EMOTIONAL EXTRACTIONS: THE RECRUITMENT PRACTICES AND EXPERIENTIAL
DIMENSIONS OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERISM

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Abstract

This dissertation analyses the increasing popularity of international volunteerism among young people who travel abroad, primarily to locations in the Global South, to work and learn in developing communities. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork including qualitative interviews and participation observation undertaken in three popular volunteer sites in Peru (Lima, Cusco/Sacred Valley and Ancash) as well as the analysis of key documents like websites, social media, training manuals and recruitment materials like pamphlets, catalogues and fliers, I demonstrate that volunteers commonly come to understand their experiences not only as an opportunity to help others, but to also personally benefit from experiences that will lead to their own individual growth and self-development. In this way, Peru is commonly imagined as a destination and resource for travellers seeking life-changing, emotional experiences from the presumed benevolence of volunteering their time. As a contribution to the field of human rights and humanitarian communication studies, I argue that this outlook is replete with neoliberal ideals valuing individualism over a politics of solidarity, as "helping" Peruvians becomes a means to an end for achieving desired positive feelings about one's own character or abilities. This trend reflects a kind of "emotional extraction", wherein privileged volunteers participate in international development work that may or may not have lasting, positive impacts on the host communities, but ultimately serves to empower or enrich the lives of the volunteers themselves. By aligning volunteerism with extractive practices like mining, my work provides new ways of understanding how colonial and imperial legacies constitute global humanitarian practices, even when they aspire to rupture these histories.

Résumé

Cette thèse analyse la popularité du bénévolat international chez les jeunes qui voyagent à l'étranger, principalement dans les régions du Sud globalisé, afin de travailler et d'étudier dans les communautés en développement. Cette analyse s'appuie sur une étude ethnographique, des entrevues qualitatives, et l'observation des participants effectués dans trois sites de bénévolat au Pérou (Lima, Cusco/la Vallée Sacrée et Ancash), ainsi que l'interprétation de documents clés tels que sites-web, médias sociaux, manuels de formation et matériels d'adhésion comprenant brochures, catalogues et dépliants. Je soutiens que les bénévoles perçoivent fréquemment leurs expériences non seulement comme des occasions d'aider autrui, mais aussi comme des expériences bénéfiques pour leur propre croissance individuelle. De cette manière, le Pérou est généralement perçu comme une destination et une source d'expériences cathartiques pour les voyageurs, grâce à la bienveillance supposée d'avoir fait du bénévolat. En tant que contribution au champ des droits de la personne et l'étude des communications humanitaires**,** je prétends que cette perspective s'inscrit dans des idéaux néolibéraux qui valorisent l'individualisme au détriment d'une politique de solidarité. « L'aide » aux péruviens/péruviennes devient un véhicule d'émotions valorisantes pour leur propre personne. Cette tendance reflète une certaine forme « d'extraction émotionnelle » par laquelle des bénévoles privilégiés participent au travail de développement international qui peut ou non avoir un impact durable et positif sur les communautés d'accueil, mais qui ultimement mène à habiliter ou enrichir les vies des bénévoles eux-mêmes. En alignant le bénévolat avec les pratiques d'extraction comme l'exploitation minière, ce travail fournit une nouvelle manière de comprendre comment des legs coloniaux et impériaux forment les pratiques humanitaires internationales, même lorsqu'elles aspirent à rompre ces histoires.

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this project to my friends in Peru: Romy Bazalar Cotera, Ana Maria Caceres, Maria Maguiña Aliaga and Josselyn Pascacio Maguiña. Each of these individuals showed me limitless kindness, openness and patience during my first visit to Lima in 2010. When I returned to conduct my fieldwork in 2015, it was like we hadn't skipped a beat. Their assistance and influence were invaluable at each stage of this project, from start to finish, and I hope that this work will in some way show the impact that their friendship has had on how I have come to see the world.

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Preface and Contribution of Authors

This thesis is an original work by Nathaniel Laywine. No part of this thesis has been previously published.

Chapter 1: The Extractive Ontology of Neoliberal Humanitarianism

"All That Glitters …"

At the risk of repeating an overused platitude, this dissertation cautions its readers that, "all that glitters is not gold." It adds, that even if it is gold that glitters before you, an ethical imperative exists to ask of it: where did this gold come from? And even if I take it, how could it ever really belong to me? The relationship between what is now known as the nation of Peru and its colonizers – first the Spanish conquistadors in the sixteenth century, and more recently, modern nation states in collusion with multi-national corporations – is approaching 500 years of ongoing preoccupation with gold and other minerals. The South American nation comprises several distinct topographical regions, including the mountainous Andes, Amazon jungle and coastal desert along the Pacific. As such, it is rich in a variety of different resources that have been enjoyed and exploited through systems of colonial rule and foreign direct investment. While other resources have commercial value, the search for gold has always most grabbed the attention of those traveling to Peru. Like other nations within the Global South, Peru has always been viewed by outsiders as a site of extraction. The desire to seize this precious mineral from the land, whether for consumption, commerce or accumulation has justified an ongoing system of political, economic and cultural domination of the Peruvian people. It is crucial to understand the legacy of extractive industries in Peru. They have created social and economic harms to local and Indigenous peoples, who are exploited as laborers, evicted from their ancestral land and the primary victims of the havoc that these operations have inflicted to the natural environment.

Five centuries of resource exploitation in Peru have so naturalized an extractive logic that even activists who travel to Peru to volunteer their time, energy and money in contribution to improving the nation subscribe to it. This dissertation argues that extraction serves as both a

metaphor, and in a Marxian materialist sense, the set of conditions through which foreigners experience and understand Peru. In a neoliberal age, this ideology permeates even humanitarian causes. International volunteers, and particularly young people, who travel to Peru still expect to personally enrich themselves from their experiences; not necessarily through wealth measured in gold, but in the emotional and experiential wealth that is associated with vague notions of helping others. While the impulse to help others who are presumed to be suffering is an important part of a cosmopolitan ethics system, and ought to be reinforced, the current paradigm devalues notions previously associated with humanitarian intervention like solidarity or altruism, and instead emphasizes how this activity will benefit the individual's own self-development. As I will argue, even voluntarism in Peru has become an extractive enterprise for international visitors. These travelers witness the poverty and disenfranchisement of the Peruvian people – a legacy of colonialism in itself – and process the encounters as a resource to catalyze their own growth or personal development.

I begin by providing brief histories of extractive and humanitarian engagement in Peru by foreign parties in order to draw historical linkages between the project of colonial expansionism in the 16th century, and the new Latin American extractive complex that emerged in the neoliberal, neo-imperial 1990s and that continues today. I demonstrate that practices of extraction and humanitarianism have always been intertwined in Peru, however in the context of contemporary youth international volunteerism, the logics of the extractive industry have come to permeate social relations between volunteers and Peruvian locals, whom these volunteers purport to serve through their labour. The union between extractive and humanitarian work is often a conscious, strategic initiative undertaken by key international players, as will become clear in my consideration of Canadian foreign direct investment and development assistance

programs in Peru. As such, it is in the contested space of the Peruvian "frontier-imaginary" (Tsing, 2005) where international volunteers assume multiple roles as tourists, aid workers, explorers and students. Ultimately, it is travel experiences within the Peruvian frontier where international volunteers locate, excavate and process meaning about their own inner subjectivities, abilities and places in the global world order. Where gold, and the material wealth that it afforded, was once the primary motivator for international exploration in this frontier, I argue that conceptions of personal development and emotional growth now motivate young people to undertake these journeys which are equally extractive in their own right. I trace this social movement within the context of colonial histories of international travel and tourism, and explain my own ethnographic research intervention, where I spent three months performing qualitative interviews, participant observation and document analysis in three key sites in Peru (Lima, Cusco/Sacred Valley and the Cordillera Blanca), to learn from the experiences of 32 international volunteers between the ages of 18-30 and 16 volunteer coordinators. I conclude this introduction by outlining how the rest of this study will unfold.

Histories of Extraction and Humanitarian Engagement in Peru

In 1532, the Spanish conquistadors, lead by commander Francisco Pizarro sacked the capital city of Cajamarca and captured the Sapa Inca, or emperor of the Incan Empire, Atahualpa. There are two well-documented outcomes of Atahualpa's capture that set the precedent for ongoing systems of colonial domination over the country's Indigenous peoples' lives and livelihoods for centuries to come (Hemming, 1970; MacQuarrie, 2007; Prescott, 1902). The first involved extraction. The king was held for an enormous ransom; an entire log cabin was to be filled from floor to ceiling with gold and silver and other precious metals from his empire. Given the Inca's expansive reign, from what is now Quito in the North to Santiago in the

South, and the resource-rich, mountainous Andean landscape under its jurisdiction, generating

this ransom did not pose a problem, although it did take several months to acquire the whole

sum. This marked the first major accumulation of minerals from the Incan Empire that would be

transported back to Spain before Peru became integrated into a "global system of extraction,

exchange and production of its mineral resources, that were organized around twenty-two royal

treasuries throughout the Americas" (Bury & Bebbington, 2013, p. 36). The first three centuries

of colonization produced approximately 86,000 tons of silver and 1,600 tons of gold, which

accounts for roughly 50 percent of all gold jewelry currently on the planet (Bury & Bebbington,

2013).

The second outcome was Atahualpa's forced conversion to Christianity before his death

by hanging. Although there are varying interpretations of the events, it is thought likely that he

procured his ransom and converted, not to spare his own life, but at least to commute his

sentence from burning at the stake as Incan spirituality dictated that if he was burned and not

interred then he would never reach the afterlife. Regardless of his reason, the Incan was baptized

Francisco Atahualpa before his death. Like the sum of gold that was collected, this conversion

set a precedent that would greatly impact Atahualpa's empire for the centuries to come. As early

as 1545, councils of priests were established in the Spanish capital port city, Lima to set about

converting Incans throughout the region. These councils developed Catholic teaching materials

and confessional manuals in Spanish, as well as in Quechua and Aymara[1] and also established a

system of religious and legal doctrines outlawing Incan spiritual practices or the worship of idols

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[1] These are Peru's two official Indigenous languages. Both are still used today throughout Andean nations. Approximately 13% of the country speaks Quechua as a first language and 1.7% speak Aymara. Based on 2007 estimates, this means that today roughly 4 million Peruvians speak Quechua as their first language and 520,000 Peruvians speak Aymara as their first language (Central Intelligence Agency, 2017).

(Harrison, 2014). *Huacas,* objects or locations that the Incan endowed with spiritual significance were all appropriated. Tombs and temples were ransacked for gold and other precious metals, while churches and crosses were constructed on sacred lands (Ramírez, 1996), irrevocably altering the traditional Incan economy, ecology and cosmology.

Forced conversions of the Inca demonstrate conflicting tensions of the colonial project: simultaneous total political domination of Indigenous populations as well as their inclusion into the Christian empire, where their souls could be saved from eternal damnation. Undeniably, "death, war, and violence were central aspects in the founding of colonial society because of … the key role they played in forming the system of authority together with its judicial and religious institutions. These forces went hand in hand, and they are crucial for understanding the history of conversion to Christianity in the Andes" (Ramos, 2010, pp. 34–35). Nevertheless, death, war and violence were rationalized and justified, at least in part, by the perception of liberating the Indigenous populations from their own belief systems.

