as-ruffians view” that was (and remains) so “dear to Canadian nationalists” appeared in everything from blaming the West’s alcohol problems on American traders, to Canadian officials taking every chance they could get to describe their policy decisions as superior to US policy decisions. For example, when Canada signed Treaty 7 with the Indigenous nations of southern Alberta in 1877, Minister of the Interior David Mills held it up “as an example of the superiority of Canadian Indian policy over that of the United States, noting that Canada had been able to conclude a treaty ‘with these warlike and intractable tribes, at a time when the Indian tribes immediately across the border were engaged in

open hostilities with the United States troops.” An agent on the Blackfeet reservation a few years later countered that view, insisting that his charges would be better off if he could keep them from ever setting foot on “British soil,” where he said they encountered only drunkenness, disease, and violence.

Present-day beliefs that “Canadians,” “Americans,” and “Mexicans,” are fundamentally different kinds of people have deep roots in the 19th century, but continue to shape policies and national pride today. What can this history tell us about other borders, other places where the line between “us” and “them” is supposed to be obvious and can be used to justify shocking levels of hatred and violence? Asian, African, or European borderlands should not feel familiar to me. As a historian of the North American West, my knowledge of other areas and their unique histories is so limited that I should not feel at home in monographs about their borderlands. And yet, whether it is the way a local community demanded that the cultural border that made the most sense to it be recognized in Mombasa; cross-border smuggling in the Belarusian-Lithuanian borderlands; the role gender played in the construction and negotiation of identity in a town on the border between East and West Germany; or the ways local communities in the Eurasian borderlands resisted the demands of some of the most powerful and lasting empires on earth, these places feel oddly familiar to me. I know where the arguments are going and am not surprised by the inevitable messy and uneven outcomes. For all the attention historians rightfully pay to the uniqueness of time and place and context, borderlands seem to have eerily similar functions no matter where or when they exist in the world. Recognizing these similarities does not obscure the shocking and profound differences between different borderlands, whether it be the Ohio River as the borderlands between slavery and freedom in the mid-nineteenth century, or the deadly capriciousness of the “Green Line” between Israel and the West Bank. But the fact that these global borderlands have anything in common at all raises a big problem for one of the central claims of the legitimacy of contemporary nation-states: that each is somehow unique; that the “nation” each “state” exists to protect and promote is completely unlike the “nation” that the “state” right next door exists to protect and promote; and that there really is a singular “us” with nothing in common with “them,” so we can each treat each other as we like. It isn’t an easy sell, asking people to look at the history of how we got here when we are trying to solve present-day problems, and borders aren’t going away any time soon. We use borders to signify difference, and maybe most of the time that seems ok. But we don’t have to believe the lies they tell us or forgive them their histories. And we don’t have to go along with how they define “us” and “them.”

PRESENTATION 4

“NIGERIA: THE UNMET NEEDS AND THE CHALLENGES OF (SOCIAL) EXPECTATIONS AND REGIONAL INFLUENCE”

By Pastor Adejare Popoola, MA, MSc – Behavioural Psychologist, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada





an individual fear can significantly impact the entire society, increasing or reducing aggressive behaviors and tendencies



Most people who live in fear believe it is the best way to meet their members' needs, and they reinforce using it repeatedly.



factors behind the unmet needs includes fear and lack of trust in self, community and larger society.



where did it all begin?

individual belief systems or culture?





The answer is no! because it is more profound than political reason, but politics helps us to bring it out when functional to meet our needs.



the influence of circumstances leading to the use of temperament as a response to fear says it is genetically based but also environmentally influenced



facts about fear

Fear comes from innate and primitive nature and response to uncertainty in meeting one's needs.



Fear itself is not bad, but when it is not helping us to build a moderate level of stress to meet our needs, it becomes a problem.

basic natural needs



Prayer Points

success identity:

→ When a person decides to meet their needs responsibly --the person has adopted

success identity:

when a person chooses to fulfill their needs irresponsibly the person has adopted.



Prayer Points

→ Abraham Maslow “there are five needs of which meeting them are in a particular order and that if lower needs are met, the greater one comes next to the attention of the person making an effort to meet his needs, but the issue is that he may or may not be satisfied in the end.

→ Nigerians residing in Canada have needs that drove us here: it could be peace of mind, security or opportunities.

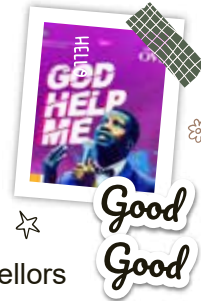
→ We like to see a better Nigeria, but we approach seeing a better Nigeria with ineffective tools driven by fear, anger, social media, talking and reactions.





Two approaches

- President= 1
- Governors=36 +all the parliamentarians and political appoint
- Federal Parliamentarians =106+360
- public establishments officers=100,000
- local governments=774+ their counsellors
- public-the electorate=200 millions



Hagar and Ishmael

Injuries from Sarah to Hagar and Ismail transferred relational aggression into religion; religion itself was not the act of violence, but it is a victim of its antecedents.





Points



our country and her systems are victims of the early lifestyles of its people from when they were very young.



Points



that fear gives rise to at the community level is the Scarcity trap, Mallainathan and Safir (2014).

This scarcity mindset limits the general public or community from paying attention to their inherent potential, developing it, making good decisions, sticking with their local plans and resisting temptation in times of challenges.

the ability to solve problems is made of cognitive capacity, engaging in logical reasoning and retaining information.





Points



if we approach it with a top-down approach, it is unlikely that using the people who created the problems in the first place will produce anything different than where we are because of their methods.

Marshal Plan can help address, which include,

- Inclusion
- Poverty reduction



Points



the fourth solution can be Objective Mass Orientation to sensitize people to their civic roles, and not when elections are approaching, we see people returning to their tribal fears.



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———— Chapter 5 ————

2023

**ADDICTIONS AND HOMELESSNESS ARE NOT FUN
BUT HUMAN STRUGGLES**

Advocacy, Awareness & Action to Save Lives

**THE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE, SOUTHERN ALBERTA
ETHNIC ASSOCIATION & THE SOBOYEJO TURNING POINT FOUNDATION**

PRESENT

NIGERIA'S 63rd NATIONAL DAY ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER SEMINAR / WEBINAR

THEME:
**ADDICTIONS AND HOMELESSNESS ARE NOT FUN
BUT HUMAN STRUGGLES –
ADVOCACY, AWARENESS & ACTION TO SAVE LIVES**

SPEAKERS:



Dr. Yale Belanger, Ph.D
Professor of Political Science
University of Lethbridge



Hon. Dan Williams
Alberta Minister of
Mental Health and Addiction



Engr. Yetunde Holloway
Professional Engineer,
Social Justice Advocate
Nigeria & Globally



Kathy Christiansen
Executive Director
Alpha House Calgary



Archdeacon Michael Stonhouse
Former President, Men's Shelter
Lloydminster, AB



**Co-Moderator
Biola Ogungbe**
Community Builder



**Co-Moderator
James Moore**
Social Justice Advocate

CO - HOSTS:

**OSARO EDHAREYRA - PRESIDENT ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIANS IN LETHBRIDGE
DR. VICTOR WUYER - PRESIDENT SOUTHERN ALBERTA ETHNIC ASSOCIATION
MODERATOR: YINKA AWOSOGA, M.Ed - EDUCATOR & COMMUNITY BUILDER
CONVENER: FOLA SOBOYEJO, P. ENG, FNSE**

VENUE & DATE:

**SAAEA MULTI-CULTURAL CENTRE ROUND STREET ROOM
421 - 6TH AVE. S, LETHBRIDGE, AB T1J 0Y7, CANADA
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023, 11AM MST, 1PM EST, 7PM NIGERIA WAT
ADMISSION: FREE IN-PERSON OR VIA ZOOM - ID 878 7494 0443 PASSCODE 117582
RSVP TO STPCFOUNDATION@GMAIL.COM, TXT +1 867 688 0066**

CO SPONSORS:



**ASSOCIATION
OF NIGERIANS
IN LETHBRIDGE**



**SOUTHERN ALBERTA
ETHNIC ASSOCIATION**



**SOBOYEJO - TURNINGPOINT
CHARITY FOUNDATION**

PROGRAM 2023

ADDICTIONS AND HOMELESSNESS ARE NOT FUN BUT HUMAN STRUGGLES - ADVOCACY, AWARENESS AND ACTION TO SAVE LIVES

Saturday 21st October 2023 Multi-Cultural Centre, Lethbridge AB & on Zoom 11 am MST

1. COMMENCEMENT & LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT – MC, Esther Awosoga (Intro by Fola – 2 mins)
2. ABOUT SOBOYEJO TURNINGPOINT FOUNDATION –Fọla Şoboyejo, Exec Director-5 mins Intro MC
3. WELCOME – Osaro Egharevba, President, Association of Nigerians In Lethbridge (3 mins) - MC
4. WELCOME - Dr. Victor Wutor, President Ethnic Association Southern Alberta (3 mins) - MC
5. INTRODUCTION OF CO-MODERATORS (2 mins) - MC

6. SESSION 1

Co-Moderator – Biola Ogungbe, MSc International Relations (read each speaker’s profile / topic 2 mins)

6.1 1st Presentation

”MEDICALIZE? POLITICIZE? TRIVIALIZE? ALBERTA’S ‘COMPASSIONATE INTERVENTION’ AND HOW WE UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO HOMELESSNESS AND ADDICTIONS”

By Dr. Yale Belanger, Political Science Professor, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada (15 mins)

6.2 2nd Presentation

“TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: BREAKING THE CYCLE OF ADDICTION AND HOMELESSNESS”

By Engr. Yetunde Holloway, Professional Engineer, Social & Development Advocate, Globally (15 mins)

7. QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD 1 (15 mins)

8. COFFEE / WATER BREAK - 15 mins.

9. SESSION 2

Moderator – James Moore, Masters in Education (read each speaker’s profile / topic 2 mins)

9.1 3rd Presentation

“COMMENTS ON MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION”

By Hon. Dan Williams, Alberta Minister of Mental Health & Addiction (15 mins)

9.2 4th Presentation

“ADVOCACY AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING ARE SIGNIFICANT STRATEGIES IN IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHOSE LIVES ARE IMPACTED BY STREET LEVEL ADDICTION AND HOMELESSNESS”

By Kathy Christiansen, Executive Director, Alpha House Calgary Alberta (15 mins)

8.3 5th Presentation

“NO PLACE TO CALL HOME: HOMELESSNESS AND THE BIBLE”

By Archdeacon Michael Stonhouse, Past President Men’s Shelter, Lloydminster Alberta (15 mins)

10. QUESTIONS & ANSWER PERIOD (15 mins) – MC with Zoom Manager displaying the Qs

11. MODERATOR’S REMARKS - Presentation / Discussion Keynotes. (James Moore 5 mins; Biola Ogungbe 5 mins)

12. CLOSING & VOTE OF THANKS - Fọla Şoboyejo (3 mins)

SPEAKERS' BIOS & SYNOPSIS



Prof. Yale D. Belanger

BIO

Prof. Yale D. Belanger (Ph.D.) is Professor of Political Science. His doctoral work at Trent University focused on the emergence and evolution of Aboriginal political organizations in late 19th- and early 20th-century Canada.

Prof. Belanger is a Member, Royal Society of Canada, College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists (2017-2024)

2006 - Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). Indigenous Studies, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario.

2000 - Master of Arts (M.A.). Political Science, Native Studies and Anthropology. University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

1998 - Bachelor of Arts (B.A.). Honours Arts Program, Native American Studies (NAS). University of Lethbridge, Alberta.

TOPIC: Medicalize? Politicize? Trivialize? Alberta's 'Compassionate Intervention' and How We Understand and Respond to Homelessness and Addictions

SYNOPSIS

In Alberta, an enduring opioid epidemic dating to 2018, and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022) preceded an ongoing housing crisis dating to 2022. The convergence of these events occurred amidst unprecedented economic decline, setting the stage for the exponential growth of the number of homeless individuals and those perceptibly combatting addictions. Inundated with media and political reports lamenting the mounting visibility of what have been termed ‘abnormal’ communities, an influential social debate developed about who should be classified as homeless, and consequently entitled to state resources. My talk reflects on the ever-changing demographic nature of the houseless community, and how the media and politicians conflate these complex, interactive, and frequently overlapping communities in their efforts to simplify how we understand their needs and how to most effectively respond. By disregarding issue of complexity, I argue the print media and elected municipal officials in Lethbridge, habitually trivialize these vulnerable individuals’ needs, biasing our approach to devising intervention policies. In this regard, I end with an appraisal of Alberta’s proposed compassionate intervention legislation.



Engr. Yetunde Holloway

BIO

Engr. Yetunde Holloway is presently the Chair of the Women In Engineering Committee of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) which promotes **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** in the engineering

space. She facilitates various events that highlight their vital roles women in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

A graduate of the renowned University of Lagos, Nigeria, Yetunde is a Professional Civil Engineer. She is also an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK).

Engr. Holloway represents WFEO on the board of the International Coalition for Sustainable Infrastructure (ICSI). Yetunde is particularly interested in Climate Change issues and believes that “The future of planet Earth can only exist within the precepts of equitable, resilient and sustainable infrastructure, which **caters to all**, regardless of, race, education, ethnicity, gender, occupation, social status, social strata or creed”

Synopsis

Theme: Addictions & Homelessness are not Fun but Human Struggles -- Perspectives on Advocacy, Awareness & Action to Save Lives

Title: Towards Sustainable Development: Breaking the cycle of addiction and homelessness:

Abstract: Globally, the coexistence of addictions and homelessness presents a complex and distressing reality, underscoring the pressing need for proactive advocacy, increased awareness, and swift action to save lives.

This paper explores in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, the multifaceted struggles faced by individuals grappling with addictions and homelessness. It attempts to shed light on the interplay of societal, economic, and other factors contributing to this crisis



Archdeacon Michael Stonhouse

BIO

Anglican Archdeacon Michael Stonehouse is adamant about Biblical justice and practice that is underpinned and guided by the teachings of the Holy Bible. Ordained for over 45 years, he has served in a variety of settings, and prior to that, worked as a social worker. Most recently, he served as President of the board for the Lloydminster Men’s Shelter.

Synopsis

Title: “No Place to Call Home: Homelessness and the Bible”

Summary of Presentation

In order to approach the problem of homelessness and find ways of dealing with it, it is best to turn to some established and respected authority, so why not turn to the Bible? That said, it is essential that we carefully examine its guidance in light of its specific culture and setting, understand the nuances of what it says, and then, and only then to seek to apply it to our situations.



Mrs. Kathy Christiansen

BIO

Mrs. Kathy Christiansen has 30 years of experience working in the addictions and homelessness fields. As the Executive Director of Calgary Alpha House Society, it has been her great privilege to work with many like-minded colleagues, who are focused on supporting the needs of vulnerable Calgarian's through a broad spectrum of programming. Working with her staff and partner agencies she has supported the creation of outreach and housing programs for men and women whose lives have been affected by addiction, mental health and poverty. The opportunity on a daily basis to witness individuals reclaim their potential has been the true gift of the work.

In addition to her work at Alpha House, Kathy has extensive committee, Board and community relations experience including the Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary, the Community Action Committee and the Interagency and Addiction Sectors in Calgary. She is a former member of the Provincial Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Affordable Housing Strategy Advisory Group for the City of Calgary and former Chair of the Recovery Services Task Force. Kathy has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Calgary.

Alpha House Presentation Synopsis

Advocacy and relationship building are significant strategies in improving outcomes for individuals whose lives are impacted by street level addiction and homelessness.

At Alpha House, forging strong relationships with the client is a key factor in supporting individuals to begin making healthier choices and staying committed to their goals. Significant effort is also invested in building relationships with the broader community including relations with neighbors, local businesses, community associations. Supporting a greater understanding of homelessness in the community is critical in lending better outcomes for those affected and is part of our dedicated work at Alpha House.



Hon. Dan Williams

BIO

Hon. Dan Williams ECA MLA, is a Canadian politician who has been the Alberta Minister of Mental Health and Addiction since 2023. He was elected in the 2019 Alberta general election to represent the electoral district of Peace River in the 30th Alberta Legislature. He was re-elected in the 2023 Alberta general election.

As of March 2023, Dan Williams was Deputy Government Whip as well as Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills. He also was the Deputy Chair of the Special Standing Committee on Members’ Services and was a member of the Building Communities Cabinet Policy Committee. He had previously been Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Culture and for la Francophonie, Deputy Chair of the Select Special Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee as well as a member of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing.



Mrs. Esther Olayinka Awosoga, MA, M.ED, MSc.

(Moderator)

BIO

Esther Awosoga is a resident of Lethbridge Alberta after a number of years in the US where she commenced her career as a professional educator. She volunteers with local community groups in the City of Lethbridge. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the Soboyejo – TurningPoint Charity Foundation.

James Moore

Co-Moderator

BIO

At 17 James Moore left his hometown in the boreal forest and completed an undergraduate degree in psychology and philosophy. Recognizing a deficiency in the occidental(colonialist) worldview, he embarked on a larger exploration of cultures, music, and languages... travelling extensively in Europe, Central Asia, and Turtle Island. He has been a contributing writer to the Manitoba Keewaitoni Okimakinak.

James Moore has a background in Justice Studies, is a pianist and a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant. He has travelled extensively in Europe, Canada and Turtle Island and spent some months in Central Asia and the

USA. He has a life-long curiosity about human beings, their relationships with each other and with the other lifeforms on our beautiful planet.