Humanitarianism emerged from colonization, and became a project of the Enlightenment, when Europeans began to feel a moral imperative to assist Indigenous populations under their dominion by "civilizing them", that is assimilating them into European standards of living well, such as speaking colonial languages and practicing Christianity (Barnett, 2011; Heron, 2007; Roth & Briar-Lawson, 2011). Although often framed through discourses of charity or benevolence, humanitarianism in the Enlightenment did not question the presumed racial supremacy or moral authority of Europeans to intervene within colonized territories, and it often served to justify ongoing forms of violence enacted against Indigenous peoples.

The dynamic continues to exist in the international development industry throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. As Escobar (2012) frames it: "Behind the humanitarian concern … new

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forms of power and control, subtle and refined, were put in operation. Poor people's ability to define and take care of their own lives was eroded in a deeper manner than perhaps ever before. The poor became the target of more sophisticated practices, of a variety of programs that seemed inescapable" (p. 39). It manifests in myriad discourses that permeate international law, politics and education. Indeed, the field of international development studies exemplifies the codification of knowledge produced about developing countries into discourse used as case studies and examples in the classroom. The need for development – as infrastructure, institutional or social reform –becomes commonsense knowledge throughout the Global North and South, naturalizing the supremacy of the former and the need for the latter to receive assistance in order to "catch up" to standards imposed on it. In the following sections, we will see how humanitarianism and self-interest are interwoven in a Peruvian context.

Contemporary Peru: Extractive and Humanitarian Complexes

Although Peru gained independence from Spain in 1821 and became a sovereign republic, the country continued to experience economic subordination to European and American interests. In subsequent decades, competing schools of thought argued over the direction that Peru and other Latin American nations might take in order to best follow a path towards "development". Since the end of World War II, conservative American economists suggested that modernization followed a unidirectional path, demanding industrialization, infrastructure to facilitate the extraction of natural resources and participation in a global market place (Rostow, 1990). Dependistas, Latin America's school of Marxist economists rejected this last claim, arguing that selling raw resources to affluent nations who could afford to process and refine these resources into value added goods, only to sell them back to Latin American countries, only

perpetuated a cycle of dependency between a colonial centre (the North) and periphery (the South) (Prebisch, 1950; Singer, 1975).

Although their ideologies opposed one another, the commonality between the two camps was the emphasis on the extraction of natural resources in the name of development. Military dictator and dependista, General Juan Velasco nationalized the economy and created a Peruvian manufacturing and mining sector throughout the 1960s that ultimately failed during the economic crises of the 1980s. The IMF and World Bank offered loans to bankrupted nations throughout the Global South, with strict conditions imposing sweeping Structural Adjustment Plans and neoliberal reforms including the privatization and sale of mining industries to foreign direct investors; new regulations that were friendly to foreign investors; abolished or amended environmental protection legislation; as well as, the development of infrastructure and hiring of military and security personnel to ensure the security of these investments (Bury & Bebbington, 2013, pp. 44–45). Alberto Fujimori was elected President of Peru in 1990 on the promise that he would eradicate the country of the militant communist group, the Shining Path (*el Sendero Luminoso*) that was responsible for widespread political violence that had spread throughout the Andean highlands for nearly 20 years. By 1992, Fujimori had undertaken a military-supported presidential coup wherein he shut down Congress, suspended the constitution and purged the judiciary. With no institutional mechanisms in place to stop him, Fujimori held unrestricted power to militarize police to combat the insurgent Shining Path and to impose the neoliberal economic terms he desired, in spite of the negative impact on the nation's poor, environment or democracy.

With the highlands now far less prone to politically motivated violence, and with generous economic reforms that invited foreign direct investment, the 1990s then witnessed the

proliferation of a new extractives complex, "A vast assemblage of humans, animals, plants, highways, railroads, power lines, energy infrastructure, communications networks, exploration equipment, mineral processing facilities, refineries, pipelines, storage facilities, and ports... necessary to support activities that locate, extract, process, and transport extracted materials across the region and into the global system of production and consumption" (Bury & Bebbington, 2013, p. 54). To put these changes in context, between 1990 and 1997, foreign direct investment in mining exploration increased 90% globally, 400% across Latin America and 2000% in Peru alone (Banco Mundial as cited in Bebbington & Bury, 2013). As of 2013, Peruvian mines yield the highest tallies of mining minerals regionally and globally; not just gold, which it is the highest producer in Latin American, and the sixth internationally, but also in zinc, lead, silver, copper and iron (Gordon & Webber, 2016, p. 184). Geographically, mining projects have increased from 2.3 million hectares of land in 1990 to 24 million hectares, or 19% of national territory, as of November 2013, sprawling from the Andean highlands throughout the rest of the country, into coastal regions, and lowlands and the Amazonian basin (Gordon & Webber, 2016).

Foreign Direct Investment and/or Aid in Peru

The development of physical infrastructure can prove politically useful, particularly in the Global South where these projects stand in as the material "promise of future benefit" in a narrative of progress away "from a state of natural disorder to a civilized order" to be maintained "against the natural forces of disaster and decay" (Hetherington, 2014, pp. 196–198). However, this model of state-sponsored "Andean-Amazonian capitalism" tends to privilege modernization and progress over Indigenous rights and environmental sustainability, when Indigenous peoples

have been dispossessed of their ancestral lands that are often located atop deposits or in the path

of pipelines (Hindery & Hecht, 2013, pp. 3–4).

As an example, the Canadian government[2] has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in

Latin American extractive industries since the 1990's that promise to reduce local poverty while

simultaneously benefitting Canadian financial interests (Gordon & Webber, 2016). It is often

difficult to parse out the distinction between investment in the extractive industries and donations

for the purpose of international aid, as the funds tend to serve both purposes. As within any

petroculture,[3] Canada's economy heavily invests in the promotion and promulgation of extractive

industries domestically and abroad. As of 2013, 180 of Peru's 229 properties were owned by

Canadian companies (Gordon & Webber, 2016, p. 184). Canadian politicians have spoken

outwardly about the strategic importance of Latin America to the Canadian economy. A Free

Trade Agreement was signed between the two nations in 2009, and in 2013, Stephen Harper's

Conservative government included Peru (along with Bolivia, Honduras and Colombia, in Latin

America) in the Country of Focus development program, even though Peru is not considered to

be among the least developed countries (LDC) within Latin America. At this time, funds were

also diverted from several other aid receiving nations, such as in Sub-Saharan Africa, which

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[2] Canada has administered financial aid to nations in the South since 1968 when Pierre Trudeau's liberal government first formed the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CIDA was merged into the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2013 to form the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) by the Stephen Harper government, which was then renamed Global Affairs Canada (GAC) in 2015 under Justin Trudeau. Throughout this dissertation, I use the name of the organization that corresponds to the time period to which I'm referring.

[3] By "petroculture" I mean to draw attention to "the ways in which global society today is an *oil society* through and through. It is shaped by oil in physical and material ways, from the automobiles and highways we use to the plastics that fill up every space of our daily lives. Even more significantly, fossil fuels have also shaped our values, practices, habits, beliefs and feelings" (Petroculture Research Group, 2016).

remain among the most impoverished in the world. Julian Fantino, former Minister of

International Cooperation, "argued bluntly that CIDA's role is 'to make countries and people,

trade and investment ready'" (quoted in Gordon & Webber, 2016, p. 24). Nevertheless, in the

preceding fiscal year, Canada's aid program across Latin America was just $187.7 million, while

the same year Canadian mining companies earned a super profit of $19.3 billion (Gordon &

Webber, 2016).

Canadian extractive enterprises repeatedly purport to benefit the most marginal citizens

of the nations that host them, in particular by creating work for the rural, Indigenous poor.[4] In a

Peruvian context, at least, this claim is spurious, accounting for only 1% of employment between

1994 and 2009 (Gordon & Webber, 2016, 184). Beyond this, mining in Peru has created

numerous social and environmental issues, most notably the direct impact that mining waste run

off has had on the nation's water sources, making it the most water-stressed country in South

America and the third most vulnerable country to climate change (McGill Research Group

Investigating Canadian Mining in Latin America, 2017). Residents of several remote Indigenous

communities throughout the country (Antamina, Constancia, Cordillera del Condor, Pierina,

Santa Ana, Toromocho, Lagunas Norte) have been directly impacted by contaminated water

sources or disruptions to farmlands (McGill Research Group Investigating Canadian Mining in

Latin America, 2017). While no reliable survey data exists that quantifies what percentage of the

population is for or against extraction in the nation, a robust Peruvian civil society has formed,

including informal anti-mining social movements, NGOs (local and international) and human

rights watchdogs (McGill Research Group Investigating Canadian Mining in Latin America,

2017). The Peruvian ombudsman Walter Gutierrez has reported over 200 current conflicts

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[4] For an explanation of Canadian foreign policy's treatment of mining as a poverty reduction
strategy, see Blackwood and Stewart (2012).

between communities and mines, mostly around water usage and contamination (Vidal, 2017).

Tragically, anti-mining activists, or their family members, have gone missing or been

suspiciously murdered during times of conflict with Canadian mining operations in

Tambogrande (Gordon & Webber, 2016, p. 195), Llamac and Pocpa (Bury & Norris, 2013, p.

107). Human Rights Watch (2017) reports rampant abuse by Peruvian police against protestors,

including over 50 deaths of protestors during mining-related confrontations between strikers and

authorities between 2011-2016. [5]

Canada and Volunteer Cooperation in the Global South

While Canada is directly implicated in the deaths of anti-mining activists in Peru, it

nevertheless maintains a longstanding positive reputation for the deployment of its citizens who

volunteer throughout the Global South on various community enhancement projects. Since the

formation of Canada's first Volunteer Cooperation Agency (VCA) in 1961, Canadian University

Service Overseas – Voluntary Services Overseas (CUSO-VSO), the Canadian government has

contributed considerable funding to the deployment of approximately 67,500 volunteers of all

ages and professions to contribute their time, skills and energy to community development

projects across Africa, Asia and Latin America (Government of Canada, 2017a, 2017b; Kelly &

Case, 2006). Implemented in 2004, the Volunteer Cooperation Program (VCP) sought to foster

"a more coordinated and systematic approach to enhance the potential effectiveness of volunteer

cooperation" through funding select Volunteer Cooperation Agencies (VCAs), "organizations

that are involved in both volunteer sending and receiving, in combination with development

work, as a means to achieving specific goals in developing countries and engaging citizens in

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[5] The disappearance or murder of Latin American activists by hired cartels or assassins is sadly part of a larger trend within the region. A recent example is Berta Cáceres, a Honduran environmental activist, indigenous leader of her people, and co-founder and coordinator of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras. She was shot and killed in 2016.

their own countries" (Universalia et al., 2005, p. 7). Canadian VCAs are non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) that work as liaisons between Canadian and Southern nation partners to

"shape and deliver development initiatives that aim to benefit participating individuals and

communities in developing countries" (Universalia et al., 2005) as well as in Canada, where

volunteers are recruited to participate abroad and return back home to participate in public

education and engagement programs. Each VCA considers volunteer cooperation a primary

focus of organizational activities, although some VCAs focus on placing volunteers in particular

countries, sectors or organizational partners. All VCAs place Canadian volunteers in

the Global South. The duration of volunteer placements among VCAs is fairly inconsistent,

with some placements lasting as little as two weeks and some for six-months to several

years. Each VCA maintains goals of local capacity building and public engagement. In 2009,

CIDA committed $244.6 million over the subsequent 5 years to increase the number of overseas

Canadian volunteers from approximately 2,500 to 8,500; this was a significant increase

compared to the $42 million spent over the previous five years (Government of Canada, 2009).