He has written for the Manitoba Keewaitoni Okimakinak (Manitoba Northern Chiefs).

After moving to Lethbridge with his spouse Arlene and their two sons, James completed a Master of Education degree and became an Instructor in the School of Justice Studies at Lethbridge College and a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant.



Ms. Biola Ogungbe, MSc.

Co-Moderator

BIO

Biola holds the MSc. in International Relations. She is a business analyst in Alberta in the public service with background in the private sector. She is a consistent volunteer with our Foundation.

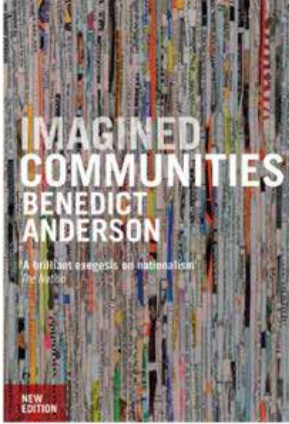
PRESENTATION 1

Medicalize? Politicize? Trivialize? Alberta's 'Compassionate Intervention' and How We Understand and Respond to Homelessness and Addictions

Dr. Yale Belanger, Professor of Political Science, University of Lethbridge

In Alberta, an enduring opioid epidemic dating to 2018 and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022) preceded an ongoing housing crisis dating to 2022. The convergence of these events occurred amidst unprecedented economic decline, setting the stage for the exponential growth of homeless individuals and those perceptibly combatting addictions. They are inundated with media and political reports lamenting the mounting visibility of what has been termed 'abnormal' communities, an influential social debate developed about who should be classified as homeless and entitled to state resources. My talk reflects on the ever-changing demographic nature of the houseless community and how the media and politicians routinely conflate these complex, interactive, and frequently overlapping communities in their efforts to simplify how we understand their needs and how to respond most effectively. By disregarding issue complexity, I argue the print media and elected municipal officials in Lethbridge habitually trivialize these vulnerable individuals' needs, thus biasing our approach to devising intervention policies. In this regard, I end with an appraisal of Alberta's proposed compassionate intervention legislation.

This year, we're celebrating the 40th anniversary of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.



Anderson argues that a nation is not defined solely by its physical borders or the people within.

Community is a socially constructed concept that exists in the collective imagination of its citizens.

People imagine themselves as part of a larger community, even though they do not know most of their fellow citizens.

In this critical work, Anderson argues that a nation is not defined solely by its physical borders or the people living within them. Instead, community is a socially constructed concept that exists in the collective imagination of its citizens—despite not personally knowing each other.

He points out that the free press influences how we self-identify and the characteristics we collectively adopt and embrace.

Newspapers play a particularly vital role. They can contribute to government transparency while uncovering issues that impact us all. Perhaps most importantly, their stories promote a sense of community at all levels by creating thresholds of inclusion and exclusion.

For today's talk, I will focus on homelessness, a word that in and of itself denotes exclusion.

Lethbridge must now start helping its hungry, needy

1987

Of course, he's right. Anyone who labels non-Caucasians or those of less than adequate means as undesirable is, frankly, undesirable themselves.

1991

"Blaming the victims doesn't help either – although it's most frequently the escape hatch we use in our collective consciousness to rationalize the plight of the people like those who rake refuge at Streets Alive."

1997

The hungry will still be fed

By TRISH BRAYNE
of The Herald
It's a stepping stone and not without hazards but the hungry are still being fed.

1986

OUR OPINION

The cracks are still big

Many communities frequently look the other way when there's something to be seen that its citizens might not want to see.

Lethbridge is no exception.

Ask Ken Kivick.

He's executive director of Streets Alive, which runs both a drop-in centre and shelter in downtown Lethbridge.

Streets Alive needs cash – and it needs it now.

Lethbridge, in many respects, is a wonderfully going community with a social infrastructure that provides a broad – and diverse – range of services. But it has some big cracks.

And people are falling through them.

The very fact that the homeless-solutions sector is

organised through the "system" – the "system" –

is one thing. Blaming the victims doesn't help either – although

it's more frequently the escape hatch we use in our collective

consciousness to rationalize the plight of the people like those

who take refuge at Streets Alive.

Blaming the cracks, it seems, is one mechanism that binds

together the public and private sectors. The voluntary and the

not-for-profit sector in a way that allows these "partners" to

quickly respond to whatever the cracks faced by Streets

Alive.

There are examples of at least ten of these sectors working

effectively together all around the city, but one-overlaps will

result when all three partners put their resources on the table.

Until then, Streets Alive will provide living, breathing,

reminders to us all that not everyone shares in the wealth and

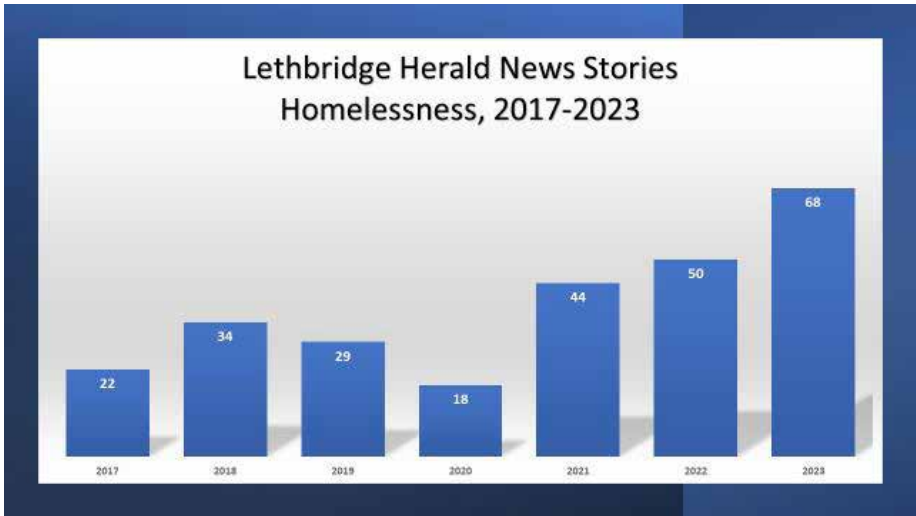
good times we see around us.

Homelessness has existed in Lethbridge dating to at least the early 1980s. No longer hidden, we have seen a population that in the 1990s measured some 40 nightly rough sleepers, ballooning to over 450 in the last point in time count, numbers I project could double in less than a decade.

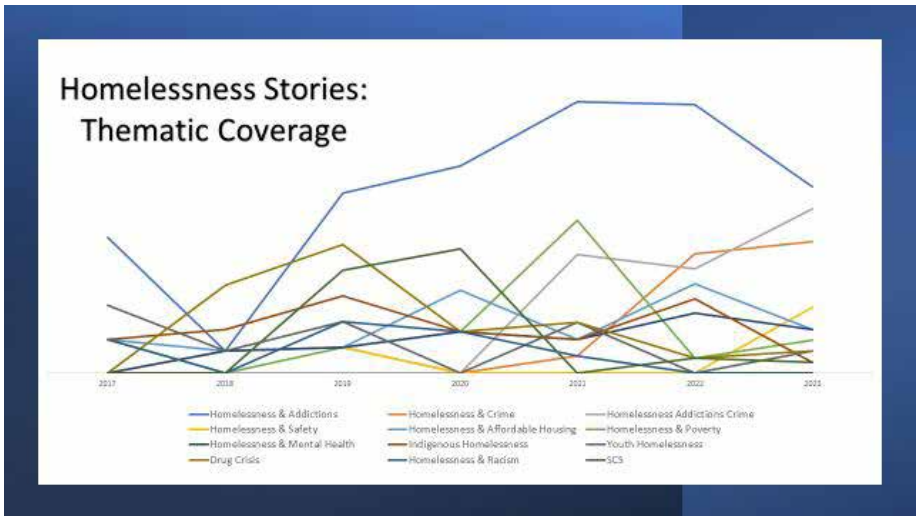
Homelessness was always a public interest issue in Lethbridge, and it appeared in print regularly in the 1980s. The *Lethbridge Herald* supported building a permanent soup kitchen, food bank and shelter. Front-line workers were regularly interviewed to publicize new innovative response strategies.

Indeed, issues such as public alcohol consumption and crime were debated. However, the focus wasn't on the adverse outcomes once an individual succumbed to homelessness. Instead, what led to homelessness and how to manage and mitigate its effects was stressed.

Things started to change in 2017 following the opioid crisis's onset, and addictions have endured as a local talking point. Here is where the *Lethbridge Herald* began to drift from its former focus on systems and solutions to emphasizing the adverse outcomes.



The *Lethbridge Herald's* interest in homelessness is apparent and reflects community concerns. In 2023 alone, it's on pace to publish the same number of stories it produced in the previous two years combined.

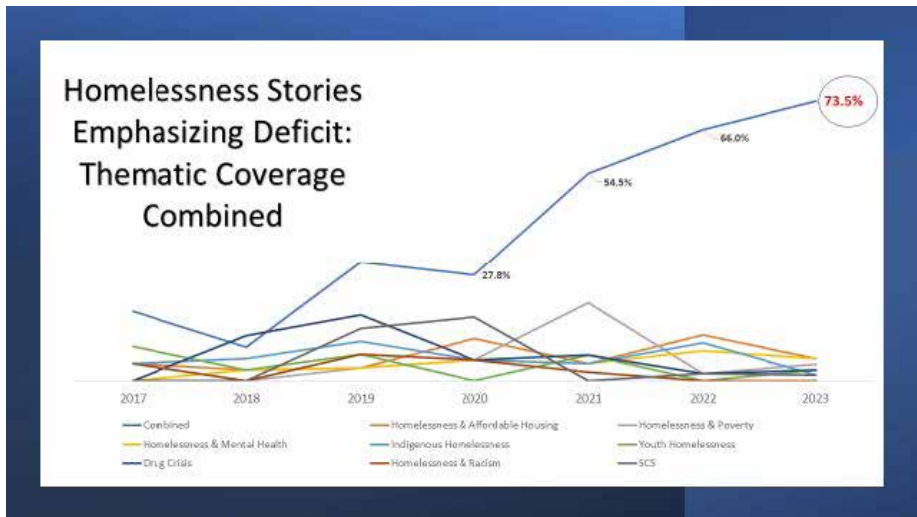


Reviewing stories over the last six years, 12 key themes are listed at the bottom. In 2019, with the onset of the opioid crisis nationally, addictions emerged as a natural storyline. Addictions remain a point of concern.

It appears that the *Lethbridge Herald* is clustering stories, suggesting balanced coverage. Taking a closer look, a worrisome trend appears: reporters are blending themes. Where issues such as addictions and homelessness may once have appeared in the same story, they were most often presented as independent issues that, at times, may have intersected.

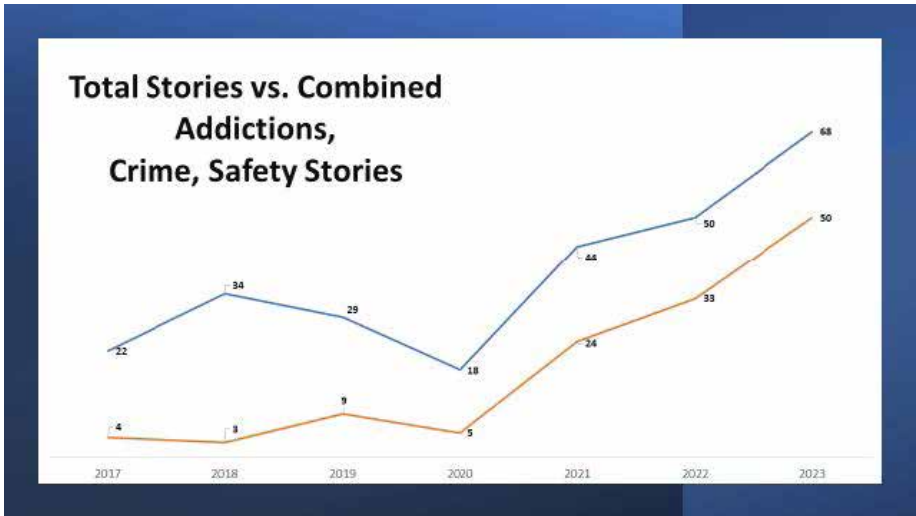
Dating to 2020, four unique categories dominate coverage: (1) homelessness and addictions, (2) homelessness and safety, (3) homelessness and crime, and a catch-all category (4) homelessness, addiction, and crime.

When I combine those four new categories, you get this chart.



Nearly 74% of all stories produced so far in 2023 emphasize deficit and homelessness’s perceived impact on society.

The concern is that in the post-2017 era characterized by a combined opioid and housing crisis, the *Lethbridge Herald* rarely treats homelessness and addictions independently. When examining addictions, homelessness is assumed and vice versa.



After reviewing 265 stories for this talk, it becomes difficult to disentangle homelessness from addictions. Instead of considering each category as unique, they are seen as causal – one event brings on or leads to the other event.

How society is impacted by ‘the homeless’ dominates thematically.



Perhaps more prominent is the *Lethbridge Herald’s* reduction of three separate communities into one deviant community. Homeless without addiction issues, individuals with addictions, and homeless individuals with addiction issues are collapsed into the category of ‘homeless addicts’.

Because the homeless community and the community of those with substance abuse issues are growing does not suggest cause-and-effect.

It shows that the drivers of homelessness and addictions are substantially overshadowed by those who seek to ‘trivialize’ and ‘politicize’ the issues.



“But we’ve also got a community that’s been traumatized by the supervised consumption site, which is why getting services in when we’re looking at rezoning is increasingly difficult because people are scared that we’re going to start seeing what happened with the supervised consumption site.”

--Lethbridge Herald
4 August 2023--

This demands we try and answer, ‘Who exactly are Lethbridge’s homeless?’ This is challenging, partly due to a lack of data, which is not a Lethbridge-specific issue but a typical North American trend.

ROAST: In the downtown, there were more than 4000 homeless people at night. It's not all of the additional homeless living around.

ROAST: In the service organizations on the government funding period who keep coding the addicts with free everything services leaving them accountable for their decisions and providing outside activities to occupy their time (volunteer clean up crews, build a garden space, get an education, learn a skill, look for employment etc). There are too many young able-bodied people on the service providers "free handouts period" and not contributing to society. Down this with no program leads to addiction and crime.

ROAST: To the City, in a recent Herald opinion poll, 45 per cent said Lethbridge is not a great place to raise a family. Only 19 per cent said it was. A lot of the problem is that people worry about the crime and drug situations. The City needs to take a "tough love" approach on addicts. Don't come here. The addict needs to go to the injection facility operated in Lethbridge and provide a living wage, not a handout.

TOAST: The article on downtown additions problem with John Middleton-Hope's comments. Here is a third option: We need a facility on a large fenced piece of land out of the city limits where the homeless can be moved. Fenced and guarded for protection. Buildings built for winter and summer protection for the homeless. Soup kitchens moved there for food for the homeless. At that facility the homeless need to be assessed for their needs for rehabilitation by professionals and then placed in different rehabilitation programs in the province.

TOAST: In "Radar," the excerpt whose article was in the Aug. 12 edition. This makes so much sense! Maybe the "powers that be" need to read some of these articles (there was another one recently in the Herald) and discuss them at council meetings. Council needs to be open to new ideas and be open to discussions with some people out there who have plausible ideas and opinions on the drug, crime and homeless situations that the city is drowning in. Perhaps these are the people that the councilors need to be inviting to their meetings.

ROAST: Now the City wants to put in more supportive housing here? For how many taxpayers' dollars? Couldn't that money be better spent on some real needs like the water treatment plant? Let the social groups find their own money to help the addicts. This is nonsense!

What we know is provocative. In 2013, a New York study estimated that 28% of the city’s families experiencing homelessness included one working adult, and 16% of homeless individuals had jobs.

In 2013, it was estimated that 28% of New York City families experiencing houselessness included one working adult

- 16% of homeless individuals had jobs.

A 2021 report noted that roughly 40% of unhoused individuals not living in shelters across the US had earnings from formal employment.

The most recent study shows that 40% of the US's unhoused individuals work:

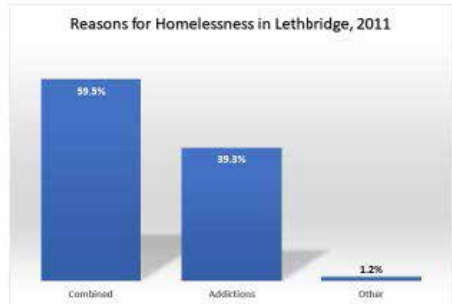
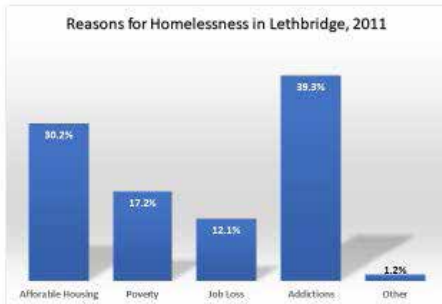
Out of 454 from our most recent PIT count, more than 180 of those Lethbridge's count as homeless are earning a wage.

Nationally, a 2021 report noted that roughly 40% of unhoused individuals not living in shelters across the US had earnings from formal employment.

How do these trends translate to Lethbridge?

In 2009 and 2010, I conducted two local censuses for the city. With the help of five research assistants, I interviewed 117 individuals who self-reported as homeless and residing at the shelter and Harbour House. Our findings reflected the studies' findings.

That said, I submit that out of 452 individuals identified in our most recent PIT count, more than 180 of Lethbridge's homeless are earning a wage. These are genuinely the working poor.



Why are they homeless? It's due to affordable housing, poverty, job loss and addictions. It's vital to consider that these groups overlap. To what degree, I'm unsure. Again, although addictions are presented as the culprit, as a stand-alone category, it comes in third.

"If Addiction turns you into an 'animal', and that is to be an accepted norm by those that suggest, its not their fault, then you have a choice, which Lethbridge seems reluctant to consider. That choice is simple, where do you want the Zoo? Do you want it in your downtown, or do you want to have it elsewhere?"

Turbine-wine, *Lethbridge Herald*
11 April 2023

Turbine-wine · 11 months ago

Good Letter Doug. I personally am at the point where the rights of some have now impinged irreparably on the rights of others.

When Lethbridge had the letter Addition the Lethbridge has, they should have a key as to where the money is spent and what is allowed and what is not. I am not talking about the National or Province Taxpayer, I am talking about Lethbridge Citizens who pay taxes and then when 3.1 million go out the door to solve a problem where a group feels it's their right to dictate where they live, create an animal they like, someone where they like and maintainable or reduce the odds where they fall.

It does not set it to say, well here's the problem is someone that tells what they do. Really, that's what they do? That's what they do, because we let them. This has nothing to do with having a home. That's a choice that is being made. It's not a choice on their taxpayer money.

Addiction turns you into an 'animal', and that is to be an accepted norm by those that suggest, its not their fault, then you have a choice, which Lethbridge seems reluctant to consider. That choice is simple, where do you want the Zoo? Do you want it in your downtown, or do you want to have it elsewhere?

I also had a conversation with the Police Chief where it was stated "Lethbridge is a place that would travel to Kelowna. It's not a place that would travel to Kelowna." I had to like my language. Why? Because 2 years ago Kelowna was not as bad as Lethbridge is now. Every city goes through the same steps. They progress deeper and deeper into the darkness of drugs and the speed onto which they proceed is solely based on "acceptance or avoidance". So if Lethbridge residents ignore, more off camera, then the tent cities will get larger quicker. The numbers will rise exponentially and be ultimately proportional to the loss of your back. So the more complaint we see the faster we become Kelowna.

I am not one to be happy with the concept the Zoo should be in your backyard anymore than I would be happy if it was in mine. I am one that believes it should be in NO ONES BACKYARD! "Do no harm" is not evidence to those that optaine illegal drugs. Do no harm equates equally to everyone. This should never be a NIMBY situation because if we're honest Lethbridge believes stalling the downtown will ensure it remains there. Then perhaps a visit to other cities to demonstrate how not to do it.

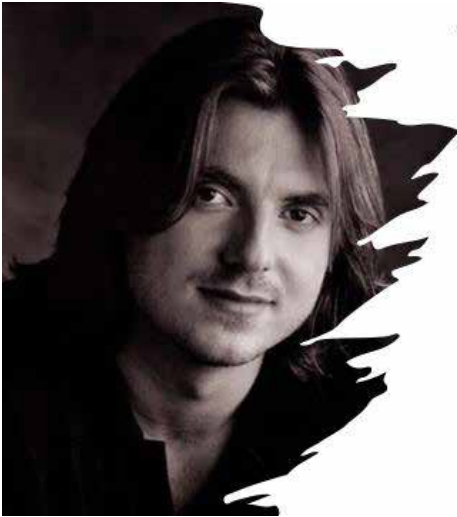
I cannot believe that the "back side of the Tracks" business believe to build it goes in the "back side of the Tracks" because it's not in their backyard? It belongs my mind. It will be in EVERY ONES BACKYARD!

Hope to see you at Thinkers - This Advers should be in tomorrow's Paper <http://www.Lethco.com>

My goal today is to highlight the complexity of the communities we're discussing. To remind you that addictions and homelessness do intersect. That there's more to the issues – plural – than we acknowledge.

Returning to Anderson's concerns about inclusion and exclusion, we should grasp why people experiencing homelessness and those with addictions describe being excluded: they don't exist. The *Lethbridge Herald* has dissolved them into one deficit community – homeless addicts – by propagating a myth of homelessness and addictions' inseparability, a myth many city councillors embrace.

This is ground zero for my discussion's second part, which details our affinity for trivializing and politicizing homelessness and addictions.



“Alcoholism is a disease, but it’s the only one you can get yelled at for having.

Goddamn it, Otto, you are an alcoholic.

Goddamn it, Otto, you have Lupus

One of those two doesn’t sound right.”

--Mitch Hedberg--

When we review how addiction and homelessness are understood and presented by our opinion leaders, homelessness is not framed as an economic issue, nor are addictions medical concerns.

The *Herald's* approach reminds me of a bit by the late Mitch Hedberg. A self-proclaimed addict, he joked:

“Alcoholism is a disease, but it’s the only one you can get yelled at for having. Goddamn it, Otto, you are an alcoholic. Goddamn it, Otto, you have Lupus One of those two doesn’t sound right.”

Yet addiction is considered a medical affliction because it involves changes in brain structure and function and physical and psychological dependence. So, how does the *Lethbridge Herald*, and who it chooses to quote, understand these issues?

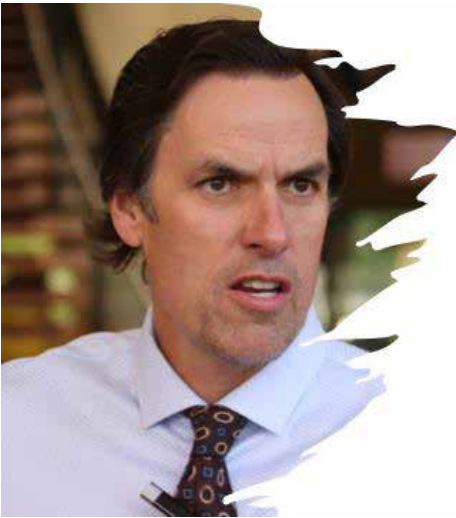
Let's start with Mayor Blain Hyggen, who, sitting as a councillor in 2019, described downtown Lethbridge as "a walking zombieland."

"You see it all over the street ... it's walking zombieland. It's terrible."

--Lethbridge Herald
16 August 2019--



Last fall, Councillor Ryan Parker publicly disputed the view that people have a right to shelter. He advised razing encampments because the occupants were "not actually homeless" but folks who had homes but left them to party.



“I know what you’ve said is kind of a really gray area and you don’t want to go there because it’s people’s rights to have shelter … I challenge that personally because I think we should remove them and if people don’t like what they’ve [LPS] done, take us to court.”

--Lethbridge Herald
9 August 2022--

“They’re not actually homeless.”

--Lethbridge Herald
10 August 2022--

Encampments “… are primarily the temporary abodes of the homeless, are garbage strewn, bio-hazardous and often unsafe environments for residents and surrounding neighbourhoods.”


--Lethbridge Herald
6 July 2022--

“One of my priorities was to displace the abnormal users who are there only to sleep in the park.”

--Lethbridge Herald
31 August 2023--



Also open in his disdain for abnormal behaviours is former Lethbridge Police Services (LPS) chief and present Councillor John Middleton-Hope, who labelled encampments as “garbage-strewn, bio-hazardous” temporary abodes of the homeless and “unsafe environments for residents and surrounding neighbourhoods.”



HERALD PHOTO BY AL BEEBER

Lethbridge Police Services chief Shahin Mehdizadeh speaks to reporters at city hall after the latest Crime Severity Index results were released. Lethbridge is no longer No. 1 in Canada, dropping two spots to No. 3.

City drops in Crime Severity Index

Al Beeber
LETHBRIDGE HERALD
www.lethbridgetoday.com

LHA thrilled with housing project approval

Lethbridge Mayor and City Councillor, Sherry Stuchlik is over the moon with the approval of the Lethbridge Housing Authority's new \$10-million, 100-unit, multi-story apartment building project in the city's downtown core. The project is expected to be completed in 2020.

Al Beeber
LETHBRIDGE HERALD
www.lethbridgetoday.com

Behaviours adjusting to city homeless encampment response

The city's response to the growing number of homeless encampments in the city is being adjusted. The city is now focusing on providing more support for those who are homeless, rather than just providing them with a place to sleep. The city is also providing more support for those who are homeless, rather than just providing them with a place to sleep.

Al Beeber
LETHBRIDGE HERALD
www.lethbridgetoday.com

City makes funding easier for affordable housing initiatives

The city is making it easier for affordable housing initiatives to get funding. The city is now providing more support for those who are homeless, rather than just providing them with a place to sleep. The city is also providing more support for those who are homeless, rather than just providing them with a place to sleep.

Regarding Galt Gardens' centrality, one of his "priorities was to displace the abnormal users who are there only to sleep in the park."



"But the New Democrat Party, social workers and local politicians will try to tell us they're fixing the problem when the reality is they aren't champions of the addicts, but rather champions of a pay cheque they are protecting by pretending to be the Florence Nightingales of Methbridge."

--Lethbridge Herald
1 June 2018--

Finally, back in 2018, when homelessness had not yet exploded, but addictions were becoming a concern, current *Lethbridge Herald* Managing Editor Al Beeber labelled Lethbridge 'Methbridge' and the NDP the 'New

Dumocrat Party,' after which he declared the third sector of primarily not-for-profit agencies perpetrating human suffering – to make payroll.

What would a summary of these opinion leaders' thoughts read as?

They are 'abnormal people' who live in garbage strewn, bio-hazardous and often 'unsafe environments' ...

Folks who 'do not have a right to shelter' if doing so compromises 'our' local sense of community ...

Irresponsible acts that 'compel us to curtail individual rights' to protect the 'collective good' ...

It's an unproblematic turn for 'most may not be homeless' but have simply abandoned their homes to party ...

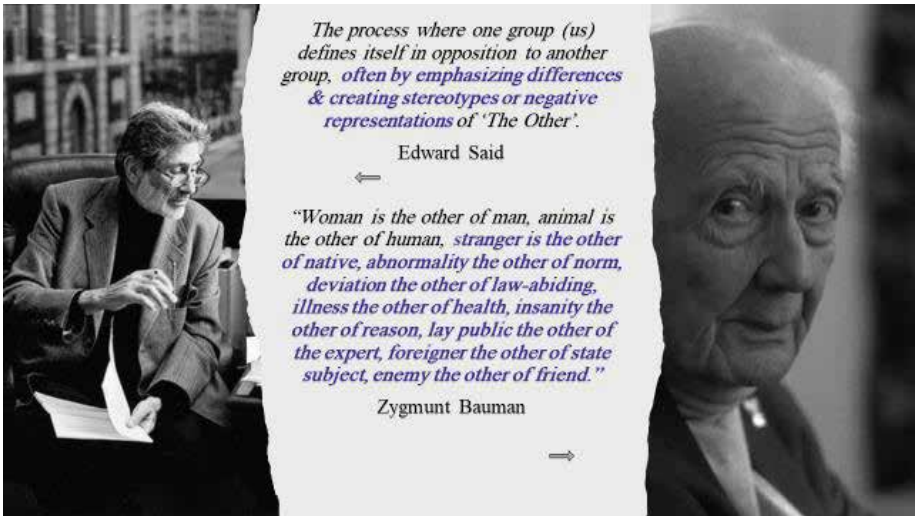
Turning a blind eye invites 'Zombieland' to reassert itself & traumatize 'us', outcomes one self-serving political party & associated do gooders champion ...

The result is 'Methbridge'

'Our' community is slowly collapsing before our eyes.

Although the comments are disturbing, what's troubling is everyone quoted is actively engaged in 'othering' people experiencing homelessness and those fighting addictions.

As the literary critic Edward Said wrote, 'othering' occurs when one group (us) defines itself in opposition to another group, often by emphasizing differences & creating stereotypes or negative representations of 'The Other.'



The Polish philosopher Zygmunt Bauman elaborates:

“Woman is the other of man, animal is the other of human, stranger is the other of native, abnormality the other of norm, deviation the other of law-abiding, illness the other of health, insanity the other of reason, lay public the other of the expert, foreigner the other of state subject, enemy the other of friend.”

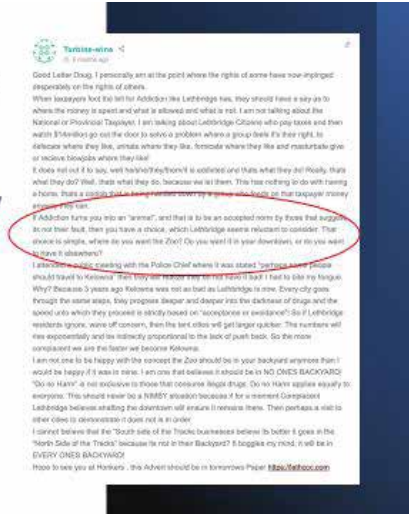
Othering is a well-established process with at least ten identifiable characteristics, eight of which our opinion leaders deployed: binary opposition, stereotyping, dehumanization, power dynamics, reductive and essentializing, other as threat, us vs. them, and impact on identity.

Trivializing the experiences, identities, and perspectives of marginalized or ‘othered’ individuals or groups is evident in Lethbridge. It involves political dimensions, significantly affecting power, identity, and societal norms.

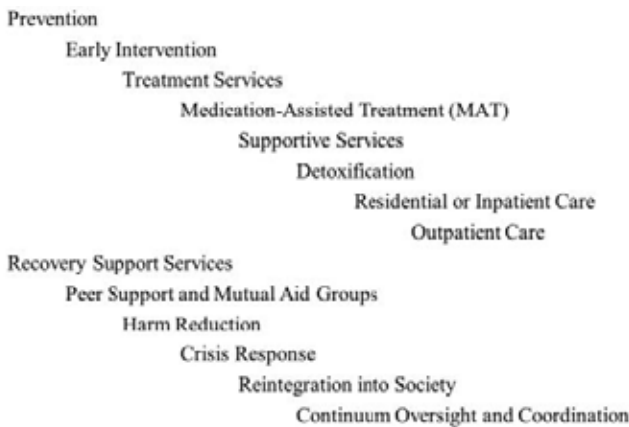
of an individual I'd describe as a local influencer who regularly contributes to the *Lethbridge Herald* by name and by nom de plume, letters to the editor, debates and captures my key points.

“If Addiction turns you into an ‘animal’, and that is to be an accepted norm by those that suggest, its not their fault, then you have a choice, which Lethbridge seems reluctant to consider. That choice is simple, where do you want the Zoo? Do you want it in your downtown, or do you want to have it elsewhere?”


Turbine-wine, *Lethbridge Herald*
11 April 2023




It is telling that most of our energies are aimed at vilifying homeless addicts. This is the difference between adopting a humanist approach to a human struggle and engaging in othering processes that dehumanize those most in need.




Best & Promising Practices Toward Ending Homelessness	
Salt Lake City, UT, USA	The city implemented a <i>Housing First</i> approach, prioritizing stable housing provision to homeless individuals before addressing other issues such as addiction or mental health. It has led to a significant reduction in chronic homelessness.
Helsinki, Finland	Housing is constitutionally guaranteed. <i>Housing First</i> ensures that anyone who becomes homeless is offered a home immediately.
Singapore	Uses a combination of public housing & social services to prevent & manage homelessness. The government prioritizes affordable housing, and social workers assist individuals and families facing housing instability.
Medellin, Columbia	Medellin employs a multi-pronged approach, including building affordable housing, providing social services, and creating job opportunities for homeless individuals.
Utrecht, Netherlands	Adopted a unique approach called <i>Housing First for Youth</i> , which targets homeless young people. This initiative focuses on providing stable housing and support services tailored to the needs of homeless youth.
Swansea, Wales, UK	Invested £55m into the "transitional accommodation programme". Homeless after 56 days? Council must provide you with home ("the duty" to secure accommodation"). Council may need to take reasonable steps to protect your belongings ("the duty to protect belongings").




Housing First: This model prioritizes securing stable housing for homeless individuals before addressing other issues, such as addiction, mental health, or unemployment.




Prevention: Focusing on preventing homelessness by offering support to individuals and families on the brink of losing their housing.



Supportive Services: Providing various support services, including mental health and addiction treatment, job training, and social services to help homeless individuals regain stability.



Collaboration: These cities often involve various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and local communities, to address homelessness comprehensively.



Affordable Housing: Increasing the availability of affordable housing options through construction or rent subsidies is a fundamental component of these efforts.

But what are we doing to end homelessness? Remember, that's where this all started. Rarely do I read stories or witness City Council conversations about how to end homelessness before it takes root. Or thoughts regarding its management once it occurs.

Keenly observing the city council for the last two years, seldom are international or domestic best practices identified or discussed. We have a Housing First program, and recent investments in affordable housing projects and support services occurred. Where we fail is by forsaking systems approaches encouraging collaboration. Things are changing, albeit slowly.

"It is the number one job of a government to ensure that people are safe when they walk down the street," said United Conservative Party Leader Danielle Smith. **"Albertans shouldn't have to look over their shoulders in their own communities. People have a right: not to be randomly grabbed, punched kick, or spit upon. Or heaven-forbid worse."**

Bell: No-guff UCP minister on ordering dangerous addicts to treatment

Minister of Mental Health and Addiction Dan Williams says we get to decide if we continue down the road to ruin or try something different

United in Government

Compassionate Intervention

"We will not let the chattering classes, the elite or any activist social justice warrior or any activist court get in the way of us helping our citizens and securing the safety of our communities."

Common to the examples and the best practices presented is that removing those experiencing homelessness or battling addictions from their community for rehabilitation is not contemplated.

My final comments focus on the Alberta government's *Compassionate Intervention Act*. As it's in the early stages of development, I'll concentrate on involuntary treatment, which underscores the proposed legislation.