Renewed in 2015 for 5 more years with an endowment of $300.3 million, the VCP anticipates

deploying an additional 10, 000 volunteers to 50 countries, demonstrating that the practice shows

no signs of slowing down (Government of Canada, 2017b).

These organizations have held three mandates; achieving developmental results in partner

communities, engaging the Canadian public and developing Canadian youths' skills (Universalia

et al., 2005, p. 13). Yet the political climate of the Cold War era also ensured that particular

interest was paid to the various decolonization movements that were occurring throughout the

Global South. As with other so-called First World nations, Canadian engagement in the Global

South also sought to prevent any of these newly independent nations from adopting communist or socialist models of governance, and from allying with the Soviets.

During this time, Canada established an "idealized national identity… [that] established Canada as a 'soft' or 'middle' power between other highly militarized nations using diplomacy and policing rather than raw force" (Benham Rennick, 2012, p. 9). These values persist in what Wagner (2008) describes as "Canada's national myth"; in its own popular imagination, "Canadian soldiers do not fight wars, they fight war itself" (pp. 46–47). Implementing volunteer programs allows for a seemingly friendly presence in Global South; focusing on relationships between different citizens, rather than interactions between politicians or the military. Nevertheless, the move served a highly ideological purpose of building and reaffirming Canada's national myth and brand.

Jacques Hébert co-founded Canada World Youth, which in 1961 was among the first of Canada's government-funded organizations to send young people to the Global South as volunteers. The comments in his autobiography reflect an attitude of Canadian exceptionalism through a practice of intentional historical revisionism:

> I gradually began to convince myself that Canada could, if it were so inclined, become the conscience of rich countries, the catalyst of North-South Dialogue. We had no colonial past to reproach ourselves (would aboriginals have agreed?), no desire to dominate; we weren't racist (history hadn't yet given us the opportunity!) and were (without deserving it) highly esteemed by both rich and poor countries. Weren't we therefore, *predestined*, as it were, to play a major role in that North-South Dialogue, without which all mankind has no future? (Hébert & Murray, 1996, p. 30)

Hébert's Canadian mythology justifies its own foreign intervention for humanitarian purposes. In his version, the country is non-racist, non-imperialist and internationally respected. Not only is Canada the best-equipped nation to confront global injustices of underdevelopment, it is Canada's destiny and moral duty to act as a conscience for the rest of the world. And who better to undertake these missives than young people? Canadian youth could not only dedicate their free time and boundless energy to important causes abroad but could also gain the most personal benefit as they undertake their own education and become active citizens, leaving their marks on their country and the world. In key ways, these young people were poised to undertake development initiatives through diplomacy, and even through forming interpersonal relationships on the ground in developing countries that neither soldiers nor bureaucrats ever could.

The emergence of these state-sponsored opportunities for young people abroad would seem to respond to the burgeoning youth, counter-cultural movements of the 1960's that were concerned with peace-building rather than warfare. The desire to train youth perhaps also responded to the governmental desire to quell such youth movements, or to redirect the energy towards foreign policy agendas. Regardless, it should be noted that the early VCAs were implemented without specific aims to assist in the political agendas of either youth movements in Canada or decolonization movements abroad.

The popularity of these government-sponsored programs grew and expanded into increasing opportunities for young people to travel and work abroad. This was not limited to Canada, as citizens from countries throughout the North sought increasingly varied opportunities to travel abroad. As I will discuss in Chapter 2, a multi-billion dollar industry now exists to coordinate the travel, accommodations, partnerships and tourist experiences of Northern volunteers throughout the Global South. A myriad of institutions aside from the government now

coordinate these kinds of travel experiences, including: high schools, universities, religious organizations, not-for-profit organizations and, most notably, private sector tour operators and travel agencies. Opportunities to travel abroad have never been easier.

Struggles on the Frontier: Unpacking Extractive Ontology

At various points throughout its colonial history, Peru has heard promises that extractive industries and humanitarian undertakings alike would benefit the citizenry in some way; through job opportunities, through modernization, through Christianization and more. Although extractive industries demonstrate the most immediate examples of the self-interest of foreign intervention within Peru's borders, Canada's deployment of volunteers throughout the last 50 years should also demonstrate that its humanitarian undertakings have been historically motivated by its desire to construct a national brand identity and position itself on a global playing field through the use of soft power and diplomacy.

Mining activities in Latin America have not delivered many of their promises, and have in fact resulted in numerous struggles at a local level. As Bebbington and Bury (2013) frame it, "the political ecology of the subsoil" is actually characterized by significant struggle between the myriad stakeholders with competing claims, goals, morals and interests (p. 1). These struggles exist in various contexts and are bound up within "movements among groups with differing interests and agendas, and, more generally the everyday struggles and tensions that frequently accompany the rise of extraction and become embedded in everyday life within these 'territories of extractions'" (Bebbington & Bury, 2013, p. 18).

These territories exist as frontier spaces or edges. As Tsing (2005) describes, these are "particular kinds of edges where the expansive nature of extraction comes into its own. Built from historical models of European conquest, frontiers create wilderness so that some – and not

others – may reap its reward" (p. 27). Frontier space is deregulated and confused; an interstitial space where multiple actors create, challenge and change rules that have yet to be fully formulated. As a space of colonial encounter, not unlike a "contact zone" (Pratt, 1992), it is a place where "competing definitions of sustainability and progress meet and collide" (Redclift, 2006, p. 206). The frontier is usually conceived of as a contested space, where natural resource wealth (and therefore financial wealth) is the ultimate, sought-after prize. Bury and Norris (2013) have already pointed to "centuries of colonial expropriation of precious metals from the Western hemisphere" (p. 93) that began with Pizarro's first conquest and ransom of Atahualpa. At that time, and ever since then, the Andean terrain has *become* a frontier. Frontiers are never indigenous to particular landscapes; they are never even necessarily landscapes at all. Rather, the frontier is "an imaginative project capable of moulding both places and processes" (Tsing, 2005, p. 32). It produces subjects (I.e. Indigenous, colonizer, miner, Samaritan, citizen) and it produces desire (I.e. gold, silver, conservation, empire, power, knowledge, growth, a sense of oneself).

It is in this frontier-imaginary space where an extractive ontology currently manifests among young international volunteers, who arrive in Peru like generations of travellers before them. As volunteer tourists, we might consider them as Wearing (2001) does: "those tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment" (p. 1). Their role is not simple care-provision or service, with no expectation of getting something in return. Over the course of their trips, volunteers understand that they will return enriched; not monetarily, through the acquisition of gold from Atahualpa's cabin or the mines in Tambogrande, but rather through their own self-transformation. By participating as volunteers, these travellers empower themselves by

cultivating their own senses of identity; they embark on "journeys of self-discovery" (Wearing & Lyons, 2008). The opportunity to work, learn and struggle alongside Peruvians, who are typically associated with poverty, Indigeneity and Third World hardship, acts as a site and platform for volunteers' own character-building processes of self-growth and personal enrichment. As catalysts for personal growth and self-improvement, these relationships themselves become a resource to be enjoyed by the young volunteer; the volunteer field becomes a site for emotional extraction.

The extractive ontology that informs and permeates the practice of international volunteerism makes several key assumptions about the site of the frontier-imaginary. (1) It presumes as common sense, that communities in the Global South that receive foreign intervention – by way of volunteer missives or FDI, are somehow in despair. They are typically seen as poor and destitute, wherein community members lack the basic conditions necessary for a quality of life to enjoy a reasonable standard of living, let alone to thrive or prosper as fully formed healthy and happy human beings. (2) In spite of this known local poverty, and the misery that accompanies it, the site holds untold potential for the foreigner – volunteer or miner – to profit. Whether the resource in question is minerals, or the immaterial opportunity for personal growth and transformation, this profit can only be generated through foreign occupation and intervention, and it is best enjoyed when the profit is recouped and transported back to the intervener's country of origin. (3) The intervention is assumed to be wholly desirable by the locals, as it is indeed necessary for the enhancement of their otherwise unsatisfying and untenable lives. Consultation may take place, but it is presumed that the consent of community members who are directly affected by the volunteer or extractive projects is not necessarily required, because the intervening organizations ultimately know what is best for the community

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they wish to help. (4) While extraction of course implies that something is obtained and removed from the land, the relationship is transactional, not unidirectional. Extractive relationships are always predicated on an exchange. This exchange may consist of goods and services rendered, but also equally as a cultural exchange. Gold, silver, precious metals are exchanged for Christianization, capitalism and the "protection" under the dominion of Spain, but also smallpox, conceptions of sin and new codes of conduct. Presently, lead, zinc and hydrocarbons are exchanged for jobs, capital and infrastructure, but with them come a loss of entitlements to land, water and the traditional economic and spiritual practices that preceded this. Concurrently, experiences of novelty, autonomy, personal empowerment and self-transformation are exchanged for English classes, newly constructed adobe stoves and fridges and childcare, but also price inflation, a devaluation of one's own language and culture and a revolving door of role models that are impossible to emulate. (5) The transaction does not need to benefit both parties equally, and in fact, it almost certainly benefits foreign visitors over locals. Reciprocity nevertheless justifies the extractive exchange and perpetuates the practice in spite of the potential harms that it risks causing.

It is the frontier space where extractive ontology informs international volunteer practice. It produces subjects that are at once volunteers, as well as tourists, aid workers, explorers, students and global citizens, and it produces desire within these subjects for transformative experiences that come from their work and travels. The following section explores the colonial legacy of international tourism that enables the present day iteration of the extractive volunteer tourist to exist.

Tourism and Travel in Peru

In spite of the nation's period of instability due to the Shining Path terrorist group throughout the 1980s, Fujimori's repressive reforms of any anti-state violence or activism, coupled with a heavy investment in tourist infrastructure lead Peru's tourism sector to grow by leaps and bounds in the last twenty years. Thanks to effective "crisis management" (Casado, 1998; Sonmez et al., 1999), adaptability to trends in tourism such as eco-tourism and sustainable tourism packages (Bury, 2008; Larson & Poudyal, 2012) and successful marketing of "the rich historical, cultural and geographic diversity has led to the inclusion of ten Peruvian sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List" (Divino & McAleer, 2010) which also act as big tourist draws, Peru is now a leading destination for international tourists. The World Bank (2015) suggests that in 2013 alone, 3 164 000 international travellers visited the nation for leisure and business. Most are temporary visitors on 3 months tourist visas while others remain longer, but all have a relative amount of time and financial capital to spend on leisure activity within Peru. Tourists are increasingly accommodated with infrastructural developments, such as the zoning of specific areas for lodgings (hostels, hotels, guest houses), the emergence of specific services like tour operators/travel agents, restaurants and various financial services (currency exchange centres, foreign banks). These often come at the expense of the enhancement of more remote, underdeveloped communities that are not along the common tourist trails, which are primarily through the Cordillera Blanca in the region of Ancash or Cusco/Sacred Valley.