Involuntary treatment is the unconditional, forced medical treatment undertaken without the person's consent. It is, in effect, forced detention for those who have not committed a crime.

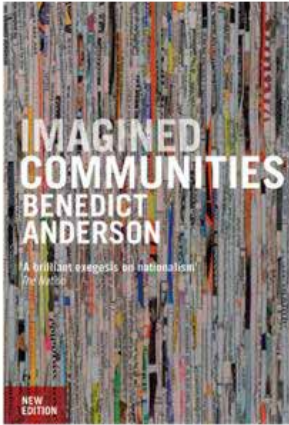
That description alone should help us understand why the City Council and the *Lethbridge Herald* favour a recovery model involving policing and removing unwanted populations.

The thing about it is most studies confirm involuntary treatment's ineffectiveness. A recent UNBC study found that 58% completed the program, while 42% left. After three months, only 76% of those who completed the program abstained from alcohol or other drugs. In all, less than half "recovered." Much lower than other treatment options.

While presented ostensibly as a health strategy, involuntary treatment is a concealed public safety scheme that removes folks from the streets and their respective communities.

If the data shows the strategy does not work, why are we spending time and energy developing a policy likely to fail? Or, at the very least, will not meet the public's expectations? I'd like to know what the Minister of Red Tape says about this.

Returning to Benedict Anderson, what type of community is being imagined by our opinion leaders? One without homelessness -- a noble idea we all agree with. How do they aim to end this terrible and growing social problem? Seemingly by excluding the 'other.'



Anderson argues that a nation is not defined solely by its physical borders or the people within.

Community is a socially constructed concept that exists in the collective imagination of its citizens.

People imagine themselves as part of a larger community, even though they do not know most of their fellow citizens.

Whether consciously or not, a move is afoot to rid the downtown of what has been labelled an undesirable element, a sub-community of homeless addicts, which I've revealed is, if not a fabricated group, a tiny community living within our larger imagined community.

I've also exposed opinion leaders' othering leads to a loss of respect for anyone identifying as homeless, facilitating and stimulating reckless policymaking at the local and provincial levels.

Political outcomes achieved by trivializing a community's needs, with nary a mention of the health concerns of the folks forced to live in biohazardous settings due to economic hardship.

I agree with Minister Williams' desire to try something different. Certainly, involuntary treatment is different. But it's not new. And it's been proven ineffective. It is also a form of 'othering' that inevitably leads to exclusion, and we've seen how well that's worked for Lethbridge, where our opinion leaders have painted themselves into a corner by simplifying a complex issue.

"It is the number one job of a government to ensure that people are safe when they walk down the street," said United Conservative Party Leader Danielle Smith. "Albertans shouldn't have to look over their shoulders in their own communities. People have a right not to be randomly grabbed, punched kick, or spit upon. Or heaven-forbid worse."

Bell: No-guff UCP minister on ordering dangerous addicts to treatment

Minister of Mental Health and Addiction Dan Williams says we get to decide if we continue down the road to ruin or try something different

"I don't think there is anything humane or compassionate or dignified leaving someone who has lost the ability to freely choose whether to sit on the street for another high, to leave them on the street to die a slow, agonising, miserable death," says Williams.

"We will not let the chattering classes, the elite or any activist social justice warrior or any activist court get in the way of us helping our citizens and securing the safety of our communities."

United Conservatives Alberta Spring & Fall

Home About Action Centre Press Team

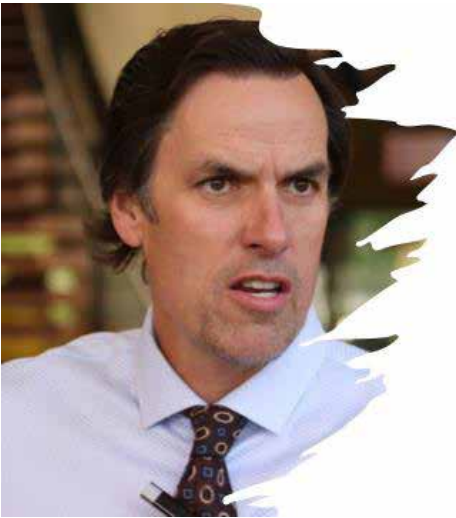
Compassionate Intervention

to one where communities of difference such as those who are homeless and those battling substance issues, are collapsed into one community they choose to then belittle for the sake of politicizing the issue (all of the councillors ran on public safety mandates) or to convince readers that those seeking to help are little more than self-serving sycophants of the all-mighty dollar who'd prefer people suffer.

After taking a community that materialized due to economic concern, we briefly medicalized all homeless into the category of homeless addicts. We abandoned our medical model and took to politicizing the people and trivializing their needs.

Despite his own best efforts to 'other' elites, the chattering classes, activist social justice warriors, and activist courts, to help those lacking impulse control and who soil themselves publicly. This would see us abandon exclusion in favour of inclusion. This would demand we abandon othering and identify and treat the various communities I've identified equitably but according to their needs. It would require us to.

As addictions are assumed to simply get worse, involuntary confinement as treatment will gain in popularity in Lethbridge anticipating worse than the *Lethbridge Herald* or local politicians currently suggest, which already is dire. We in Lethbridge



“I know what you’ve said is kind of a really gray area and you don’t want to go there because it’s people’s rights to have shelter … I challenge that personally because I think we should remove them and if people don’t like what they’ve [LPS] done, take us to court.”

--Lethbridge Herald
9 August 2022--

“They’re not actually homeless.”

--Lethbridge Herald
10 August 2022--

None of these acts show a desire to promote inclusion. All of these acts demonstrate our longing to ‘other’ the homeless, which is then identified as a group of homeless addicts who should seek recovery options. Preferably away from our community. Once healed, they may return.

But as the data above illustrate, forced medical treatment is less effective than other options, even if it temporarily rids the city of abnormal people.

Four years in and we still have no data evaluating the effectiveness of Alberta’s ‘recovery-oriented system of care’.

What I’ve read in the press raises important questions? Who will man the courts? What are the thresholds for commitment; individual rights being violated; stats demonstrate it is not the most advantageous approach (infrequently successful). Perhaps most problematically, our Compassionate Intervention Act as proposed, is underscored by

Example of complex systems, according to a medicalized view. The triviality we witnessed in the quotes is problematic. The graphs demonstrate that these issues are not discussed.

Government specifies addictions, we in Lethbridge have conflated the two, this is an easy fix – fix the addicts and you fix homelessness. As addictions are assumed to simply get worse, involuntary confinement as treatment will

gain in popularity in Lethbridge anticipating worse than the Lethbridge Herald or local politicians currently suggest, which is dire.

Homelessness intervention in Lethbridge will remain informed by a belief in all homeless as addicts, and deficit communities. We will see city council align with provincial compulsory treatment

When I review the best practice sites where homelessness and addictions have been curtailed, I never see involuntary

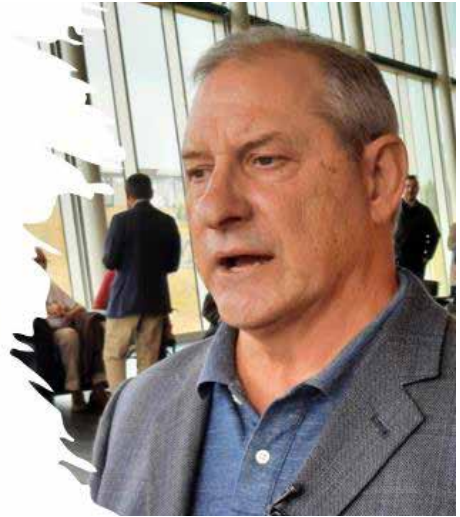
Are addictions considered a medical concern first and foremost, or a public safety issue?

Encampments "... are primarily the temporary abodes of the homeless, are garbage strewn, bio-hazardous and often unsafe environments for residents and surrounding neighbourhoods."

--Lethbridge Herald
6 July 2022--

"One of my priorities was to displace the abnormal users who are there only to sleep in the park."

--Lethbridge Herald
31 August 2023--



Politicizing – language used to suggest those helping are in fact the problem.

The Compassionate Intervention Act; who will man the court; what are the thresholds for commitment; individual rights being violated; stats demonstrate it is not the most advantageous approach (infrequently successful). Perhaps most problematically, our Compassionate Intervention Act as proposed, is underscored by

In a city like Lethbridge, where the opinion-leaders consider homelessness and addictions synonymous, the reasons for supporting recovery (compassionate intervention) and enhanced policing.

Trains our gaze on a limited number of options. This impedes us from exploring best practices. If it's just about public safety, we look to the police. If it's simply about addictions, which frequently leads to public drug use, we look to the police. What we're overlooking is

This is expensive. But not expensive as allowing homelessness, addictions, and homelessness addictions to persist. That means you need public buy-in

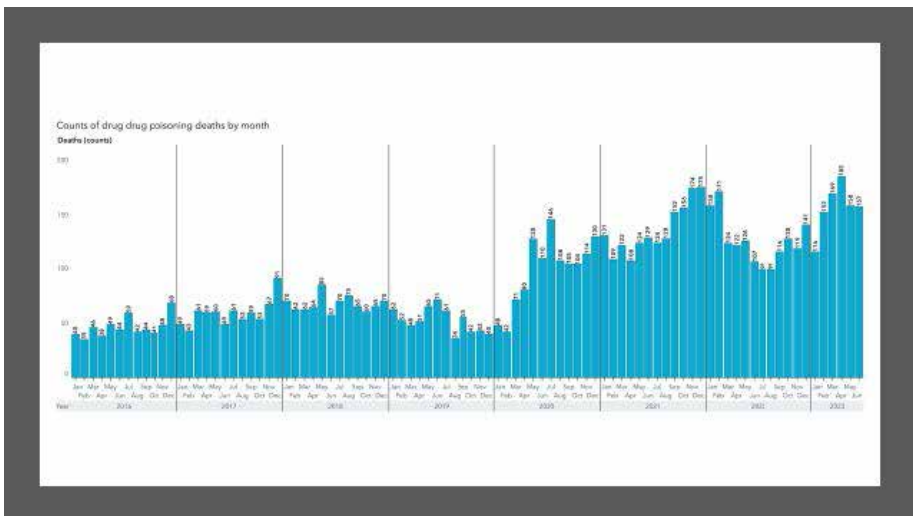
Limiting the scope of our view means we're only looking at the issue from one perspective. Let's look at some of the best practices that have emerged, using medicalization as the lens.

The remainder of the talk will focus on the trivialization and politicization of addictions and homelessness simply because it leads to a loss of respect and consideration, and because it facilitates and even stimulates reckless policy making.

The medicalization of homelessness and addictions has been established. It's also important to identify three distinct groups and their specific needs.

This group demands its own programs.

I'm not ostracizing those with substance abuse issues.



We see two problematic trends developing here. One, the homeless and their specific needs are being ignored because they are now assumed to be addicts. The latter are not deemed to be combating a medical affliction, but rather are positioned as a danger to society. In effect, you can start to see how the homeless become a policing issue – due to our compunction to equate homelessness and addictions and symbolic.

Addictions and homelessness are being portrayed as the cause of local harm

In effect, we have trivialized and politicized the social and medical needs of two separate communities.

Where the proof, you ask? Let look at what some of our elected officials and the *Herald's* managing editor have to say about these concerns.

Let's return to this slide. Dating to 2020, the number of stories focusing exclusively on homelessness and addictions, homelessness and safety, homelessness and crime, and homelessness, addiction, and crime have climbed steadily.

That represents a 264% increase!

And it's having an impact on how the community und

So, what have we got? Homelessness and addictions are presented as going hand-in-hand.

Goes against the medical knowledge that addictions are a medical concern. Every discussion is in response to what homelessness and addictions have wrought on our community, as opposed to discussing why both issues proliferate. Underlying each discussion is the causal formula I alluded to, where blame for homelessness and addictions is directed at social workers, policy makers, and the individual.

They are 'abnormal people' who live in garbage strewn, bio-hazardous and often 'unsafe environments' ...

Folks who 'do not have a right to shelter' if doing so compromises 'our' local sense of community ...

Irresponsible acts that 'compel us to curtail individual rights' to protect the 'collective good' ...

It's an unproblematic turn for 'most may not be homeless' but have simply abandoned their homes to party ...

Turning a blind eye invites 'Zombieland' to reassert itself & traumatize 'us', outcomes one self-serving political party & associated do gooders champion ...

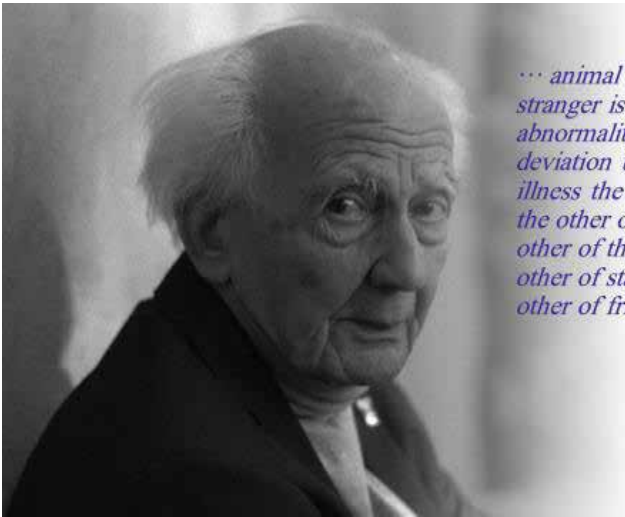
The result is 'Methbridge'

'Our' community is slowly collapsing before our eyes.

Abnormal people living in garbage strewn, bio-hazardous and often unsafe environments. Folks who do not have a right to shelter if doing so compromises our sense of community, which then permits us to

curtail their rights if deemed advantageous. If they are homeless and not, simply abandoning their homes

to party. To do otherwise is to turn the community into zombieland and traumatize the local community, acts that are enabled by one political party and the associated do-gooders championing their own cause. The outcome: Methbridge, which is slowly collapsing before our eyes.



*... animal is the other of human,
stranger is the other of native,
abnormality the other of norm,
deviation the other of law-abiding,
illness the other of health, insanity
the other of reason, lay public the
other of the expert, foreigner the
other of state subject, enemy the
other of friend.*

Clearly the dialogue is about us. Not folks who are homeless or battling substances. But you and me. The latter two communities are simply foils for our debate about how to ensure the city remains pretty, unsullied by the unwanted.

Leads to othering, which is a potent means of establishing criteria of exclusion.

As defined by Edward Said,

Is there a correlation between the newspaper's support of building a soup kitchen, a food bank, and a shelter? Or between the newspaper's blatant anti-homelessness and addictions stance and the community's slow response to these issues?

Homelessness is unique own characteristics influences out policy response look at the city in reciprocal relationship between newspapers and politics; Roy Romanow discussion; reinforcing local politics;

rarely seen as [part of the community; long relationship here; ryan parker and JMH; with politics structured and the free press prescribing exclusion, lets review communities of best practices and the key Abnormal behaviours. Now, homelessness is abnormal by virtue of the fact that we're taught to go to school and get the job needed to secure your home.

“This is a model that we are going to be utilizing all across the province.”

Minister Nixon discusses challenges of addictions and homelessness

Steffanie Cortigan
STAFF WRITER

Local Journalism Project Reporter

Minister of Services, Community and Social Services Jason Nixon spoke in Lethbridge Thursday for the grand opening of the Lethbridge Recovery Community Facility.

He shared the excitement to be in Lethbridge and noted the challenges Lethbridge has faced with homelessness along with addiction after the spike at the facility's grand opening.

"It's really crucial to be here in Lethbridge," he says. "It's always so hard when you're here each week in taking place in the community, which has really seen some of the most significant challenges when it comes to homelessness and primary addictions issues anywhere in the province."

Nixon said the opening of the Lethbridge Recovery Community Facility is a "major step" in the province's "strategy" on issues of addiction, homelessness, and housing. He said the Lethbridge Recovery Community will be an example of the facility being used all across Alberta. "This is the model that we are going to be utilizing all across the province."

Nixon acknowledged that the provincial administration office of Lethbridge through services in 2012, which the model of the Lethbridge Recovery Community opening, has solved the issues that have been in Lethbridge being and he wishes to have more of that.

like justice.

"I think I could say that to every housing authority across the province. We are really excited to see a great example of ways that we can have an impact on what is ongoing and to be one of the greatest cities of our time. And that is the housing city," said Nixon.

Nixon talked about the example Lethbridge is setting for other municipalities, the significant accomplishment it is in the opening of this recovery unit, and the impact it will have all across the province.

He noted Lethbridge Recovery Community will also demonstrate the future across Alberta, this facility being the example.

"It's very important not to get overwhelmed by the numbers. It's important to get the right because everybody's working in it. And what happens here will determine the future of a lot of other important programs across the province."

Nixon gave the Lethbridge Herald the opportunity to speak with Nixon on-site, where he visited one of his cities being to become the homelessness crisis across the province. He noted the long-term plan is addressing homelessness as it assess mental health and addictions.

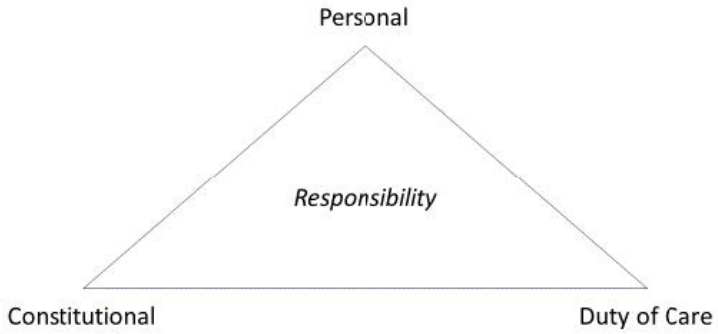
"We know that the way forward is to be able to address homelessness a long-term in addition to mental health and addictions. And without investment in the city, we're going to continue to see our homelessness problem continue to fill up because there's nowhere for people to go for help."

CONTINUED: Please visit page 50

Here's where we'll see recovery pop up, good transition the online dialogues 2021; expertise in the room; key themes; nothing done; provincial policy reflects none of this complexity; ignores systems; we see a complex economic issue such as homelessness, medicalized by pronouncing all homeless as addicts. A new policy category of homeless addicts is produced. Once that category becomes publicly accepted, policy is developed accordingly.

In sum, the complex problems of homelessness, homelessness and addictions, and addictions have been shoehorned into an artless discussion debating how to remove a deviant group of homeless addicts deemed to be negatively impacting our community.

Outsiders of our construction. Imagined out of our community. Just how long will it be before someone suggests physically removing them from our community?



Dr. Yale Belanger
University of Lethbridge

Medicalize? Politicize?
Trivialize?

belayd@uleth.ca

Thank you.

PRESENTATION 2

Towards Sustainable Development: Breaking the cycle of addiction and homelessness

Engr Yetunde Holloway, Professional Engineer, Social Justice Advocate.

Abstract: Globally, the coexistence of addictions and homelessness presents a complex and distressing reality, underscoring the pressing need for proactive advocacy, increased awareness, and swift action to save lives.

This paper explores in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, the multifaceted struggles faced by individuals grappling with addictions and homelessness. It attempts to shed light on the interplay of societal, economic, and other factors contributing to this crisis



Homelessness and Addiction around the world

Homelessness and addiction are two major social problems that are closely linked and are social maladies seen in every country, all over the world. The country with the highest number of homeless people in Africa is Nigeria. Nigeria is also the country with the biggest homeless population in the world. With a homeless population of 24,400,000 out of 216 million citizens, the homeless rate is 11.3%. A report by the United Nations Office on Drug and

Crime in Nigeria indicates that 14.4% (14.3 million) of people aged between 15 and 64 years abuse drugs.25 Oct 2022.

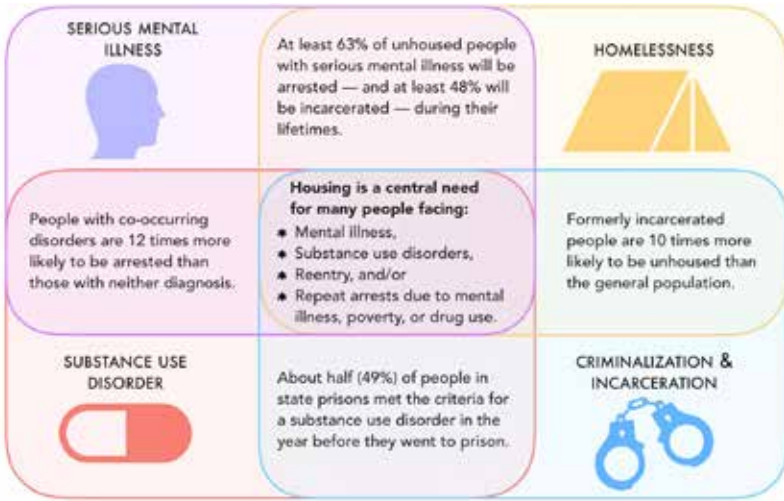


Factors contributing to Homelessness and Addiction

- Poverty
- Mental illness
- Physical disabilities
- Lack of access to affordable housing and healthcare
- Natural or manmade disasters
- Pandemics or disease outbreaks
- War, terrorist operations and famine
- Forced evictions
- Rural urban shift
- Overpopulation
- Inflation

Homelessness and Addiction are strongly interrelated - Crime too!

Homelessness increases chances of addiction and vice versa ...More often than not, either propagates a cycle of physical & mental health problems, crime (victims or perpetrators), isolation and exclusion from family and friends, extreme wretchedness and poverty ...recovery becomes more and more unlikely, as reaching out for help can be difficult.



Sources: Prison Policy Initiative, *Beyond the Count and Nowhere to Go*; Pew Charitable Trusts, *More than 1 in 9 People With Co-Occurring Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders Are Arrested Annually* (2021); Laurence Roy et al., *Criminal Behavior and Victimization Among Homeless Individuals with Severe Mental Illness: A Systematic Review* (2014).

A Venn diagram showing some of the ways in which homelessness, mental illness, substance use disorder, and criminalization and incarceration overlap.

Women, Homelessness and Addictions

The experience of homelessness bears especially hard on women. Homelessness experienced by women is made unique by their disproportionate experiences of gender based violence including domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, human trafficking, and sexual assault, sex slavery and negative cultural practices.

Limited financial and social resources, widowhood and oppressive cultural practices often leave women out in the streets.

Women’s experiences of homelessness are governed by oppression, gender inequality, and stigma.



Women, Homelessness and Addictions



Caption: Adijat | Photo Credit: Omolola Afolabi/The ICIR

- “RIGHT there in the flowing septic waters, near the Lagos State Government Abattoir Complex in Agege, was Adijat, sprawled inside the filthy drainage water channel, lap wide-open, apparently wearing no underwear. She sat, looking down and tired. Her dress was in tatters, soaking dirty waters as it cascaded down her private parts. Adijat could care less.”
- “My child was kidnapped while I was begging to keep her alive.” For Jemilat Lawal, a 45-year-old mother of six, the kidnap of her daughter remains the lowest moment of her life after the loss of her husband. She says she is forced to remember her six-year-old every day, especially when she sees children of her age passing at her regular spot on the Berger Bridge. Seated next was her younger child, Rodia. She was jolted out of her nap by the reporter’s presence.
- The child’s eyes are jaundiced, and her mouth is held by abrasion.
- “The death of my husband in 2018 was the climax that led to my becoming a beggar,”

Effects of Drug abuse on Women



WOMEN AND DRUG ABUSE

How Drugs Affect Women and Men Differently

- Women become addicted to drugs after using smaller doses and for shorter periods of time than men.
- Women can be more sensitive to the effects of certain drugs because of sex hormones.
- Women who use drugs experience different changes in their brains than men do.
- A woman's menstrual cycle could affect her withdrawal symptoms and likelihood to relapse in addiction recovery.
- Women are more likely to die from overdose of certain drugs than men are.



The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), this year declared that out of every four drug abuse persons, one is a female.

In 2018, data showed that more women are going into drug abuse. The trend creates a vicious cycle of more addiction and homelessness and hopelessness for society

The SDGs...

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



In 2012, at Rio de Janeiro, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were born at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The objective was to produce a set of universal goals that meet the urgent **ENVIRONMENTAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC** challenges facing our world.

**169 targets and indicators

Breaking the Cycle.....



Goal 1: No Poverty: Poverty Alleviation: Implement strategies to reduce poverty among homeless and addicted individuals. This could include

providing income-generating opportunities, access to vocational training, and support for finding employment.

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being: Access to Healthcare: Ensure that homeless individuals struggling with addiction have access to healthcare services, including mental health and addiction treatment. Collaborate with healthcare providers and organizations to deliver integrated care.

Goal 4: Quality Education: Education and Skills Training: Offer education and skills development programs to empower individuals in recovery. Support them in acquiring the skills and knowledge needed to secure employment, fostering long-term stability.

Breaking the Cycle.....

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth: Employment Opportunities: Collaborate with local businesses and organizations to create employment opportunities for individuals in recovery. Focus on inclusive economic growth that provides fair and meaningful work.

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities: Housing Solutions: Develop sustainable and affordable housing options that can help homeless individuals transition to stable living conditions. Promote community development initiatives that provide affordable housing for those in need.

To effectively break the cycle of homelessness and addiction, it's essential to work in a coordinated manner, involving government agencies, non-governmental organizations, healthcare providers, and the community.

Monitoring and evaluating the progress in alignment with the SDGs can help ensure that these goals are met sustainably.

Asking the Questions

- How can we talk about homelessness in a way that deepens public understanding and builds demand for the problem to be solved?
- How can we better influence the media to report homelessness as a result of policy choices not life choices?
- How can we avoid reinforcing negative stereotypes about homeless people and a sense that homelessness is too hard to solve?
- How can we work towards achieving the SDGs by 2030?

The Way Forward-Spotlight on women



- 1. Housing Programs:** Implementation of **Housing First** initiatives that provide homeless, particularly those struggling with addiction, with immediate access to stable housing without preconditions. This approach prioritizes getting people into safe and secure housing as the first step in their recovery journey-**particularly important for women, who are more likely to be victims.**
- 2. Mobile Outreaches ,Counseling Services and Advocacy:** Establishment of mobile outreach teams that can reach homeless individuals where they are, offer immediate support, counseling, and connections to addiction treatment and social services. These teams should be empowered to build trust and facilitate access to care.

3. Employment and Training Centers, skills acquisition Creation of centers that focus on providing homeless individuals, including those in recovery, with job training, employment resources, and support for gaining sustainable employment. This initiative helps promote financial stability and self-sufficiency.

- These initiatives offer immediate assistance and support to address the intertwined challenges of homelessness and addiction for all, particularly women , offering a foundation for long-term recovery and stability. But.....

Long term actions

Personal Stories and Humanization:

Sharing of personal stories: Humanize the issue by sharing stories of individuals who have experienced homelessness. These stories should highlight the challenges they face and their journeys to regain stability. Personal narratives can help the public relate to the issue on a human level.

Create empathy: Encourage empathy by emphasizing that homelessness can happen to anyone and women more due to a variety of circumstances, as discussed earlier. Help people understand that homeless individuals are not defined solely by their circumstances but are, first and foremost, human beings with dreams and aspirations.

Long term actions

Education and Statistics:

- Raise awareness: Need to provide accurate and up-to-date statistics about homelessness in our country and highlight the prevalence of homelessness and its impact on the community.

Explanation of root causes: Help the public understand the systemic and structural factors that contribute to homelessness, such as the lack of affordable housing, income inequality, and limited access to mental

health services. Explain how addressing these root causes is crucial for long-term solutions.

Information and Communication channels, such as social media, community meetings, or local events, to spread the message.



Conclusions



Conclusions

Breaking the cycle of addiction and homelessness is a complex challenge, but it is one that is essential to achieving sustainable development in Nigeria, and of course around the world. By working together, we can create a more just and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Every situation is unique, it is important that we must identify the underlying cause of each situation and work together as a community to break the cycle of Homelessness and Addiction.

Most importantly to achieve sustainable development goals, we cannot afford to leave behind those who are vulnerable and exposed to conditions beyond their control.

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Appreciation



PRESENTATION 3

“No Place to Call Home: Homelessness and the Bible”

Archdeacon Michael Stonhouse

(October 2023 Homelessness Talk)



Introduction

- From time to time we hear various comments concerning the homeless, or the poor in general:
- “What a bunch of lazy bums. If they’d just get off their backsides and work they’d be out of this predicament”
- Or, to quote St. Paul, taken badly out of context, ‘if they will not work, they will not eat.’
- My purpose this morning is to provide not only its context, but also the wider view of what the Bible actually says about homelessness.

Introduction

Surprisingly, and rather interestingly, the Bible seldom uses the various words for ‘home’ to denote homelessness. However, we know that various people, Jesus, for instance, the apostle Paul, and the early church missionaries, often had to rely extensively on the hospitality of others. We know that the future king David ‘lived rough’ when he was fleeing King

Saul’s persecution, and we can surmise that Jesus and His first disciples might have done the same during Jesus’ earthly ministry.

However, possibly due to the much more temperate climate of the Holy

Land, it wasn’t quite the problem that it is for us. Living rough, is, for much of our population—at least not here on the prairies--not a very pleasant or feasible option.

Even so, I think that the Scriptures do have something to say on the matter.

Anyway, it certainly is a problem for us today:

Here are some ‘frequent’ approaches to it:

Blaming



Scapegoating

© Randy Glasbergen / glasbergen.com



"This problem requires immediate action.
Hire another scapegoat!"

Avoiding it

© Randy Glasbergen / glasbergen.com



"Of course I'm doing something about
the problem — I'm avoiding it!"

Ignoring the problem, hoping it will go away



"This matter requires immediate attention.
I'll get someone to ignore it right away."

Confusion

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"I need help! I was thinking outside of the box and I let my mind wander too far and now I can't find my way back!"

Solutions?

by Glasbergen, F. email: randy@glasbergen.com



'Sometimes you get a brainstorm, sometimes you only get the clouds.'

Incremental steps? (As Edison once said, we have discovered one more thing that doesn't work)

The problem is 'I'm not sure whether we are getting anywhere closer to a solution'.

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The Bible as Authority

Perhaps, seeing as none of these ‘work’, we can turn to an ancient source of wisdom, the Bible, for guidance on this matter. I will suggest that the Bible can be of use in two ways:

The Bible as Light



The Bible as something to hold on to, to refer to, to take inspiration from:



Work & Poverty in the Ancient World

- People in rural areas or small towns often had garden plots
- Susceptible to crop failures due to drought, too much rain or bad timing
- If that happened, had to rely on other, outside sources
- A question then of its availability
- Result, if not? Migration and food riots
- Overall availability dependent on weather, social conditions and distribution systems

Work & Poverty in the Ancient World

Work, to begin with, was seen as a gift from God

- it provided purpose, meaning, and a sense of identity
- it was a means of sustenance

In the largely agricultural society that was the Holy Land during the Biblical period, most people, even those in the small towns, had fields or garden plots, and so could look after themselves in terms of food. It was only in the more urban centres like Jerusalem or Samaria that inhabitants relied on food being brought in.

However, being generally self-supporting like this, they were all the more susceptible to famines caused by crop failures or adverse weather like drought or over rainfall, and all the more dependent on outside sources of food if their supplies ran out.

The scarcity of food and high prices sometimes led to riots but also to migration in search of food, or to the cities or to places where food was still available. (We see this with Abraham, Isaac, Joseph's brothers and with Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, and her family in the book of Ruth.)

The weather was unpredictable even at the best of times, with too little rain or too much, or simply bad timing. The annual rainfall barely sufficient in many areas and according to the Biblical record, famines, droughts, and crop failures were prevalent, often repeated:

- Joseph in Egypt: a seven-year famine
- Ruth & Naomi (as mentioned above)
- Elijah & Ahab
- it even happened in Jerusalem and the rest of the Roman empire during apostolic times (see Acts 11:27-28).

The availability of food was dependent on the weather, but also on social conditions and distribution systems. For instance, war or maintaining a

military presence in an area such as Palestine (as happened during the time of Jesus) was costly and especially demanding in terms of food supplies.

Storing up reserves not always possible: most crops came only once a year, and so they had to last. This was dependant on storage facilities (such as the storehouses in Egypt) and on the type of crop being stored in terms of perishability. Far too often the populace was reduced to eating dried fruits and acorns when the normal food supplies ran out;

Often, even without contributing social conditions such as taxes and rentals, which we will discuss in a moment, people were often living very close to the poverty line, if not below.

People's purchasing power was so low that the cost of one's family's daily food often amounted to more than half of one's daily wage:

This meant that there was no cushion – if there was no work, then no money, no food, and family had to do without. This then is the background to the scenario in the parable of the workers in the vineyard. That is why the workers who hung around the market place all day were so anxious to find work, and why getting the extra made such a difference to them.

But natural factors such as droughts, famines and crop failures were not the only elements that made their lives so precarious and so close to poverty and homelessness. There were also the human factors such as taxation and rental rates.

Taxation in the ancient world

People were often burdened with excessive taxation. Ancient day Palestine was literally 'littered' with a myriad of taxes of various kinds:

Secular taxes: Firstly, there were the secular taxes, the ones imposed by the Roman overlords:

There were the toll taxes, collected on goods entering, leaving or crossing a particular district, and so were especially collected at crossover points like bridges, city gates or river or lake landings. This tax applied to everyone and was based on the value of the goods. There was also a tax on crops and a sales tax on goods bought and sold; a tax on agricultural land based on its

size and quality, and a poll or head tax, collected directly from individuals. All of these were hated by Jesus' compatriots, and together constituted quite a sum.

The Roman occupation army controlled the collection of many of these secular taxes and auctioned them out to the highest bidder, the chief tax collector, who then farmed them to various underlings who did the actual work. The chief toll collector had to pay the assessed amount up front and then needed to try recoup this amount and still have a profit on top. What was actually collected was entirely up to these underlings. The entire system was risky, open to abuse, and far from profitable in most cases.

And, believe it or not, even fishermen were subject to this excessive tax regime. Fishing, as an occupation, was taxed like everything else. In fact, the right to fish on the Sea of Galilee was controlled by the government and 'farmed' out to the chief tax collector of the area, who in turn brokered the rights to local fishermen. And because this occupation was too demanding to be the preserve of just a single-family grouping, it was often farmed out to a group, a collective, as we see with Peter, Andrew, James and John. And because it required a certain amount of start-up capital, an amount often beyond the scope of this small collective, they had to turn to the selfsame tax collector for the funds. And what was his 'take'? It was a certain percentage of the catch, sometimes as high as 40%. So, no wonder even fishermen fell into debt and lost their homes.