Power relations between host and visitor have always constituted the social practice of tourism. These replicate the economic structures, cultural representations and exploitative relationships that were previously based in colonialism. As Tucker and Akama (2009) write, "the global structure of international tourism as a 'luxury and pleasure seeking industry' usually

entails, predominantly, rich tourists from the metropolis (mainly from developed Northern countries) visiting and coming to enjoy tourist attractions in the periphery (mainly poor and resource scarce countries in the South)" (p. 507). These relationships structure economic dependency upon tourist dollars and often disenfranchise locals from decision-making processes about development initiatives within their communities, such as for example the construction of hotels, transportation or the implementation of other services that cater to affluent visitors, rather than residents who live and work there. While tourism is often framed in terms of the movement and mobility it enables (Leite & Graburn, 2009; MacCannell, 1976; Urry & Larsen, 2011), Burman (2010) points out that these flows of trans/international movement – of people, of capital, of goods and information – are also frequently characterized by stagnation and stoppage. While millions of visitors frequent Peru each year for leisure related travel, barriers such as stringent visa restrictions, the devalued Peruvian currency and the prohibitively expensive costs of international airfare and accommodation prohibit the same number of Peruvians from traveling abroad themselves. While travel is made accessible for international visitors to Peru by friendly institutions and an eager tourist economy, it is impossible for many Peruvians who wish to travel beyond their own borders, as either tourists or migrants.

Tourism marketing materials tend to rely on simplistic, Romantic colonial discourses of Otherness in their depictions of tourist locales.[6] The construction of the colonial Other establishes a "tourist gaze"; a set of expectations placed on local populations by tourists who are

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[6] The Peruvian frontier-imaginary has been discursively constructed by many generations of travelers as a mysterious, exotic and otherworldly site (see Said, 1979). This precedes even first contact with the Spanish, when conquistadors retold fabulous tales of the Incan wealth. Later "explorers" like Harim Bingham, who "discovered" Machu Picchu in 1911 were trained archaeologists, fascinated by the Incan and pre-Incan societies, or others, like American traveller, Harry A. Franck, author of *Vagabonding down the Andes* (1917), who wandered almost entirely by foot from Colombia to Argentina through the highlands, seeking adventure rather than scientific knowledge.

in search of this presumably authentic experience (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Simmons (2004) argues that travel articles and advertisements represent postcolonial island nations in the Caribbean and South Pacific as the "Romantic tropical Other" through a discourse of "paradise" that is central to a Northern imagination of relaxation and tranquility, entirely unlike the experience of living there. Echtner and Prasad (2003) point to various colonial tropes in representation of Southern nations in tourism marketing. They are timeless, unchanged and outside of modernity, and therefore they are ripe for discovery by tourists who are modern day adventurers, identifying as explorers, treasure hunters or archaeologists. Images of natural beauty reinforce the assumption that these spaces are somehow untouched or uncompromised by the outside world, and friendly, smiling locales assure tourists they can indulge themselves and that friendly staff will be happy to serve them, perpetuating "the asymmetrical relationships between the former colonizers and colonized; relationships often characterized by the power divisions between master and servant" (p. 674).

Recent "hopeful" developments in tourism studies scholarship argue that international travel presents productive intellectual and emotional learning opportunities as well as increasingly sustainable and socially responsible travel opportunities. This hopeful tourism can empower multiple stakeholders to "dispute the hegemonic neo-liberal ways of producing and disseminating tourism knowledge and to call on responsible tourism intellectuals to engage understandings which directly relate to the challenges of creating a just and sustainable planet" (Pritchard, Ateljevic, & Morgan, 2012, p. 2). Volunteer-related tourism would seem to offer exactly this kind of opportunity to all stakeholders; a chance for an encounter outside of the transactional, customer-service orient nature of a typical tourist encounter. Rather than just arriving on vacation, consuming and then leaving, volunteer tourists are thought to donate their

time and energy, participate in a cultural exchange and impart with greater knowledge and personal growth (McGehee & Santos, 2005).

But as McGehee (2012) has framed it, there are "inherent contradictions of volunteer tourism, particularly concerning the interplay of oppression/emancipation, dependency/resistance, and dominant hegemony/agency" (p. 84). Although coded in language that would suggest that volunteers are motivated by altruism, or self-sacrifice, the relationships between volunteers and the community stakeholders whom they purport to serve are contested, varied and far more complex than the seemingly unidirectional language of care-provision might suggest. Mahrouse (2014) describes in great detail the ethical complexity that characterizes First World transnational solidarity activists in Palestine. These activists walk "a fine line between activism and imperialism" where they must "negotiate and manage their dominant positioning in relation to their social justice commitments and understandings" (Mahrouse, 2014, p. 93). This process is often destabilizing for well-meaning activists who understand themselves as exceptional allies -- "good white people"-- who invest their time and energy in social justice causes for selfless reasons and are therefore, outside of a racialized, settler-colonial dynamic among those they hope to serve. Heron (2007) also contests this assumption in her study of white, Canadian female development workers in Africa. In this context, development workers' come to construct their own identities based on their abilities to care for the colonial Other. Moreover, development work in the Global South serves as an opportunity for these practitioners to differentiate themselves from the populations they serve, empowering themselves as liberal, Western white women.

The ambitions of this dissertation follow from Mahrouse's observation that lines are blurring between tourism and activism (2014, p. 156). It recognizes that more opportunities than

ever before now exist for young people to travel abroad, learn and grow, but that these opportunities are predicated upon the presumed suffering of others. With this in mind, "solidarity" no longer seems like a relationship or a dynamic in which one participates. Rather, it is about the kind of emotional response that may be extracted from those who are in pain. As author and activist Teju Cole tweeted in 2012, "… The White Savior Industrial Complex is not about justice. It is about having a big emotional experience that validates privilege." In the following section, I will explain the primary research that I undertook while in Peru, where centuries of ongoing extraction and humanitarian/development intervention have paved the way for a steady stream of young volunteers to seek out these big emotional experiences.

Research Program

My concerns with the extractive ontology of the Humanitarian (or White Savior) Industrial Complex are admittedly quite personal, as they derive from my own experiences volunteering in Peru. In 2009, when I was 22 years old, I volunteered for three months with an organization called La Semilla; a child advocacy organization with a head office in the San Martin neighbourhood of Lima and locations set up all throughout the city's *pueblos jovénes*, impoverished slums located all along the city's perimeter. Like many volunteers with the organization, I lived in the affluent neighbourhood of Miraflores and commuted daily – sometimes up to 2 hours – to work in the outer *pueblos jovénes*, usually in Carabayllo, a neighbourhood of an estimated 188,000 (as of 2005). The majority of people who lived there were internal migrants from the Andes or Amazon, who had come to Lima in search of opportunities, but who found themselves instead living in urban poverty; lacking basic infrastructure like water, electricity or garbage collection.

I had several duties at La Semilla: primarily, working with children in the organization's various community centres, running afternoon "literacy programs" for kids age 5-12 that consisted of reading stories, doing arts and crafts, administering snack time and playing sports. In the mornings I had administrative responsibilities in the head office, where I responded to e-mails and translated documents. One of my duties was to go door to door throughout different neighbourhoods in Carabayllo, knocking on doors to single room, prefabricated homes to inform parents of the centre's programs and to recruit their kids to come participate. In some cases interest was expressed, however, in many others, we were told matter-of-factly that the children couldn't come because they had to work. For the most part, children in this community worked in a nearby landfill, where they would sort out recyclable plastics and metals that could be traded in for cash. At first I tried to protest, suggesting in my so-so Spanish that their kids would benefit from the community centre; they would learn to read, they could meet friends, play and have a snack or meal. Reluctant parents would explain that their children had no time to do those things; they had to contribute to the family.

It was in these moments that I realized I had no idea what I was doing in Lima. First of all, my BA in Cultural Studies and my energy and optimism insufficiently prepared me to address the complexity of urban poverty in the Global South. I did not previously understand to what extent these families faced challenging choices, and that my willingness to come "help" had no real impact on alleviating the burden of making them. This realization provoked a more challenging line of question, as I reflected upon my decision to travel to Peru in the first place. Like many participants, my motivations were varied: I wanted to positively contribute to those less fortunate than me, but I also wanted to travel, meet new people and escape the Canadian winter. I was, and remain, unconvinced that these motivations justified knocking on the doors of

these families' homes, offering a service that they did not want and could not use even if they did. The question "What am I doing here?" came up frequently in conversation with the other volunteers I met in our shared accommodation, provided by the volunteer recruitment company that placed me with La Semilla. Some of my friends shared my concerns, and found themselves questioning their decisions to work in microfinance outfits or in hospitals. Others were less concerned. One volunteer, who came for 10 days over his Reading Week break at Queens University to build and paint houses, commented as he left "This was the hardest thing I have ever done, but at least I know I made a difference!" I recall that he also missed two days of work because he got alcohol poisoning while partying in a casino in Miraflores, and had to visit a (private) hospital, where he was administered an IV saline solution and instructed to stay out of the sun. I wondered, how could he be so confident that he "made a difference" when after three months, I felt only ineffective and guilty?

Grappling with these questions lead me to undertake this research, which is chiefly concerned with how young, international volunteers make meaning of their experiences within the Global South. Whether or not these volunteers come to understand their role as helpful or harmful for the communities in which they work, live and/or serve, their contributions and reflections ultimately are about the construction of their own identities; as global citizens, as active, internationally and upwardly mobile youth, who are worldly, experienced and capable of solving problems. Drawing on poststructuralist conceptions of identity, postcolonial critiques of tourism, travel and the privilege of international mobility, as well as post-humanitarian concerns about transnational solidarity within neoliberal, imperialist practices of international development, I ask in this dissertation how, within the context of the Peruvian frontier-imaginary, international volunteers are interpellated to participate in this social practice? What

institutions are in place to recruit volunteers and how do they work? Ultimately, how do the promises of these institutions structure volunteers' expectations and experiences, and what kind of political learning is possible within a context where witnessing and interacting with the poverty and marginalization of others leads to an individual's own self-development?

In my research program, I traveled to Peru for three months from January – March 2015, where I conducted a number of case studies, working with various organizations that worked with international volunteers (see Figure 1). These partner organizations allowed me to interview their volunteers and in many cases to observe these volunteers working in the field, as well as to analyze key training documents and recruitment material. Although primarily stationed in the capital city, Lima, I also made excursions outside of this hub to visit notable sites with particularly high concentrations of volunteer-related activity, such as the town of Huaraz and surrounding area in the Ancash region, and Cusco and the Sacred Valley region. Both of these regions offer a number of other activities to tourists of all kinds, and in particular backpackers, such as most notably hiking the Cordillera Blanca in Ancash and the UNESCO World Heritage Site and New Seven Wonders of the World, Machu Picchu, about an hour and a half outside of Cusco city.