- Enforced by the Romans



Roman taxes (continued)

- Even fishermen taxed: sometimes 40% of catch
- Often in debt to tax collectors
- Often very little left-over (or at least, it felt that way)

Taxation: Roman taxes

- Taxes on goods bought and sold, on lands, on individuals
- Often 'farmed out' by the government; subject to over charging
System abused
Greed was prevalent

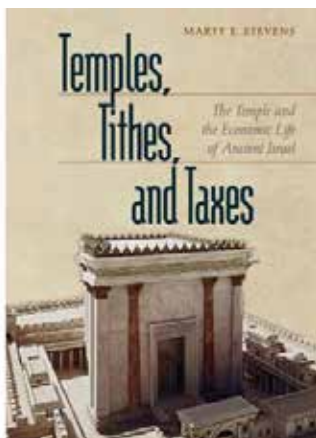


The religious tax

There were also taxes of various sorts imposed by the religious authorities in Jerusalem. There was, for instance, the Temple tax levied on all Jewish males, including those of the Diaspora. This amounted to a half-shekel per year and was used for the maintenance of the Temple.

Taxes: Religious taxes

- The religious authorities in Jerusalem imposed a tax on all Jewish males, including those in the Diaspora, for Temple upkeep;
- In addition, there were tithes and offering, and the ever-present sacrifices.
- The total of ALL the taxes, civil and religious, came to 35-40% of the total agricultural production of the country. Of the entire nation, it was more like 50%.



Impact of the taxes

- Especially with the Roman rulers, there was little wiggle room,
- They were hard task-masters
- Most peasants lived in a continual state of debt
- Often threatened with loss of farms and businesses
- Forced to mortgage them at exorbitant rates, and occasionally to needing to sell their children into slavery to pay their debts

Loss of farms or businesses

- Forced into casual employment, which was seasonal & uncertain and lacked any security
- Became landless and rootless, with no garden plots of their own
- Lost their sense of identity and belonging, forfeited their sense of family and who they were
- The land was considered a sacred trust, which was now gone
- Often resulted in migration to the cities, where their fortunes were even worse

All in all, the accumulated weight of these taxes often amounted to 35-40 % of the total annual agricultural production of the nation. Some have estimated that the average Jewish person paid up to 50% of their annual income to the local, provincial and imperial governments, and that isn't even counting the temple tax!

One source put it this way: “The million or so Jews living there [in tiny Palestine] were little more than taxpaying units in one of history’s most extensive systems of taxation—a system dependent on the contributions of conquered populations from all over the empire. The great works of Roman government—strait roads and soaring aqueducts, marble buildings and spacious public plazas—were partly funded by taxes, which proved most burdensome on the lowliest members of society. In taxation as in everything else, Rome was a strong-arm overlord.”

Because of this, most Judean peasants continually lived in a state of debt. As you might guess, these various taxes often threatened the loss of farms and businesses, or worse. Nehemiah reports that the excessive tax during his tenure forced some people into mortgaging their farms, borrowing money at exorbitant rates and sometimes even selling their sons or daughters into slavery to pay the tax (Nehemiah 5:1-13).

Upon the loss of their farms or business, they were forced to rely upon casual employment, which was often seasonal and uncertain. Furthermore, such day labourers didn't even have the security of being household servants or slaves. They were purely at the mercy of the weather and the landowner;

And, what was even worse for them was the fact of losing their farms or businesses meant that they were then landless and rootless, and no longer had the food security that came from having their own gardens or orchards or fields. And, of course, a loss of accommodations, housing, came with this.

And, there was also a loss of identity and belonging. There was the sense that the land was a sacred trust, a trust bestowed upon the family and so to lose it was to forfeit something of who you are. So, homelessness was more than just an attachment to a piece of land or property; it was to lose one's identity, one's sense of who you are.

Often this resulted in migration to the larger centres, but then they had to depend all the more on leaders and were also subject to overcrowding and disease.

Rentals

Often as well as taxes, there were sometimes excessive and crippling rents. One writer put it this way, "Peasants owed owners of absentee estates a rent that they could not pay; year by year, they handed over much of the rich produce of their harvests just to be allowed to remain indentured on their land, owing more and more of what they did not have."

And, in like manner, a failure to pay could result in loss of their farms and businesses. While generally devastating for the renters or tenant farmers, for the landlord, this could provide something of a mixed blessing. On a positive note, for themselves as landlord

- It could create a new source of casual labourers
- it could provide opportunity for landowners to expand their holdings -and it allowed them to increase their earnings
- tapping into foreign or urban markets rather than just the local ones;

Rentals

- Rents often excessive with unpaid rents mounting up year by year
- A failure to pay could result in their being expelled from the land
- Reduced to poverty, desperation, destitution and homelessness
- Forced to rely on 'handouts'
- Vast amounts of land, as much as half the kingdom owned by King Herod
- 85% of the land owned or controlled by 1-2% of the population

Interestingly, the vast agricultural lands owned and controlled by King Herod may have amounted to as much as half the kingdom, so where was the room for 'the little guy'?

No wonder that it reduced many people to poverty, to desperation, to destitution. And, of course, it often meant the loss of their homes, and the security and the sense of belonging and identity that they represented.

So, what, if anything, was done to alleviate or deal with this? Actually, there was quite a bit that was done—on various levels. The responsibility for feeding the masses fell variously to government, landowners, and individuals. (By the way, in this whole discussion, housing and homelessness seldom come up, because, given the more temperate climate of the Mediterranean, this was seldom quite so urgent.)

Overall, approximately 85% of the wealth of the nation was controlled by only one or two percent of the population. The rest were pretty close to being destitute. Most people fell below the poverty line.

Feeding the Masses

Feeding the Masses

- Government

- Joseph in Egypt: stored the produce from the years of plenty and distributed during lean years

- Roman authorities: Rome, Carthage & Antioch

- rural areas: no infrastructure or means of distribution

- Judaea: Herod? Temple authorities?

- looked after only themselves

Government action

That the government would have had a hand in this was a cultural expectation of the times:

We know from the story of Joseph and the seven-year famine in Egypt, that the central government under Joseph's expert and wise guidance constructed storehouses, gathered up the surplus from the years of plenty, stored it securely and then doled it out when the famine came--distributed food in times of scarcity.

We know from secular sources that the Romans did the same. The Roman government in major centres such as Rome, Carthage, and Antioch provided food to the poor, the so-called 'bread and circuses', but what about the provinces, the rural areas? (There is evidence that Herod the Great did this on a limited basis, but probably only locally.) The relief to more rural areas was often non-existent as there was no infrastructure, no means to provide or distribute it. No wonder there were food riots in places.

So, what about Israel? We are told that during Nehemiah's time produce was brought into storehouses in Jerusalem for the benefit of the Levites and temple staff. (see Nehemiah 13:10-14) and are also told that Solomon built cities for that very purpose, but we are never told that they actually doled out food to the masses.

And what about Jerusalem? The Temple there had storerooms for various foodstuffs and from these stores was expected to redistribute to the poor. However, the evidence is that often they did nothing of the sort. Often the tithes and tribute were spent by the Temple elite only on themselves. No wonder the prophets described them as shepherds who looked after only themselves!

Feeding the Masses

• Communal Action

There are numerous Biblical injunctions to look after the vulnerable, especially those with no land such as widows, orphans, aliens, and Levites

Communities, however, were notorious for failing in this and given their inaction and ineffectiveness, individuals were forced to step in.

Communal action

There was a Biblical mandate to support the poor, homeless etc.:

The Bible calls upon the community, especially the leaders, to help them:

- it especially singled out orphans, widows, aliens & Levites, people who didn't have land, the means to grow their own food;
- not only that, these people were uniformly without the social networks that served to protect them from the abuse of others and defend their rights or interests, and so, the king, the state, was obliged to step in.

Leaders were lambasted who looked out only for themselves, who oppressed or took advantage of the poor or who didn't look after them. The ordinary people were often forced to mortgage their homes or fields to pay the taxes.

No wonder the Nehemiah was incensed and expressed a concern for the poor and demanded that something be done to help them (see Nehemiah 5)

The Scriptures often express a special mention of widows and because, if they had no families left to support them, were homeless and especially vulnerable:

“Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not defend the orphan, and the widow’s cause does not come before them” (Isaiah 1:23);

“Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes, to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans your prey!” (Isaiah 10:2);

“Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts” (Malachi 3:5);

In reality, however, these injunctions applied to more than just widows, orphans and aliens but to anyone who was in a vulnerable situation—and certainly those who were homeless fit the bill.

Feeding the Masses

Individual Action: The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

Men waiting in the marketplace all day

Clearly wanted to work – desperate, close to subsistence

Without this pay, their families would have gone without

Landowner knew this: gave them a break, paid them more than they deserved



Individual action

Because the central government was seen as incompetent or ineffective, it was often left up to private individuals to provide relief. The story of the workers in the vineyard is an example of this:

- the potential workers waited in the marketplace. looking for work, waiting all day in fact; they clearly wanted to work, and so were willing to wait all day if necessary;
- these day labourers lived close to subsistence – the daily food for their families depended on this income. Without it they would go without. And not only that, there was the shame/ honour in not being able to provide;
- furthermore, it was seen as shameful to ‘beg’ for food or work; -and so, they were waiting upon a patron, who constitutes an example of grace/ mercy.

And so, the vineyard owner, sensitive to their needs, paid them far more than was rightly their due.



For the landowner, being generous was a way to gain and maintain the respect of neighbours. He would be seen as a patron, a kindly, generous and charitable person, which was important in an honour-based society. (In that culture, you see, his social & political status depended upon his ability to act as protector and benefactor).

Likewise, in the parable of the unjust steward we see yet another example of this motivation and behaviour. The unjust steward incurred the undying gratitude of his master’s debtors in reducing what they owed.

Feeding the Masses

- Individual Action: The Parable of the Unjust Steward
- Reducing their debts meant giving them 'a break'
- His boss would thereby be seen as a patron, a kindly and generous person
- Thereby earning their gratitude and, in the process, helped the less fortunate among them



In doing so, both of them promoted harmony and good will—as well helping out the less fortunate among them.

However, absentee landlords—as was often the case in the ancient world—were less likely to do this: they had fewer close ties locally and so were not dependent upon locals in any way. It really didn't matter whether they were seen as benevolent patrons or not.

In this light, Jesus would have been seen as yet another patron: feeding the 5,000 with just a few loaves and fishes. No wonder they wanted to make Him king: here was a patron who was really 'worth his salt'. Meeting their earthly needs in this way would have guaranteed an instant following and allegiance. 'Surely', they would have thought, "this is the kind of person we want as king." This was all the more so when we consider that bread, the staple of life, constituted about one half of their daily caloric intake for the poor. So, where their bread was coming from was rather crucial.

There was also the Biblical practice of gleaning, of not going over your harvest 'with a fine-toothed comb', not trying to reap every last head of wheat or cluster of grapes. In other words, not trying to reap the maximum profit from your field or orchard. We this in the story of Ruth & Boas.



Feeding the Masses

- Individual Action:
Gleaning

Leaving some of your crop for the less fortunate (Boaz & Ruth)

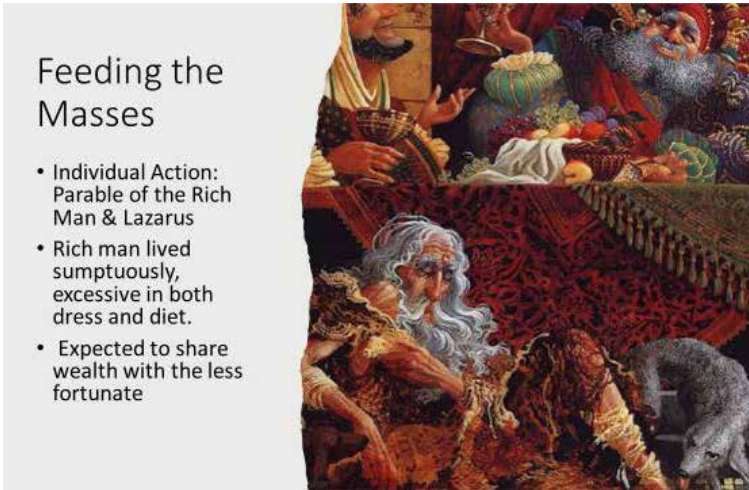
Not maximizing your profit



- this was a Biblically mandated provision for the poor;
- it made it incumbent on the landowner not to try to maximize his profits or get all that the market would bear, but to use his surplus to help the poor.

There are other Biblical examples of this expectation of individuals having a responsibility to help the poor:

- In the parable of the Rich Man & Lazarus, the rich man was expected to be generous with his bounty (especially considering his own dress and meals). His apparel was of costly fine linen, akin to what the high priest and rulers wore, and his meals were of the sort that most people could only afford occasionally, if at all!



He was expected to share it with the impoverished and unwell man who was encamped at his gate. The cultural expectation and obligation was that he would share his wealth and give alms to the poor. In that culture any windfall of wealth was to be immediately distributed to others.

When he begs that his brothers be warned, he is told that they should have already known their duty, as the Law and the prophets mandated (see Exodus 22:21-22; Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Amos 2:6-8; and Jeremiah 5:25-29).

Feeding the Masses

- Individual Action: the Rich Man & Lazarus (continued)
- Lazarus, impoverished and diseased, lived just outside his gate and yet he failed to notice him, or help him
- Both he and his brothers knew better, and so were held accountable

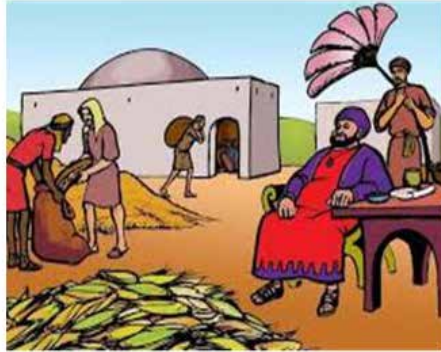


Likewise, the Rich Fool is a fool not only for relying on his wealth, but also stockpiling it for himself and his own pleasure and not sharing it;

Feeding the Masses

- **Individual Action:**
Parable of the Rich Fool

Three errors: Relying on his own wealth, stockpiling it for himself and failing to share it



The rationale for all this? The fact that Israel as a nation, and as individuals, were once in this situation of being poor and helpless: 'you were an alien':

Israel had a long history of being displaced, being refugees, of being helpless and so they were to do the same for others, just as Egypt had become a place of refuge for Israel and for the Holy Family: Israel was to be kind and sympathetic to economic or political refugees for this was once its state;

On the other hand, there was curse on Edom because they didn't welcome Israel when they were in transit;

In Babylon, when they were refugees, they were to make their home there: pray for it etc. “It’s welfare should be your welfare”. They were to become model citizens in their place of exile, their new homeland.

It was surely a model of what Israel’s newcomers could become. Therefore, immigrants, refugees, displaced persons were to be welcomed and provided for.

So far, we have the Biblical background on homelessness and poverty in general, the theory, you might say. So, what about the practical implications? How do we put all this into practice?

Discernment: how do we make decisions in this regard?

What about their not ‘deserving’ it?

What then about the adage: if you do not work, you cannot eat, which comes up in Paul’s 2nd letter to the Thessalonians. However, does it actually apply to us today?

“Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone’s bread without paying for it; but with toil and labour we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.”

“Anyone unwilling to work should not eat.”

Here Paul is addressing a very odd situation. Jesus’ Second Coming was seen as taking place very soon, and so some people declared, “why bother to work, or earn money, or save? None of it will be needed when Jesus has returned.”

The result was that they sat around doing nothing, sloughed off, and sponged off the wider community, and so thus came Paul's words: 'if they will not work; they will not eat'. But that hardly applies to us today.

Feeding the Masses

- Individual Action: The Rationale
 - They, as individuals and as a nation, had been homeless and rootless; they had been aliens and refugees and had been helped by God
 - They had been displaced and powerless, and so they were to extend the same care and compassion to others that they too had received.

Interestingly, for like reasons, marriage was discouraged, and homes and properties were sold for the pooling of monies to help the poor: there was no long-term plan in place, because they didn't figure that they would need it. They didn't think they would be around for the long run.

These words from Paul to the Thessalonian church don't really apply to our modern context, one that is totally different from the one back then. But what if the poor, the homeless, don't really 'deserve' it, don't deserve our help? The Biblical answer: help them anyway

Here we have to note God's care for the underdog, and see that it is a model for how we are to act:

Practicalities: Not 'deserving it'?

- Not working? "If you do not work, you do not eat" (2 Thessalonians)
 - An odd situation: expecting Jesus to return any day
 - So why bother earning money or saving when it's a waste of time.
- Likewise, why marry? Better to be single and devote yourself to God.
- And why have property? Pooled the money to help each other
 - No long-range plan because they didn't figure they'd need one.

There is the case of Hagar & Ishmael: was it Hagar's fault that Sarah mistreated her? Yes, partially at least. When she learned that she was pregnant and Sarah wasn't, she grew haughty, looked down her nose at her mistress Sarah and treated her with disdain. In some ways, she had it coming. And yet, God cared for her and her son Ishmael in very real and practical ways.

Not deserving: God helps anyway

• Hagar and Sarah

- Hagar partly to blame for her predicament
- When she became pregnant and Sarah wasn't, she grew haughty and looked at Sarah with disdain



Not deserving: God helps anyway

• Hagar and Sarah (continued)

- Even though Hagar 'had it coming', God helped her and her son in very practical and loving ways.

The prodigal son(s): did the two sons deserve the father's help, the father's graciousness? Certainly not. And we are left wondering whether they did ever 'shape up'. We are never told. It is left up in the air. Even so, the father was incredibly gracious towards both of them, unreasonably so, in fact.

Then there is the story of the Hellenistic widows in the Jerusalem church found in Acts 6:1-15:

Was their perilous state their own fault? Yes, to a certain degree, but they were helped anyway. Let me explain:

There is a very good explanation why the Hellenist, Greek-speaking widows were in an especially vulnerable position. Many devoted Jews from within the wider Roman Empire, the Diaspora outside of Palestine, chose to move to Jerusalem, live out their final years there and be buried there. This was because there was an expectation that the Messiah would show himself first in Jerusalem and so they would be among the first to be resurrected and be present and able to greet Him in person.

However, often the husbands died first, leaving their widows, who were far from home, without families to support them. And so, they were truly helpless, all on their own, with no extended family around them. And so, the church, in the form of the seven deacons, stepped in to help them—whether they truly deserved it or not.

Not Deserving: God helps anyway

• The Hellenistic Widows in Jerusalem

- A tragic 'miscalculation': wanting to die in Jerusalem, so moved there
- Husbands died first, and with no local family, left destitute
- Church steps in to feed them even though they'd brought it on upon themselves.



And then there was the story of the short-lived experiment in communalism found in Acts 4:32-37. They sold their houses and lands and used the proceeds to help each other. But ultimately it was ill advised and failed, because by selling all this they thereby lost their means of sustenance, their dwellings, and had nothing to fall back on. They were short-sighted: once again, they were expecting Jesus' imminent return. However, once again, the wider church stepped in to help them when a famine arrived, and they didn't have the resources to meet it.

God listens to, hears, helps 'sinners', people who don't deserve it:

This would seem to be the case of King David (see Psalm 3): he asks for help when the mess he's in is his own fault, his own creation. Similar instances can be found all through the psalms (e.g. Psalm 40).

Likewise, the tax collector in Jesus' parable about the tax collector and the Pharisee: the tax collector knew perfectly well that he didn't deserve God's grace or mercy, but still he asks: "God be merciful to me, a sinner" (Luke 18:9-14).

Practicalities: Choices

- Enabling – Entitlement – Judging vs. Discernment
- Okay to practice discernment
- But watch for what might 'blind' you (the log in your own eye)
- Take a look at the person's actions (by their fruits)
- However, we need to note that the standard we use for others will be the standard that is in turn applied to us
- However, what if the others really do not have much of a choice because of addictions, mental health issues or other circumstances

Choices on our part

It is here that I, both as an intercity priest and as a former social worker, clearly face some difficult choices. By helping someone, am I enabling to continue in a destructive and less than health lifestyle? That is why both myself and the

Shelter that I work with, are quite happy to provide food, shelter and clothing, but not money.

And what about the sense of entitlement or ingratitude or hostility that we sometimes encounter? I really have trouble with those.

This then comes down to that age-old question of judging or discerning who and when and how to help. Here, from Jesus Himself, are some pros and cons:

- He speaks of removing the mote, the log, in your own eye before trying to remove the speck that other person's eye. Clearly then, judging is allowed, but first after considering and dealing with one's own faults, imperfections and biases. Clean them up first? But when will that ever happen?
- so, there is, a place for wisdom, for discernment, for discrimination, based on their behaviour. Indeed, Jesus says, only a few verses later, "for by their fruits you shall know them."

But then Jesus also says, 'it is the measure or standard that you apply to others that will in term be used for you.' And, to make matters for us as the 'givers', He tells us not to be worried about being misused or taken advantage of.

So, to move ahead, when It comes to homelessness, often the question is asked, 'do they want a solution? Do they want to stop being homeless? Or, put another way: do they have to want a solution?

- Jesus often asked people who came to Him for healing a question that seems self-evident: 'do you want to be healed?', thus implying that there was a choice.
- in the Parable of the Sower, the Seed & the Soils, there are a series of choices:
 - in each case, the type of soil actually represents the individual human heart and how it will respond to the Good News;
 - each person has a choice as to whether he or she will have a hardened, a shallow, a crowd or overly 'busy' or a receptive and open heart. So, it is with life in general.

- For those who 'chose' to be homeless—and this does occur, this is a problem, but I would argue that we still provide them with shelter, food and clothing. Homeless encampments, however, constitute a different and more far-reaching problem.
- However, this simple question of choice is often compounded or impacted by issues of mental illness and/ or addictions. So, what if it can't be boiled down to a matter of deserving or of choice? What if they are truly helpless? Many of those who are homeless or in our shelters, are addicted or have mental health issues. What if it isn't a clear matter of choice, of choosing to be homeless?

Mental Illness in the Biblical World

Certainly, it was well known:

Paranoia: King Saul, Herod the Great, and Herod Antipas

Depression: Job, David, Elijah, Jeremiah and Jonah

David feigned it while on the run

More serious disorders: Emperor Nero, King Nebuchadnezzar

boanthropy: caused him to act like a cow

Mental Illness in the Biblical World

- WORSE NOW?
- Busyness, speed & pressure of modern life?
- Lack of clearly defined roles & expectations? (Jesus & John the Baptist)
- Lack of societal support systems:

Families: for instance, with Jesus, when they thought he was 'beside himself' (in other words, deranged) or with the prodigal son (knew he could come home)

Institutions, as with Caesar or kings.

Mental illness in the Biblical world

Certainly, it was known, though probably not as widespread as it is today:

- paranoia in the cases of King Saul, Herod the Great & Herod Antipas
- severe depression as with Job, David, Elijah, Jeremiah. Jonah
- even foreign rulers were mentioned as having mental disorders:
 - Caesar Tiberius, for instance
 - or the remarkably unbalanced Caesar Nero
 - or King Nebuchadnezzar, who was inflected with a rare mental ailment called boanthropy:

“O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you! You are no longer ruler of this kingdom. You will be driven from human society. You will live in the fields with the wild animals, and you will eat grass like a cow”
(Daniel 4:31-32)

And we know that the future King David, when on the run from Saul, feigned madness/ insanity in order to get himself out of trouble so the condition was certainly not unknown back then:

David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of King Achish of Gath. So he changed his behaviour before them; he pretended to be mad when in their presence. He scratched marks on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle run down his beard. Achish said to his servants, ‘Look, you see the man is mad; why then have you brought him to me? Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?’
(1 Samuel 21:12-15)

However, it is probably worse today, for several reasons:

- the speed, busyness and pressure of modern life;
- the lack today of clearly defined roles and expectations:

- boys back then were expected to follow in their father's footsteps and continue in their occupations:
- compare the expectations around Jesus and his cousin, John the Baptist, a carpenter's son vs. a priest's son. No wonder they accepted John as naturally having a ministry where they didn't with Jesus. "Is this not the carpenter's son?" they asked when Jesus spoke in the synagogue in Nazareth.
- and girls were expected to be wives and mothers.
- furthermore, there were publicly accepted limitations based on family, clan and tribe: thus, King Saul's reluctance to taking on the role of king (after all, he was from a lesser tribe and family (see 1 Samuel 9:21).

Back in Biblical times, there were informal but widely understood supports in place:

- Jesus' family thought He was 'beside himself' (that is, insane or at least imbalanced) and so came to 'take him home', out of the public limelight and away from public scrutiny and reproach. The person was secreted away at home and essentially became a 'non-person' as far as the public was concerned, but was certainly safe and out of danger (see Mark 3:21). That was a widespread strategy at the time of Jesus in dealing with mental illnesses or disturbances. -furthermore, the younger son in the Parable of the Prodigal Son knew that he could always come home, even with the shame and dishonour he'd brought upon the family, even with his totally disreputable behaviour. He knew there'd always be a place for him, even if no more than as a hired servant (see Luke 15:17-19).

Even in more recent times we've had a history of mental disorders but little of their modern frequency:

- in pioneer days, we'd hear of recluses or remittance men who lived by themselves and avoided, shunned, society;
- or we'd hear of people suffering from melancholy, an old way of describing depression

Often the minor cases were looked after informally, by the family—for instance, by living at home where family members could look after you, or by the community, as with the Hutterite colonies of today.

Addictions in the Ancient World

- Palestine: wine and beer were the staples
- Elsewhere: opium, cannabis, ergot and kykeon
 - None of these were prominent in Palestine
- Cases of abuse dealt with by family or community
- Nothing of the speed, severity or scope of modern addictions
- Few noted instances of individuals being totally incapacitated or controlled by whatever intoxicant they were using—unlike today

Addictions in the ancient world

There were certainly various intoxicants in the ancient world, and in Palestine in particular, where wine and beer were staples.

Elsewhere there was opium, cannabis, ergot (a hallucinogenic substance), and kykeon (a fermented beverage composed of barley and water), but there is no evidence that any of these was prominent in Israel in Biblical times.

Cases of abuse were dealt with either by the family—at home, or by the community, as with a king or emperor.

However, there was nothing like the speed, severity and widespread nature of modern addictions.

Drunkenness certainly existed, but there are few noted instances of individuals being totally incapacitated by use of the substance, unlike what happens so frequently today.

Even so, Paul the apostle’s word of warning is still quite appropriate: “All things are lawful to me, but I will not be mastered (or controlled) by anything” (1 Corinthians 6:12).

However, I would venture to say that for many of our people who experience homelessness addictions are indeed inflicted with something that controls or masters them, over which they often can have little or no control.

Practicalities – Practical Measures

- Timely and helpful intervention for mental health & addictions crises;
- Realistic funding for social assistance programs;
- Housing, with supports; half-way and transitional housing;
- Early intervention regarding homelessness;
- Outreach programs (life and career training etc.)
- Affordable housing
- Adequate income levels

Practical measures

So, what in practical terms, can and should be done?

- making up for the lack of assessment, intervention and treatment for addictions and mental health issues; prompt and informed assistance in cases of severe trauma and support for those suffering from it. Often immediate intervention is needed; a referral several months down the road simply won't 'cut it.'
- changes to our social assistance programs and how they are viewed, both by government and by the general population. I know that they are generally seen with suspicion as being misused or taken advantage of, but I think that those are the minority:
 - when I was a social worker, I had a home economist look at what we 'allowed' for two parents with a teenager. She was able to manage on that amount, but only because she did considerable skills, engaged in comparison shopping and had ready access to transportation;
 - and certainly, over the years, I have known individuals who skipped on buying food or medicines simply to be able to afford decent accommodations.
- homeless shelters, half-way houses and transitional housing
 - housing, with supports

- warming shelters
- and certainly, the Housing First initiative of the Alberta government is a great start.

And here, of course, questions of zoning, building codes and neighbourhood consent often arise and frustrate the efforts of churches and other community organizations.

- early intervention regarding homelessness, before it becomes habitual, especially with youth and incidental or periodic homeless people;
- finding a replacement for the sense of community, belonging and security that people can sometimes find in shelter or encampments
- outreach programs for the homeless, training in life and work skills, assistance in obtaining necessary documents, etc., exit- planning vs. simply 'warehousing' them.
- soup kitchens, food banks – so many people today are one paycheque away from poverty or homelessness -affordable housing, whether to rent or to purchase
- in our homeless counts we found a surprising number of people who were either 'couch surfing' or sharing crowded accommodations because they could not afford to pay the rents themselves, or else were paying over 30% of their income on housing.
- and then, there is the unpopular but ever-present question of income levels, especially for those in entry-level or service jobs. The rich, in James 5:4, were lambasted for making their fortunes on the back of the poor, so what about our corporate salaries and profits today?

The Grace of God

- Illustrated in the Parables of the Unjust Steward and the Workers in the Vineyard
- ‘While we were sinners, helpless, rebels...” God took the initiative.
- To give, to lend etc. even to those who will never repay you
- To do it for ‘the least of these my little ones’
- What good does it do to say, “I hope all goes well with you; if you don’t lend a hand?
- Only to Christians: no, Parable of Good Samaritan tells us that we help anyone and everyone.

The Grace of God

- We are to imitate God



The grace of God

The owner in the Parable of the Unjust Steward, by going along with the actions of the steward he incidentally blesses his renters, meaning that they wouldn't have to go without this year;

And with the landowner in the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard, the bestowing of grace is even more evident. In no wise did those later workers deserve the owner's generosity or benevolence;

Paul's letter to the Romans tells us that 'while we were sinners, helpless, rebels etc.', God took the initiative. He didn't wait until we were ready, or deserved it, or any such thing. He gave, he sacrificed, anyway.

And does not Jesus say the same kind of thing in the Sermon on the Mount: He tells us to give, to lend, to those who will never repay you in some way. He says that even sinners give when they expect something in return, payment perhaps, but that we are to be a cut above that.

There are a couple of very unsettling Scripture passages in the New Testament. In one of Jesus' final discourses, He says to His disciples, "If you do this for the least of my little ones, you do it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

And in James 2:15-16, we hear these words, "If you know someone who doesn't have any clothes or food, you shouldn't just say, 'I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat.' What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help?"

There is, as you might expect, a tremendous debate among Bible scholars as to just who this was referring to, one's fellow believers or to the world in general.

However, this debate is immediately dismissed as irrelevant by the wellknown Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Preceding that parable, Jesus was asked by the legal expert, 'Who is my neighbour?' (verse 29). The legal expert is clearly wanting to 'limit his responsibility', limiting who he had to act as a neighbour towards. He was hoping, probably that it would be no one further than one of his fellow Jews.

But then, notice how Jesus frames the parable. The man who has beaten up and left half dead, has also been stripped of his clothing. That means that his identity as being one of the legal expert's fellow Jews, or as being some foreigner, has been stripped away. The expert has had his expectation of being able to limit his care and responsibility on the basis of religion or ethnicity has been removed.

And so, Jesus' reply to the expert and to us, is in essence, "To whom must you become a neighbour to?" And who is that neighbour in this parable? It is the person who was in need!

And indeed, is this not exactly how God is. In fact, we are to imitate God in the way that He deals with people. We are to be generous, just like God. God gives rain to the good and the evil, the just and the unjust, alike.



Be merciful
just as your
Father is merciful

Luke 6:36

Knowing-Jesus.com



Matthew 5:45 NKJV

THAT YOU MAY BE
SONS OF YOUR
FATHER IN HEAVEN;
FOR HE MAKES HIS
SUN RISE ON THE EVIL
AND ON THE GOOD,
AND SENDS RAIN ON
THE JUST AND ON THE
UNJUST.

Knowing-Jesus.com

God's own life experience— In Christ Jesus, we see that God understands what homelessness is like--because He's been there.

The Prologue to John's Gospel tells us that He "set up tent among us". It is the same word used in the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Septuagint, to describe the tent of meeting in the wilderness, something very movable and innately temporary. Think of Jesus erecting a pup tent on our front lawn—and that in the midst of our unpredictable and often inclement weather!

Illustration

Furthermore, in answer to one 'would be' disciple, Jesus spells out what it means to be a disciple and follow Him. He says that He Himself has 'no place to call home'. So, Jesus knows what it's like, knows what it is like to be without a permanent home and have to sleep rough—as was probably often the case--or else rely upon the hospitality and good graces of others, often for extended periods of time—what we today would often call 'couch surfing'.

And so, we are commanded, certainly if we are His disciples and followers, to be merciful, even as He is merciful, for certainly this is the example and the pattern that Jesus Himself established and followed.



A Concluding Note...

In His earthly ministry, Jesus often had to share accommodations or 'live rough'

He had no place to call His own

He has shared our existence, even our homelessness, so He knows what it's like.

And so, in keeping with His practice, we are to be helpful and merciful to others.

PRESENTATION 5

ADVOCACY & RELATIONSHIPS; STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY ADDICTIONS AND HOMELESSNESS.

Mrs. Kathy Christiansen, Executive Director, Alpha House Calgary

Advocacy and relationship building are significant strategies in improving outcomes for individuals whose lives are impacted by street level addiction and homelessness.

At Alpha House, forging strong relationships with the client is a key factor in supporting individuals to begin making healthier choices and staying committed to their goals. Significant effort is also invested in building relationships with the broader community including relations with neighbors, local businesses, community associations. Supporting a greater understanding of homelessness in the community is critical in lending better outcomes for those affected and is part of our dedicated work at Alpha House.



ALPHA HOUSE

1

OVERVIEW



building a
community
where we
can all feel

ESTABLISHED IN 1981 AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CITY CELLS OR HOSPITALS FOR MEN AND WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION AND LIVING ON THE STREETS OF CALGARY

MISSION: TO PROVIDE SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHOSE LIVES HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG DEPENDENCIES



ALPHA HOUSE

2

GOALS



- REDUCE HARM
- IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE
- BUILD RAPPORT THROUGH UNDERSTANDING
- UPHOLD CLIENTS PERSONAL AGENCY
- MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT





ALPHA HOUSE 8

SUMMARY

- Our goal is to **REDUCE HARM & IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE** while building relationships with our clients to gain a deeper understanding of their goals
- We believe in each individual's right to make decisions for their own life and we work with each client to **SUPPORT & EMPOWER** them in making choices that will improve their circumstances
- Our staff are highly skilled and able to provide **QUALIFIED & COMPASSIONATE** care to clients displaying a wide range of complex behaviours



ALPHA HOUSE

9

RESOURCES



SHELTER: 403-234-7388 ext. 1

DETOX: 403-234-7388 ext.2

OUTREACH

H.E.L.P. (FORMERLY DOAP) TEAM: 403-998-738

ENCAMPMENT TEAM: 403-805-7388

NEEDLE RESPONSE TEAM: 403-796-5334



ALL ALPHA HOUSE RESOURCE LINES ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND FREE TO CALL

ALPHA HOUSE

10



 AlphaHouseCalgary

 AlphaHouseCalgary

 AlphaHouseYYC

 Alpha-House-Society

www.alphahousecalgary.com

PRESENTATION 3

DISCUSSION ON ALBERTA GOVERNMENT AT THE WEBINAR, FOCUSED ON TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION, WITH QUESTION AND ANSWER SEGMENT

Hon. Dan Williams – Minister of Mental Health and Addiction

The minister spoke from the heart.