Over the course of these 3 months, I interviewed 48 respondents representing 20 different organizations.[7] Of these participants, 32 were volunteers between the ages of 18 and 30, while 16 were volunteer coordinators who were employed by the organizations with whom I partnered. Some of these organizations were private sector volunteer placement agencies (1), social

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[7] In order to protect their privacy, the names of all interview respondents, including volunteers and volunteer coordinators, have been changed to pseudonyms. I intentionally avoid naming specific organizations where these volunteers work in order to ensure that their identities may not be discerned. In some cases, I also avoid referencing the specific names of small, isolated communities where volunteers lived and worked (i.e. in the Huaylas province in the region of Ancash) as this could lead to the identification of particular volunteers.

enterprises (3) or private research groups (1), but the majority were NGOs either formed in Peru or from abroad with Peruvian partners. Almost all of the organizations worked in education, social services, child welfare or human rights, although one or two also had environmental conservation listed in their mandates as well.

Figure 1. Map of key research sites in Peru and surrounding countries.

Of the 32 youth volunteer respondents that participated in this study, 9 (28%) were male-identified and 23 (72%) were female. This is consistent with reports that have indicated the young women tend to volunteer considerably more than young men. Of these respondents, the average age was 22.5 years old, with the eldest respondent being 30 and the youngest being 18. Respondents came from all over the Global North, but 14 – nearly half, in fact – were from the USA. Of the remaining seventeen, 10 were from Canada, 7 were from Europe (2 from Germany, 2 from Luxembourg, 1 from France and 2 from the UK) and 1 was from Australia.

Volunteers tended to be very educated, or in the process of completing their educations. 17, or just over half of the respondents (53%) had completed college or university degree programs, and of these 2 had completed Masters degrees. 7 of the volunteers (22%) interrupted their college or university education in order to travel to Peru and undertake volunteer positions. Of these participants, all had, at the very least, vague plans of returning to school upon their return home, even if it not immediately. One of these respondents had dropped out of school in the United States and had enrolled at a university in Peru to continue her education there. The remaining 8 (25%) had high school diplomas, but of these 8, 6 had only completed high school within the past year, and were on "gap year" travels before they either applied to university or would attend a university to which they had already been accepted.

Notably, when asked of their country of origin and their hometown, many respondents had various difficulties answering these questions. First of all, many of these respondents were themselves from immigrant families. They often held multiple passports, or had moved several times in their own lives, so the relationship to a hometown or place of origin was somewhat ambivalent. My interpretation of this hesitancy to locate oneself is that many of these respondents were largely mobile before they undertook these experiences. Their decisions to

come to Peru were based on an already-known interest in and desire to travel. In further chapters, I will conjecture how this comfort with the idea of international travel relates to a desire to learn and be transformed through traveling.

In a somewhat different case, 7 of the Canadian respondents self-identified as Aboriginal. These participants were part of a Canadian government-funded Volunteer Cooperation Agency (VCA) that organized a particular project to select Aboriginal Youth Leaders from their communities to pair with Peruvian "twins" and to work collectively on development projects, first for 3 months in a community in Canada, and then for 3 months in a community in Peru. In this case, the Canadian community was a reserve in Northern Saskatchewan, and the Peruvian community was a predominantly Quechua-speaking community in the Cordillera Blanaca in the Huaylas province, in Ancash. The particularity of this Indigenous-focused project, which I had the benefit of shadowing for a week during the cumulative phase of their 3 month tenure in Ancash, means that there was a particular influence of Aboriginal voices in this work that I have been hard-pressed to find in other inquiries into volunteer tourism practice. Often, there are assumptions that volunteers are white or white-identified who are working in racialized communities. Indeed, this is often the case. (Of the 32 volunteer respondents, only 2 others beside the 7 Aboriginal-Canadians identified as a non-White or non-Caucasian person.) This particular attention to Aboriginal identity is atypical of international volunteerism, but usefully sheds new light on how Canada and Canadianness is presented outside of its borders. It demonstrates the plurality of the nation, which has both radical and more mainstreaming potential; that is, it both breaks down norms of whiteness in Canada as a settler society, and reinforces a popular national myth of a cultural mosaic that often serves to ambiguate ongoing systems of racial, cultural and class-based privilege that continue to exist within Canada.

In order to recruit participants for this study I began by contacting government-funded VCAs prior to my departure to Lima. I was in touch with two of these VCAs prior to departure and coordinated visits with their offices for when I arrived. I also consulted the South American Explorers' (SAE) Volunteer Resources Handbook. The SAE (2015) describes itself as a "nonprofit travel, scientific, and educational organization founded in 1977." Since the 70s the SAE has operated clubhouses in various South American cities such as Lima, Cusco, Quito, Santiago and at one time Buenos Aires. They offered travel resources for almost three decades to scientists, journalists and adventure travelers (such as extreme hikers and mountain climbers) during a period when travel through South America was far less common due to a lack of easily accessible information (pre-internet searches and the platforms required for independent booking) and also due to the large scale political violence throughout South America, and particularly in Andean nations. Presently, travel throughout these same areas is much more common, but SAE nevertheless still offers resources for travelers of all kinds, including libraries of travel-related information archived both digitally and in each clubhouse. I consulted their list of recommended volunteer-seeking organizations and was fortunate enough to use their library as my own workspace while based in Lima. When visiting project sites was inaccessible, I was also able to use this library as a space to conduct interviews with volunteers based in Lima. Upon contacting and meeting volunteers and coordinators working with these organizations, I also relied heavily on snowball sampling, wherein respondents were asked to refer me to other international volunteers who they knew, currently working in the field, who would be willing to participate as well.

Most of those who responded were eager and open to discussing all aspects of their volunteer experiences. Often I found that participants were enthusiastic about sharing their

thoughts and feelings as they were in the midst of processing these experiences themselves. Unfortunately however, due to my time restrictions, I found that I had to turn down volunteers who were contacting me to take part in the study. The limits of a 3 month timeframe in which to work meant that I had to make careful choices about how much time to spend outside of Lima and how much time to allot to both the Ancash and Cusco areas. Furthermore, while inside Lima, the conditions around transportation and commuting also limited my window. As an expansive city of over 9 million (documented) inhabitants, and with a very limited public transportation system, commuting from my home and from the SAE headquarters in Miraflores to the impoverished *pueblos*, such as San Juan de Miraflores or Chaclacayo proved time-consuming and difficult, sometimes taking upwards of 3 or 4 hours of travel in one day.

While these limitations of time and space proved difficult and at times disappointing as a researcher, upon reflection they would also seem to authentically speak to many of the reoccurring experiences that my respondents discussed as well. I have come to understand my own role as an ethnographer as very much akin to that of the volunteers who I observed; both ethnographer and volunteers are foreigners, both are visiting under the auspices of cultural learning with normative ambitions to contribute in some perceived way to helping others (whether through labour, knowledge development or some aspect of either of these), both have structured their experiences through some combination of independent choice based around (perceived) need, desire or obligation related to "home", and both simultaneously rely on local, on-the-ground assistance from expert coordinators to facilitate an experience abroad that meets these conditions. Above all, these experiences are structured to have beginnings and endings. The time restrictions that proved a frustration also prove defining characteristics of the experiences. They are supposed to encourage transformation due to this rupture; a finite amount

of time that stands outside "normal" quotidian existence and provokes some kind of personal process wherein one ostensibly discovers some greater truth about themselves, social systems, the interconnectedness of world systems and what it means to care for others. Or at least, this is the hypothesis that we shall test.

Methodology

Within this ethnography I relied on three different methods to gather and analyze my data. The first was extensive qualitative interviewing with all participants. Within these interviews we focused on several themes: the participants' interest in volunteerism and motivations for coming to Peru; how they accessed resources about volunteering and learned about the program that they selected; how they prepared for or were trained for their trip; their experience in the field, including their work life, their down time, the people that they met and their experiences traveling. Following methodological guidance from Tiessen and Heron (2012), I was predominantly concerned in this instance with the opinions, perspectives and self-assessments volunteers had of their work. This was supplemented by my own analysis from the second method, participant observation. Here, I observed volunteers in their placements, to examine and assess how they interacted with each other, their supervisors, colleagues and the community members. Due to the breadth of research subjects I met, I rarely spent more than 2 or 3 days with each organization. The one exception was when I spent a full week in a very remote town about 2.5 hours north of Huaraz, which I will discuss in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4.. Thirdly, I also gathered key training, recruitment and evaluation documents from various organizations, which will be analyzed and applied throughout this work. These documents include training manuals, advertisements and pamphlets promoting the programs, videos and

interactive online material, translations, instructions, and also in some cases detailed descriptions of live performances of volunteer labour in their placements.

Within the anthropological tradition, ethnography is commonly associated with highly localized case studies wherein researchers standing outside the culture or society of study enter into the culture/society in order to observe and understand it from the subject's point of view. Aspects of this framework are somewhat dissatisfying to critics of ethnography, who charge the research method for assuming that the knowledge and epistemology of the subjects of study are ever fully knowable based on observation and cultural immersion, regardless of the length or rigor of the study.

My research engages and plays with these tensions around ethnography, by exploring the phenomenon of international mobility. Following the works of Burawoy (2000) I demonstrate that within a context of globalization, and particularly in the study of international mobility and the global disparities of power and privilege, a new methodology is required that is "flexible enough to link everyday life to transnational flows of population, discourse, commodities and power" (p. ix). Although globalization alters our relationships to space, and time through "displacement, compression, distanciation, and even dissolution," ethnographers, whose occupations are, "after all, to study others in "'their space and time'" are offered a "privileged insight into the lived experience of globalization" (Burawoy, 2000, p. 4). Global ethnography explores how global forces influence localities through economy, polity and culture. "These forces are not presented as abstract and inert, but as concrete and dynamic, evoking fluid patterns of resistance and accommodation" (Burawoy, 2000, p. 30). It also acknowledges the global connections between multiple interrelated sites, linked as chains, flows or networks that constitute global forces.

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Multi-sitedness is an essential part of the theory and practice of global ethnography. These global connections form global imaginations that "reconfigure what is possible, turning globalization from an inexorable force into a resource that open up new vistas" (Burawoy, 2000, p. 32). These vistas are the sites where volunteers live, work, learn and socialize alongside local "host" populations; the frontier, as a place defined by "friction", which Tsing describes as "the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (Tsing, 2005, p. 4). Friction emerges through these connections, which are motivated by the imperialist "strivings" of capitalism. The force of friction keeps "global power in motion" and it "inflects historical trajectories, enabling, excluding and particularizing" (Tsing, 2005, p. 6). Simultaneously, it disrupts, "causing everyday malfunctions as well as unexpected cataclysms" (Tsing, 2005, p. 6) throughout the sites.

A global ethnographic account that understands international volunteerism as a site of friction disrupts the presumed benefits of international volunteer practice (i.e. that it straightforwardly "helps" locals through volunteer labour, and "teaches" volunteers through their experiences of helping the poor) by understanding the frontier as a "contact zone" wherein volunteers and locals "meet clash, and grapple with each other… in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery or their aftermaths" (Pratt, 1992, p. 7). It attends to the transnational flow of volunteers who travel from various locations in the Global North for temporary stays in Peru to participate in a combination of humanitarian labour and recreational tourism as one aspect of a multi-pronged capitalistic, imperial force that extends throughout the Global South. As such, global ethnography disrupts the colonial histories that have lead to the evolution and development of discourses around (global) citizenship.

Research Sites

The existence of neighbourhoods catering to tourists in major cities and in close

proximity to large scale tourist attractions made choosing sites to conduct my study a fairly

straightforward process. Volunteers tend to congregate in these highly gentrified spaces for both

housing accommodation and entertainment. Tourist neighbourhoods offer elite services

mirroring luxuries from the developed world that most Peruvians simply cannot afford, such as:

fine-dining and international cuisine, fancy coffee shops, high end shopping centres, hotels,

hostels, casinos and notably, services for tourists. The concentration of tourists in these

neighbourhoods means that Peruvian entrepreneurs also tend to flock here to profit from the

steady of influx of travelers with deep pockets. It is worth noting that the most affluent

neighbourhoods in the Global South are at a discount for foreigners, who would spend far higher

prices to live or hang out in comparable spaces in the most affluent neighbourhoods in their own

countries of origin, due once again to the different values of their currency. The existence of

these spaces throughout the country means that volunteers act on a spectrum of integration; there

are those that elect to live in the same communities as their work placements, and those who

choose to commute to work and remain in the more familiarly developed (or gentrified)

neighbourhoods commonly frequented by travellers.

Even when volunteers lived within the communities where they worked, opting out of

living in shared housing with other ex-pats, and instead staying with local host families in order

to benefit from a cultural immersion, these sites were nevertheless still in close proximity to the

country's many tourist attractions. I began my research in the capital, Lima due to connections

with NGOs in the city that I had made during my own volunteer experience in 2009, but while

searching volunteer databases that I accessed through SAE, it became evident that many other

organizations that accepted volunteers were clustered in the Andean Highlands, primarily in the Cusco/Sacred Valley Region, which is where Machu Picchu is located, as well as in and around Huaraz, the capital of the Ancash department in the Cordillera Blanca. This city is the departing point for a number of famous treks throughout the mountain range's vast network of national parks.

A strong correlation existed between high numbers of volunteer placements available with the popularity of tourist sites in the area. Interview respondents frequently confirmed assumptions that they selected particular organizations or locations because of the proximity of the placement to places that they hoped to visit while in the country. Others were less picky about where they volunteered, but nevertheless still planned to visit key sites on their travels, such as Machu Picchu, the Colca Canyon outside Arequipa, the floating islands in Lake Titicaca, or the beaches of Mancorá, among others. Finding these sites was a straightforward task, thanks to the aggressive marketing of the communities to tourists, as well as popular word of mouth between backpackers, volunteers and other travelers. The routes around the country were well known and widely discussed among travelers, who tended to share travel stories and tips frequently among one another.

Lima. Although it stands out from my other research sites due to its sheer size, an analysis of volunteers in Lima (see Figure 2) reveals the unique mobility of volunteers throughout Peru who enjoy a freedom of movement between the extreme poles of Peruvian society that many locals do not. Volunteers tend to live in accommodations in particular tourist neighbourhoods while working in the extremely poor communities on the other side of the city. In her auto-ethnographic account of the city, Gandolfo (2009) describes Lima as "wildly intersected by uncrossable boundaries –a world of 'parallel cities', as it were" (pp. 11–12).

Having spent her childhood in a district on one end of the city, Gandolfo recalls realizing that she and her family never left it. Although the city itself is massive – as of 2015, the city has a population of 9 million (documented) inhabitants and is the second largest city in South America, (2015 Perú) – the author was totally unfamiliar with much of it, realizing "those sections of the city had been tacitly off limits to me in the early part of my life, cloaked in a veil that spoke of poverty, crime, and even death. I had only a vague idea of what the district looked like inside, in its more impoverished northern section, from reports I had see years ago on TV and in the newspapers" (Gandolfo, 2009, p. 3).

The segregation that Gandolfo describes is still commonplace in Lima today, which has a longstanding reputation for violent crime, dating back to the days of the Shining Path. In spite of such reports as the Economist Intelligence Unit's (2015) Safe Cities Index stating that Lima ranks among the 50 safest cities in the world, the city is commonly understood as a site of crime and danger. The United States Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security (2015) suggests that on the contrary, crime is a "constant problem" across Lima and that "Armed robberies, assaults, express kidnappings, carjackings, burglaries and petty theft are a daily fact of life." Travelers and residents alike are highly aware of the danger throughout Lima and take constant precautions around personal security. It is common for many Limenos to avoid going out at night alone. If one does go out then they never take a taxi unless it is already vetted and trusted. In family homes, it is also common for at least one family member to remain at home at all times to keep an eye on the place in case of attempted burglary. Leaving the house unattended is generally avoided.

Figure 2. Map of Lima District, including areas mainly populated by volunteers (Miraflores, Barranco & San Isidro) and the *pueblos* where they work Chaclacayo, Carabyllo and San Juan de Miraflores.

Figure 3. Photos taken in the Miraflores neighborhood, in Lima.

But fear and danger is not how tourists experience Lima. I would suggest that the city's politicians and tourism boards have worked hard to change this reputation, at least in certain areas like Miraflores (see Figure 3), the affluent seaside district recommended to travellers in almost any travel guide. The district has hired its own, private police force since 2012, and agents are trained to speak English in order to assist foreigners.

The contrast is as highly visible as the colour palette of the city; the lush green lawns and beautiful gardens that line the streets and houses of Miraflores (literally translated to mean "Look at the flowers") are striking compared to the muted browns and grays of the rest of the city, which lacks the infrastructure or resources to maintain such aesthetically pleasing public spaces in the coastal desert climate. There are other neighbourhoods that are comparably upscale, such as the elite San Isidro and the increasingly gentrifying "hipster" Barranco area. But when Lima's cosmopolitanism is referenced, it generally refers to Miraflores, evidenced by its restaurants, nightlife, parks and festivals. There are glass and steel condos all along the coastline. Public art installations and parks are also everywhere, such as in the main Ovalo and next to Larcomar – an upscale, seaside mall. I lived next to Parque Reducto, a gated park surrounded by 4 Starbucks locations within a few hundred meters, as well as 3 large supermarkets. Reducto hosts yoga classes every morning and farmers markets with vegan and gluten free fare every weekend. These typical signs of urban gentrification stick out in a city that otherwise steps decidedly to a different pace and rhythm.

This is where tourists stay. All along the Ovalo and coastline there are ample options for travelers of all styles; hostels for backpackers, luxury hotels like Hiltons and Sheratons for more affluent travelers, not to mention designer boutique hotels, and AirBnbs have proliferated for all ranges of travelers. Businesses around this neighbourhood have become established to cater to

foreign tastes and interest. Casinos can be found throughout Miraflores as well as a number of chains that aren't anywhere else in the country, like fast food franchises and retail outlets. There are no shortage of cafes and restaurants serving non-Peruvian food that is simply not found outside of this particular area.

Only the most affluent Peruvians live in Miraflores. As with Gandolfo's story, Miraflorinos do not often stray from the seaside districts due to fear of violence, crime and death associated with the poverty of the *pueblos*. On the other hand, volunteer tourists who stay in Miraflores do not work there, traveling instead up to 2 hours by public transit to work in communities like San Juan de Miraflores, Carabayllo or Chaclacayo (see Figure 4). Depending on the program type or the organization with which they are affiliated, some will even pay to venture out into these communities. Nearly all of the volunteers I interviewed that were based in Lima worked with either children or young people in these communities, providing English classes, homework help or workshops of some kind out of community centres similar to the one that I described in my placement. Several worked at an orphanage in Chaclacayo. Although they did live on site at the orphanage, they spent days off in Miraflores to shop, see movies, or go to restaurants. Just this kind of daytrip would be a financial impossibility for most of the residents of Chaclacayo. For tourists, including international volunteers, this space signifies the comforts of privilege and the opportunity for reprieve from the poverty and destitution of their chosen workplaces.

Cusco/Sacred Valley. Cusco and the surrounding Sacred Valley (see Figure 5) were the former heartland and capital of the Incan Empire, situated at around 3,400 m above sea level. Today, the region is widely recognized for its historical significance; the city received a UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 1983, in recognition of the colonial architecture and

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Incan ruins throughout its core and along its perimeter. Cusco serves as a main hub for tourists that wish to trek through the Sacred Valley's smaller villages, such as Pisac, Calca, Urubamba and Ollantaytambo. I interviewed volunteers in each of these communities during my stay in Cusco. A network of buses, combis [8] and informal taxis connect all of the communities throughout the Valley, which are about a 90-minute drive from one end to the other, along twisting mountain roads. Traveling in the Valley is often cheap and very easily accessible. The snow-capped mountains, lush jungles and the Urubamba river at the valley's basin make for stunning vistas in nearly any direction. After the briefest trip, it would be easy to see why the natural beauty alone would draw so many tourists every year, and why some would hope to extend their trips to volunteer here for several months or longer.

Volunteers within the city tend to stay near the *Centro Historico* (historic district), Old Cusco which was built around the Plaza de Armas, or main town square with its own cathedral (see Figure 6). All around the square are twisting cobble stone streets, leading up the mountain. Restaurants, bars and cafés line the narrow streets, as do several hotels and hostels, ranging from a luxurious Marriott and Hilton to various backpacker hostels. As with Miraflores, these all tend to cater to foreign tastes; in addition to some traditional Andean fare, there are vegetarian cafés, elegant sushi restaurants and wine bars.

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[8] A combi is a large, privately owned van that travels throughout or between cities. It is significantly cheaper than a charter bus or other travel options for tourists like hiring a private car/taxi.

Figure 4. Photos taken in San Juan de Miraflores neighbourhood in Lima.

Figure 5. Map of Cusco and the Sacred Valley region.

In addition to the high volume of drink and dining options, the main square and surrounding areas are lined with touts trying to sell key chains, post cards, photo opportunities of women and children wearing traditional textiles, or men in Inka warrior costumes. These textiles and costumes are also available for purchase, as are massages, shoe shines, city tours, mountain treks, posters and photos. Since Cusco is far smaller than Lima, marked foreign spaces are narrower and thus the number of touts seems intensified. Unlike Lima, there is less restricted mobility, but there are still some particular areas that are ill advised to travel due to assumptions around their crime and danger. San Jerónimo is one such area, located on the outskirts of the city. Several volunteers that I interviewed lived and worked in this district. Once again, many of them also worked with children and youth.