The Lethbridge Herald newspaper provided a feature article (see below) on the webinar which included the minister's comments among others.

Webinar brings attention to addictions issues

BY LETHBRIDGE HERALD ON OCTOBER 24, 2023.

Justin Seward
LETHBRIDGE HERALD

The Association of Nigerians in Lethbridge, the Southern Alberta Ethnic Association and the Soboyejo Turning Point Foundation for Nigeria's 63rd National Day Anniversary hosted a web seminar to bring awareness to struggles of addiction and homelessness on Saturday at the Multicultural Centre.

The theme was Addictions & Homelessness Are Not Fun But Human Struggles-Advocacy, Awareness & Action to Save Lives.

This is the fifth seminar series that the Foundation has hosted.

"We talk on global issues, local challenges and the way forward," Fola Soboyejo, executive director for Soboyejo Turning Point Foundation.

"Rubbing minds, having dialogue to promote understanding and peace."

The Association of Nigerians host one seminar a year in October to celebrate their National Day anniversary.

“October 1 is Nigeria National Day and then we think it’s part of our contribution to the Nigerian community and the Lethbridge community, which is our host, to have an event like this to bring people together,” said Soboyejo.

Alberta Minister of Mental Health and Addiction Dan Williams was a speaker and spoke about the issue in the province.

“I think it needs to be said off the beginning that what we’ve been doing by-in-large as a society, I’m going to count all of Canada and America in this, what we’ve been doing as a response to the addiction crisis, it hasn’t been working,” said Williams.

“And I’m not throwing stones or blaming any individual group or individual person, not at all. But we have to be able to recognize when a policy isn’t working. When it’s not making things better, are we willing to pivot and move towards a policy that does?”

Williams said what happens then is if there aren’t policies in place that enable recovery, first and foremost, society ends up facilitating an addiction.

“And Alberta has taken a very strong stand on this,” said Williams.

“We’ve been very emphatic in saying we believe deeply in recovery. We believe in there’s a hope and a life beyond addiction, and we see it all the time with thousands of Albertans running amongst us.”

On top of Williams list is a health care response to addiction.

“Which is why we have invested in hundreds of millions of dollars into recovery centres, into the virtual open dependency program, which is evidence-based opioid therapy as addiction opioid medical treatment that you can get on, and Alberta is the only place in the world that has it. So you can have same-day immediate access to evidence-based treatment when it comes to that.”

Kathy Christiansen of Calgary Alpha House Society spoke about how advocacy and relationship building for those who have experienced homelessness and street-level addiction helps.

“We’ve often talked about our work at the centre as sort of being founded on a relational model,” said Christiansen. “So we build rapport through understanding.”

Alpha House has a detox program with 42 beds, 30 of which are medical detox beds.

“So we’re supporting people who are in Acute withdrawal and probably need some type of medical intervention,” she said.

“And then 12 of those beds are for people that have moved through the phase of Acute withdrawal. But we want to continue to work with them to make sure that they have an opportunity to connect to a treatment program or a housing program before we discharge them.”

APPENDIX

SOBOYEJO-TURNINGPOINT CHARITY FOUNDATION PROJECTS

About

Upon the successful completion of the Ogan School Charity Project June 2020, our dream is to develop a community centre comprising the Ogan Women & Youth Centre, Ball Courts, Arts & Craft Centre, Adubi War Heroes Museum and an Internet Radio Station to stimulate the community and save the village further decline.

Ogan – Olu Wellness Project

The purpose of the Ogan – Olu Wellness Project is to improve students' and educators' wellbeing and educational experience.

To get this project off the ground we have asked Dr. Oluwagbohunmi Awosoga (Olu) to reach out to other well-meaning people in his circle of influence to support this great cause. We realize raised funds may not meet all the needs. However, we know that every bit of assistance will make a difference in the daily educational experience of individuals in these educational institutions.

Olu visited Nigeria in 2021 and had the opportunity to visit his former primary school. The condition, which he found, was very disheartening. As he looked forward to his 60th birthday in 2022, he came up with the idea of requesting well-wishers to translate their birthday gifts into financial donations to support these schools. Funds donated will go toward infrastructure renovations in these schools, with the provision of computerized library facilities to each of these schools if there is sufficient fund.

Thank you for your contribution to this great cause!

Ogan Women and Youth Centre

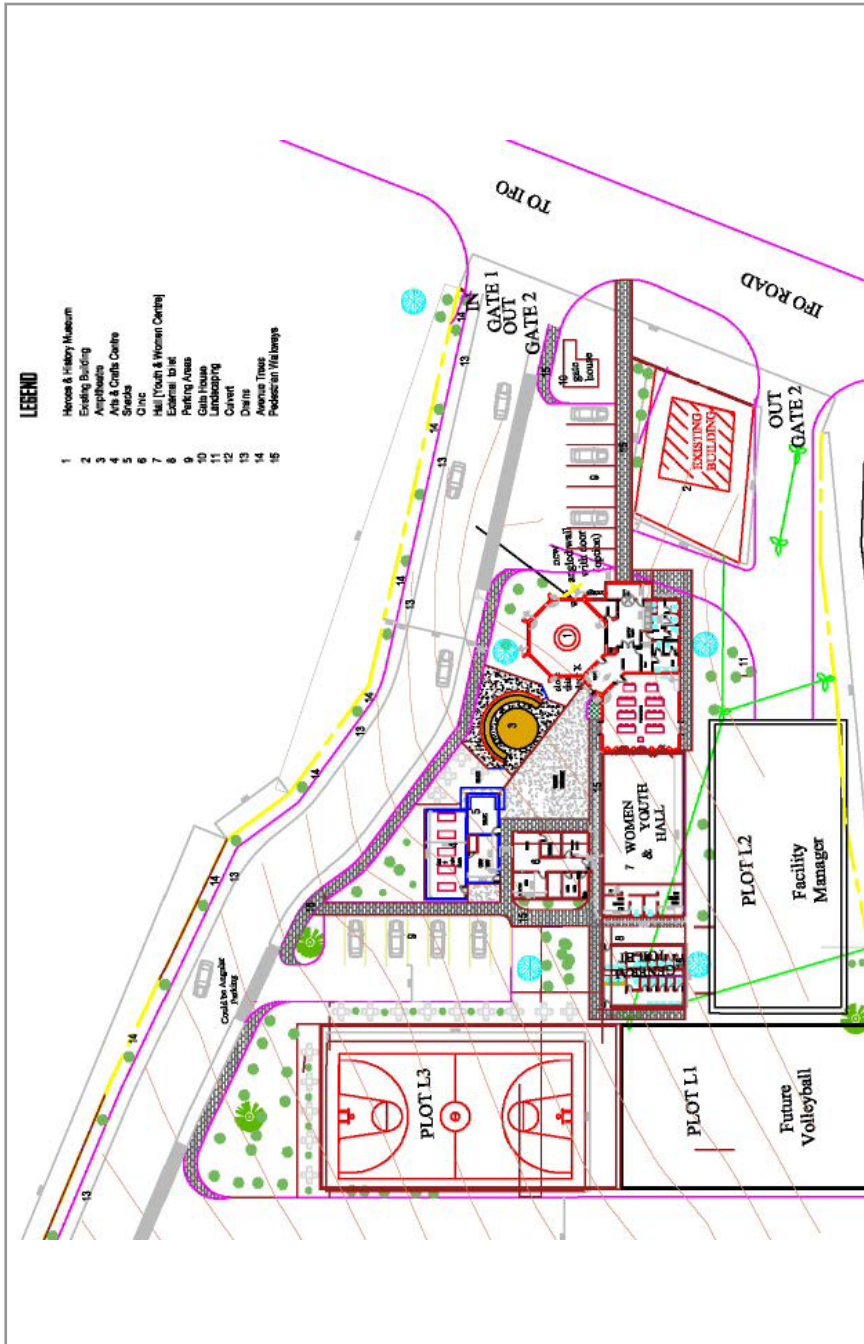
Ogan Women and Youth Centre is a new project that Fọla Şoboyejọ is undertaking following the successful completion of the Ogan Elementary School in a rural farming community in Ogun State, southwest Nigeria.

The vision is to develop a community centre that connects mothers with children and youth for learning and sharing in a safe and fun play environment to nurture a responsible, creative, happy and Godly childhood for future leaders.

Our goal is to develop a community centre that connects mothers with children and youth for learning, sharing – weaving, braiding, sewing, painting, arts and craft, poetry, storytelling, drama and scriptures – in a safe and fun play environment to nurture responsible, creative, and happy Godly childhood of future leaders; to memorialize and amplify the legend of Adubi the freedom warrior and stimulate tourism and the local economy. Our dream is to develop a community centre that connects mothers with children and youth for learning, sharing – weaving, braiding, sewing, painting, arts and craft, poetry, storytelling, drama and scriptures – in a safe and fun play environment to nurture responsible, creative, and happy Godly childhood of future leaders; to memorialize and amplify the legend of Adubi the freedom warrior and stimulate tourism and the local economy.

In a recent development, we have received encouragement from one of our key patrons in Nigeria to elevate the project to OGAN WOMEN & YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE for basic skills acquisition. This would be a means to youth and women empowerment, poverty alleviation and economic self-reliance in Ogan region. Our dream is that such a lofty project goal may align with the Corporate Social Responsibility objectives, and attract the partnership of at least one of the mineral mining and processing companies in the area to complete the project quicker, by God’s Grace.

Much gratitude goes to our project architects and engineers who support us, pro bono, or donate significant part of their man-time. Our thanks go to Brad Goss Architect (retired), Alvin Reinherd Fritz Architect, Plan-Eng Consulting Inc in Canada, and Palfe Associates, GJH Project Associates and others in Nigeria, including dynamic committed stakeholders in the village of Ogan helping to protect the project.



SITE PLAN IN PROGRESS



3-D RENDERING OF THE OWYEC



Master Site Plan – Proposed OGAN WOMEN & YOUTH CENTRE with Adubi War Heroes Museum



OGAN WOMEN & YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE Main Building



ARTS & CRAFTS CENTRE



ADUBI HEROES MUSEUM INTERIOR



BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL COURTS



ADUBI WAR HEROES MUSEUM



FUTURE INTERNET RADIO STATION

Watch the 3-D video clip Presentation of OGAN Women and Youth Centre on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/V6Vmjud8j-M>

SOBOYEJO-TURNINGPOINT CHARITY FOUNDATION PROJECT

Blurbs and Clips

OGAN SCHOOL CAN-NAIJA HALL DEDICATION 2ND APRIL 2020

Posted on [February 29, 2020](#)

It has been 5 years coming. The Ogan School Charity Building Project is now completed with support from individuals and churches in Canada, and family and friends in Nigeria, the US and the UK. Praise God

CAN-NAIJA HALL

Comprises:

- 4 Classrooms
- 93m Deep Water Borehole with Submersible Pump and Storage Tanks
- Washroom Building – 3 Flushed Toilets for girls, 3 for boys
- Classroom 4 is built as Library, Computer Learning Centre including a Meeting Room.

The Dedication and Tape-Cutting event is scheduled for 1pm, Thursday 2nd April, 2020 at Ogan (United Anglican) School, Ogan Town, Ifo Local Government, Ogun State. Four of the proposed 10 computers for the Computer Lab have been donated.

Since the gradual reconstruction of their collapsed classroom block, the school population has grown from 200 (in 2 classrooms) to over 400, with the additional classrooms. Million thanks and blessings to our donors and volunteers in the past, and the future assisting in many ways to enrich the lives of the children, and enhance the future of the village.

Ogan School classroom development project promotion

Posted on **October 18, 2013**

Ogan School Development Project began as a dream for Fola Şoboyejo who has a heart for the children in Ogan, Nigeria. Together with supporters and friends they are making an impact on this area of Africa to make a difference in the lives of many children. **THE PLACE & THE NEED:** United Anglican School in Ogan Town is a 100-year-old elementary school attended by children from Ogan and 4 neighbouring villages. Until a few years ago there were 3 buildings of 3 classrooms each however, due to aging and structural material two of the buildings have collapsed. The only surviving cement block of 3 classrooms built about 15 years ago is school to about 200 children from kindergarten to Grade 6 who do daily rotations and shifts, enduring half-day schooling. **THE GOAL:** To build 6 classrooms, a multi-purpose hall with library, computer room, adult education, and water closet washrooms over the next 30 months. To get involved contact Fola at folasoboyejo@yahoo.com for more information.



OGAN SCHOOL COMPUTER LAB

CAN-NAIJA HALL

CHARITY PROJECT, UNITED ANGLICAN SCHOOL, OGAN TOWN, IFO LGA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

OFFICIAL DEDICATION - To The Glory Of God

2ND APRIL, 2020

Rt. Rev. Nathaniel O. Ogundipe
Bishop, Anglican Diocese Of Ifo

Chief Olumuyiwa Patrick Okele
The Baale, Ogan Town

Project Director Engr Fola Soboyejo, C. Eng, FNSE
Project Manager Engr. Anu Egbedayo, MNSE

Architects: Alvin Fritz FRAIC (Canada), Babajide Dada, H. Akin Akiyode FNIA
Structural Engineer BCB Engineering (Canada); Ade Adewole Associates
Mechanical & Electrical Engineer: Plan Eng Consulting Inc (Canada). Palfe Associates
Quantity Surveyor Kintiruss Associates

Construction: Mutiu Olaniyi, Peter Ogundele, Ayodeji Ojetunmibi, Francis Shoeta
Mutairu Momoh, Entop (Water) Ltd

Head Teachers (2014-to Date) - Mrs: Aderonke Akiwowo Kehinde Olusile Titi Ajayi
T. Esho, Monsura Tella Adebanke Olajide

Community Project Advocates: Chief Ajana Tunde Soboyejo, Ahmed Balogun
Development Sponsors: Pastor Engr. Afolabi Oladele, Engr. Titi Omo-
E.B. Olusanya Family, Dr. Adesola Taiwo

Project Promoters: Soboyejo Turningpoint Foundation & GreenLove (Non-Profit) U
Project Charity Agency: BRIDGES OF HOPE. CANADA



Posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [Leave a reply](#)



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Email: folasoboyejo@gmail.com; info@bridgesofhope.ca

SOBOYEJO TURNINPOINT CHARITY FOUNDATION

stpcfoundation@gmail.com

Phone: (403) 929 1316; (867) 688 0066

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As the mechanism of engagement and change is education, preserving the resulting rich and robust conversations is the rationale for the WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK. It carries forward thoughts and ideas to challenge the status quo of citizen complacency with community engagement. It serves as feed mill of concrete ideas for students, researchers and social justice advocates. That is why this WORLD TURNINGPOINT BOOK is a must-read that inspires and strengthens today the hope for a better tomorrow through continuous, open, meaningful conversation for effective action.

- **Esther Awosoga**, *Professional Educator, Community Service Leader, Lethbridge, AB, Canada*

The Soboyejo-TurningPoint Charity Foundation is attempting to make available to a wider audience of those who are, might be, or DEFINITELY SHOULD be thinking on the root causes of our human quagmire and alienation now. Our failures to be civil, work cooperatively, together to help make a better place for us and our progeny and others to THRIVE, not simply grow WEALTHIER and be FAMOUS. It is a must-read for all.

- **Arthur Haverhals**, *Historian, Global Affairs Commentator, Ottawa, ON, Canada*

Globally, the coexistence of addictions and homelessness presents a complex and distressing reality, underscoring the pressing need for proactive advocacy, increased awareness, and swift action to save lives.

- **Engr. Yetunde Holloway**, *Chair of the Women In Engineering Committee of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) which promotes Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), 2023 October Webinar Speaker.*

"Now I know that being Canadian means being who you are and be yourself. I look at people from other ethnic groups who also have accents when they are talking; they are Canadian too. I do not need to fight against my own culture, and I do not need to worship other cultures either. It is the [multicultural] political system. It cultivates "trust" and respects "individuality."

- **Prof. Bonnie Lee**, *Keynote Speaker at the Inaugural TURNINGPOINT Seminar, 2018*

Africa should define its own way of leadership and define its destiny. Societies have grown through civilization taking account of their history and culture. The West does not understand Africa (enough) and wants all to be like them, which is not sustainable.

- **Sola Awoderu**, *2019 October Webinar Speaker, Public Affairs Commentator*

The question that we have asked ourselves over the years is this – is the Western type of democracy ideal for Africa? The webinar speakers proffered profound answers.

- **Dr. Victor Wutor**, *Speaker at the 2019 Webinar, President Southern Alberta Ethnic Association.*

Let us review the historical record...from the papal bull of Nicholas V in 1454 (declaration of all sub-Saharan Africans to be held in perpetual Portuguese slavery) to October 19, 2019: a time span consistent with the ascendancy of the model and try to answer the question: Cui Bono (Who Benefits)?

- **James Moore**, *Speaker at the 2nd TURNINGPOINT Webinar, Thinker, Social Justice Advocate*

Politics is a very risky business, which sometimes requires people of strong character to unite and depend on one another. If you want peace, then you need to cultivate genuine friendships and engage not only with those on your side but optimally with those on the other side.

- **Prof. John von Heyking**, *Professor of Political Science, University of Lethbridge, 2022 TURNINGPOINT Webinar Speaker*



Book is **FREE** onLine

May visit www.ogandev.org and support our cause.



Fola Soboyejo

Author, Thinker, Engineer,
Community Builder,
Founder of STPCF.