In the villages throughout the valley, integration between volunteers and the local population was much more common. Some volunteers lived on their own in boarding houses or apartments, but others opted to stay with host families in town. Fears of crime or violence are even lower here than Cusco, as many of the towns had only a few thousand permanent residents. Volunteers felt secure to walk around and they did not feel as though they were easy targets. Indeed, trekking was a popular past time for volunteers, as each village had its own, unique paths from each city's central plaza, up along the twisting mountain paths, or downwards further into the valley, along the Urubamba River (see Figure 7). Touts could still be found in some areas in the villages. Ollantaytambo, in particular, had many merchants that were particularly aggressive, as the small train to Aguas Caliente (the town closest to Machu Picchu) departed here, so there were often tour buses with eager shoppers parked out front the town's main plaza. Generally, the villages offered a much quieter and more peaceful alternative to working in the cities. Many of the residents were Indigenous farmers, and many of them were extremely poor. It should be

noted that volunteers did not frame this poverty as menacing or dangerous in anyway, in juxtaposition with the violence associated with Lima. Although a handful of volunteers kept with the overarching trend of working with children throughout the Valley, others worked on conservation programs or with social enterprises that helped local, Indigenous women sell their textiles in local marketplaces, as well as to international vendors at fair trade prices.

Ancash. The Ancash region (see Figure 8) was the most remote site that I visited to conduct interviews, located about a 9-hour bus ride north of Lima, spanning a long stretch along the spine of the Cordillera Blanca, which offers some of the most stunning trekking trails in the nation. The Aboriginal Canadian group referenced earlier was stationed in a village about two hours north of the regional capital, Huaraz. As such, it stands apart form other volunteer experiences which were much more centrally located, either in relation to large cities like Lima, or hubs for tourist activity, like Cusco. This Quechua village had only a few hundred residents, and the main industry was agriculture, except when volunteers came to town. This was the community's third time hosting groups of Canadian volunteers after forming a partnership with the Canadian VCA. As the community had no hostels or hotels as options, individual households hosted volunteers in homestays. All of the volunteers were within walking distance from one another, as the village was only four or five blocks in any direction from the central Plaza de Armas, where the town's church, municipal offices, single restaurant/bar and small bodegas could be found. Nestled in a valley at about 2240 meters above sea level, a path southwards lead downwards to the river at the valley's basin. Any other direction leading outside the town ascended the mountains, through terraced fields of quinoa, kiwicha and pacay that are maintained by the village residents, or nearby families who live on the other side of the mountain (see Figure 9).
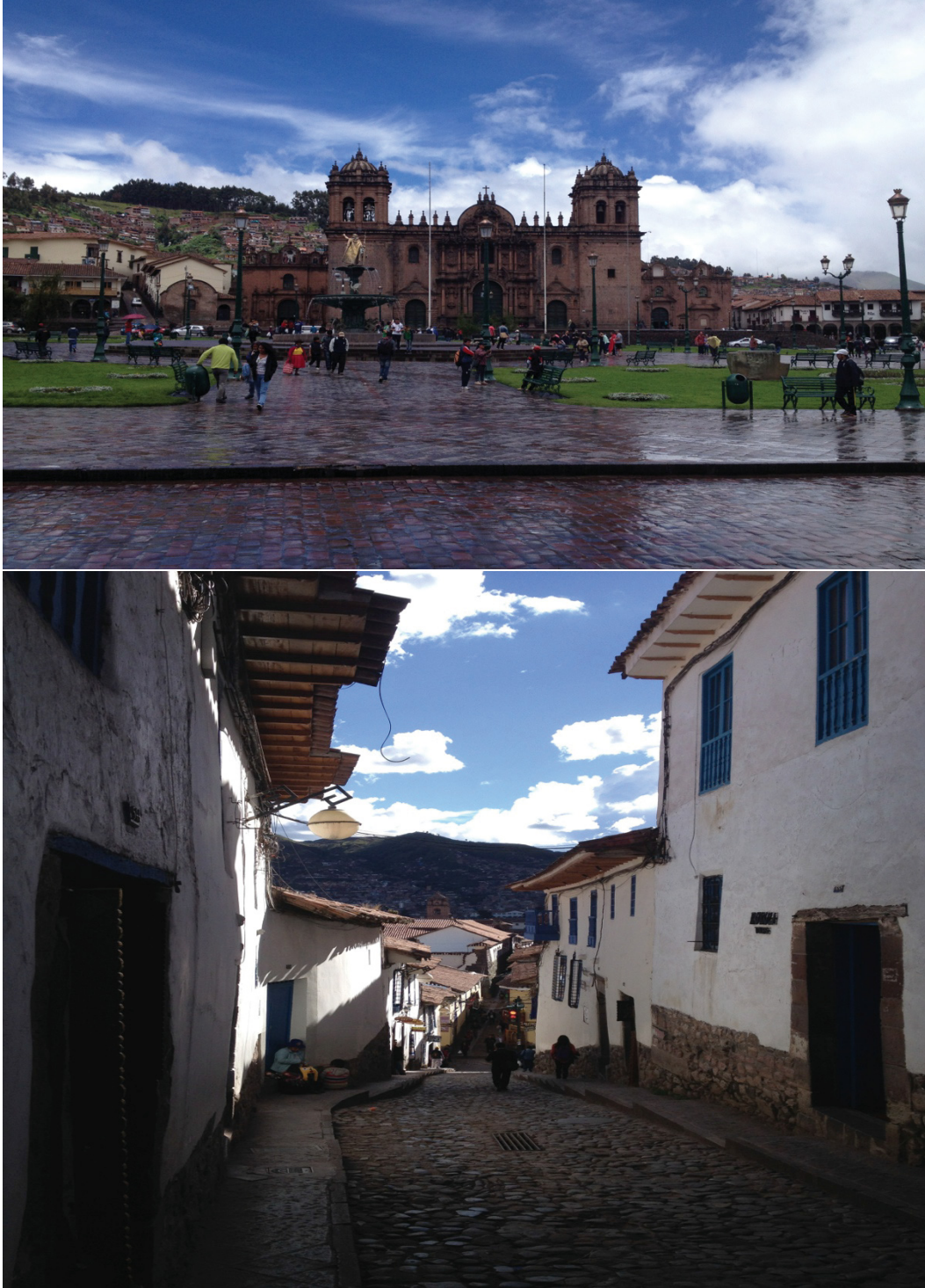
Figure 6. Photos taken in the city of Cusco. A street in the San Blas neighbourhood (top) and the Plaza de Armas (bottom).

Figure 7. Photos taken in the Sacred Valley Region; Ollantaytambo (top) and Urubamba (bottom).
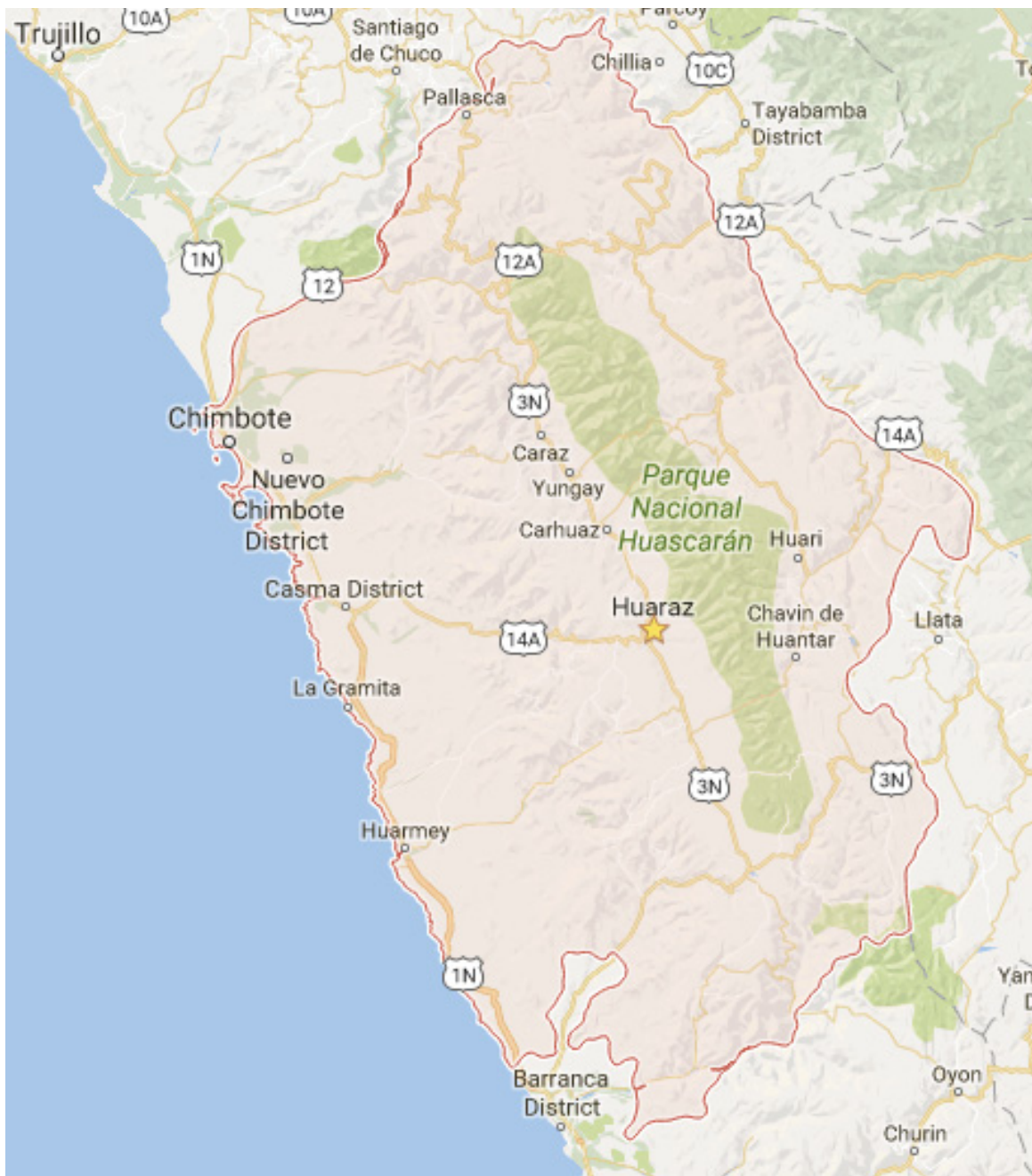
Figure 8. Map of Ancash region.

Figure 9. Photos taken in the Ancash Region; a hiking trail (top) and a plaza in Huaraz, the province's capital (bottom).

Although it only has a population of about 100,000, Huaraz offers much in the way of tourist services and infrastructure. The region receives less tourist traffic (and therefore is less expensive) than Cusco and is still widely celebrated for its hiking trails throughout nearby Huarascan National Park. A large draw, the park offers hiking expeditions for the inexperienced, lasting as little as 3 or 4 hours, lead by a guide, or 4-5 day long independent camping odysseys. As a result, Huaraz, which is built around a central Plaza in the style of all colonial Spanish towns, has a large number of touts offering tours, gear, and transportation to the park. I stayed briefly in Huaraz, when not in the northern village, and also spoke with volunteer coordinators who currently were hosting no volunteers.

Chapter Outline

In Chapter 2, I explore the research and practice of international volunteerism. I begin by identifying various dimensions and actors within the industry: who participates in international volunteerism, what institutions are in place to facilitate the practice across the public, private and not for profit sectors, and who the various stakeholders are that are invested in the practice and to what extent. I also examine the critical research that has emerged over the last two decades in the fields of volunteer tourism studies and global citizenship education. I unify this research with theories of self-development as a form of governmentality, and demonstrate that these forces tend to obscure the often negative repercussions that international volunteerism can have on community hosts and volunteers alike.

In Chapter 3 I explore volunteer recruitment practices by demonstrating the complex media environment that is in place to entice young volunteers to participate in these programs within the context of post-humanitarian communications. There is an abundance of volunteer programs disseminated through universities, recruitment fairs, peer networks and online search

engines hosted by private sector and not-for-profit volunteer cooperation agencies. The competition between different organizations in this milieu creates a customer service oriented approach to volunteer coordination that allows unlimited flexibility for volunteer to customize their volunteer experience. This aspect of volunteer recruitment can risk oversimplifying, and even dehumanizing the struggles of communities in the Global South, and minimizes the importance of volunteer's learning.

Chapter 4 examines volunteers' experience in the field, focusing on their emotional responses. It reveals the high propensity for volunteers to identify fundamental changes in how they view themselves and the world. I ask, to what extent, volunteers' self-perceived transformations can be described as "learning" by identifying various common outcomes that take place in the field. I highlight various examples of volunteers' efforts to engage in solidarity-based relationships in order to demonstrate their complexity.

The conclusion, Chapter 5, questions the overall impacts of these experiences on volunteers who return home from the field. I challenge the findings from a handful of monitoring and evaluation reports of Canadian volunteer organizations that largely laud praise on volunteers by comparing their results with my own research. I end my dissertation by speculating about how these emotionally extractive experiences structure volunteers' ongoing political engagement and attitudes towards collective action and activism, and by imagining what future international development policymaking may look like, under the leadership of young people who have undertaken these experiences during their formative years.

Chapter 2: Volunteerism: Self-Development or Solidarity

International Volunteerism: The Industry and Scholarship

The popularity of international volunteerism is evident from the multiple routes through which one might pursue this experience. Volunteer cooperation agencies (VCAs) abound in universities, churches/faith based organizations, not-for-profits, private sector tour groups and government-sponsored programs. These organizations cater to the desires of prospective volunteers by arranging work placements for within the Global South in a wide variety of different fields, as teachers, childcare providers, health care assistants, builders, community organizers, cultural programmers, conservationists or environmental stewards, human rights watchdogs and organizational managers. Based on different VCAs that facilitate the experience for varying lengths of time (sometimes 1 week, sometimes 1 year or longer), and the wide range of opportunities on offer, those who practice volunteering abroad identify differently: as volunteer tourists/voluntourists, solidarity tourists, international cooperants, interns, students abroad, those that are undertaking a gap year, as backpackers or backpacktivists, missionaries or alternative spring breakers.[9]

Regardless of the name that one assigns to it, international volunteer practice is becoming increasingly fashionable among youth. The Tourism Research and Marketing consultancy group (TRAM, 2008) suggests that 1.6 million tourists participate in volunteer programs a year and that the "total expenditure generated by volunteerism is likely to be between £832 million ($1.66 billion [USD]) and £1.3 billion ($2.6 billion [USD])" (2008, p. 42). No comparable study has

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[9] Global Affairs' Volunteer Cooperation Program (VCP) refers to those Canadians participating in volunteer service overseas as "international volunteers." I also use this term to generally refer to the patterns of traveling abroad to work on community development projects in the Global South even though not all participants might use this term to describe their activities. To my mind, this lack of consistency demonstrates the expansiveness of the industry.

been conducted since 2008, but these figures were projected to grow annually. Findings from the United Nation's World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and World Youth Student and Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation's joint study (2016) show the increasing frequency of youth travel,[10] estimating that in 2014, the total value of the international youth travel market was $286 billion USD. By the year 2020, they estimate "almost 370 million youth travellers will account for a total spend of over USD 400 billion" (p. 10). While not all of these youth will necessarily travel as international volunteers, the study observes an increasing trend of what they call "purposeful travel," distinguished from leisure travel as work or study abroad trips, volunteer tourism or language learning-related travel (p. 12).

Purposeful travel creates perceived opportunities among multiple stakeholders on a local and global level. Aside from the volunteers themselves who are eager to travel, local communities hope to benefit. This does not just include local grassroots organizations, NGOs, faith-based organizations or social enterprises who hope that their organizations and the communities that they serve will benefit from volunteers' service, but any number of local entrepreneurs who may profit from the income that volunteers generate as tourists in local markets. Local travel agents/coordinators, tour operators, and guides are employed when volunteers arrive, as are other hospitality service workers in restaurants, hotels, bars and many other tourist attractions, depending on the region. Infrastructure development projects, primarily related to transportation and accommodation, also tend to proliferate in areas with high concentrations of volunteers and tourists, which stimulates the national economy. On a global scale, a complex network exists that links local organizations to international institutions like

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[10] The UNWTO and WYSE define "youth" as between ages of 15-29.

universities, faith based organizations, international NGOs or various levels of government that seek to recruit, train, occasionally fund or otherwise coordinate volunteers' trips.

This chapter explores scholarly inquiry into the phenomenon of international volunteerism beginning around the year 2000, focusing largely on scholarship in the fields of volunteer tourism studies, global citizenship education and international development. Although this is a relatively new area of study, the growing critical attention to the practice reflects the emerging popularity of this industry. what were once publically-funded, government-organized programs have since proliferated into a burgeoning industry comprising also the private and third sectors, as described above. Benson (2011) notes that within the scholarship on volunteer tourism studies, far more attention has been devoted to the effects of the experience on volunteers than on the communities they aspire to help. Scholarship tends to reflect the interests of volunteers, who treat their travel experiences as opportunities for their own education, growth and personal development. International volunteerism is frequently posited as an opportunity for the volunteer to establish and cultivate a sense of self. Wearing, Deville, and Lyons (2008) have gone so far to describe the practice "as much a journey of the self as it is a journey to help others" (p. 63).

Given the inherently extractive ontology of international volunteerism, this chapter is also concerned with the particular constitution of Selfhood through extractive relations in international volunteerism. Rather than asking how this extractive experience takes place, I examine why the formation of selfhood through volunteering has gained such popularity and traction among practitioners and scholars alike. Although they can be expensive, volunteer opportunities are not intended solely for a few privileged elite young people, but are actually an increasingly standard rite of passage for young people as they enter into the neoliberal economy

in an "adult" capacity. In this sense, I argue that self-development is an instrument of

governmentality and that volunteers' efforts to constitute their own identities through volunteer

practice produces a specific kind of citizen and international actor that may conduct itself in

ways that ultimately benefit institutions (the university, the state, the corporation) rather than

vulnerable populations in the Global South. I draw on literature in the field of global citizenship

education to demonstrate how volunteer coordinating institutions, like universities, benefit from

volunteer deployment. I also explain how institutions and volunteers operationalize discourses of

moralism or altruism to justify volunteer experiences that ultimately reflect the desires of

volunteers over those of community members. The chapter concludes by suggesting that the time

volunteers spend witnessing the perceived poverty, suffering or hardships of communities in the

Global South is interpreted as an opportunity for their own maturation and growth into fully

formed global citizens.

The Relationship to the Self [11]

  Wearing (2001) defines volunteer tourists as those "who, for various reasons, volunteer

in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material

poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into

aspects of society or environment" (p. 1). Widely cited, and among the first to differentiate

volunteer tourism from other forms of tourist activity, Wearing largely considers the practice as

"new and exciting forms of travel in defiance of the mass-produced tourism product born out of

the industrial revolution and, prior to that, the need for social standing" (2001, p. 6). As a

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[11] For the sake of brevity, this section is primarily devoted to Wearing's scholarship, which is widely cited by other scholars who are equally concerned with volunteer's self-formation, such as Lepp (2008), Matthews (2008), Söderman & Snead (2008), Pearce and Coghlan (2008), Brown (2005), Wickens (2010), Tomazos and Butler (2009), Zahra (2011), and Mittelberg and Palgi (2011).

practice of alternative tourism,[12] volunteer tourism represents a kind of "serious leisure" (Stebbins, 2007), whose major characteristics he identifies as "a motivation based in altruism and self-interest; an institutional role of delegated work; and a contribution of helping and satisfaction" (p. 53).

In this formulation, volunteers may find motivation in their own self-interest and in the prospect of helping others. "Volunteer tourism provides an opportunity for an individual to engage in an altruistic attempt to explore 'self'. It has been built around the belief that by living in and learning about other people and cultures, in an environment of mutual benefit and cooperation, one is able to engage in a transformation and development of the self" (Wearing, 2001, p. 3). In spite of the power differentials between volunteer and host that may impose volunteers' own ideas, values and agendas onto their hosts, Wearing (2001) nevertheless remains optimistic that these experiences serve the ultimate benefit of broadening the tourist's sense of self. "Presumably, the cumulative 'I' can be enlarged by interaction in tourist space… The 'me' and the 'I' which make up the self must be changed in some way by the interactions and symbols experienced in the tourist space" (p. 169).

Interactions with local community members benefit the tourist in their own sense of self-development, ideally making them more sensitive to their social and economic positions, and preventing them from projecting their own ideals outward. This process draws on Margaret Mead's symbolic interactionist explanation of "how society 'gets into' the individual, determines behavior and becomes part of 'self', suggesting that the mind is a process through which individuals adapt to their environment, using language and symbols in communications with others" (Wearing, Deville & Lyons, 2008, p. 65). There is a "never-ending search for meaning"

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[12] Other examples of alternative tourism are backpacking, adventure tourism and eco-tourism.

that, in the context of tourism allows the tourist to "experiment with representations of the 'me'

but also may lead to long-lasting reworkings of the 'I'" (Wearing, Deville & Lyons, 2008, p. 69).

In this sense, volunteer projects are "inextricably linked to the project of the self" (Wearing,

Deville & Lyons, 2008, p. 70).

Although Wearing does raise concerns that the increasing role of corporate tourism

operators are serving to undermine the work of NGO's in developing communities (Wearing &

Wearing, 2006), the development of the self is lauded in this scholarship because it is assumed

that using volunteer experiences as a process of personal discovery will necessarily lead to

personal growth, self-awareness and an ongoing commitment to social justice activism. The

novelty of the international volunteer environment acts as an ideal setting for the contemplation

required for some kind of personal transformation to occur. This transformative process is

described almost teleologically. As the host community "gets into" the volunteer's self, they

expand their understanding of the world in a way that is presumed to be wholly beneficial; it is a

learning opportunity for the volunteer in question, and they will naturally learn to contribute to

their chosen cause earnestly and enthusiastically.

The Self and Governmentality

By Wearing's account, international volunteer experiences allow for personal growth and

skill development that enriches the character of the volunteer participants, while ostensibly

serving communities in need. Works informed by Foucault's understanding of the self enrich

Wearing's descriptions of self-development, and the subsequent trajectory of volunteer tourism

studies' inquiries, by revealing the power dimensions that inform the motivations behind

participants' desire for self-development in the first place. Social power is instantiated at a

micro-level on individuals through their senses of self, serving to construct subjectivity rather

than dominate or repress it (Foucault, 1990, pp. 55, 58). Power circulates through and within bodies, through "dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings" rather than in restraint, force or violence against them (Foucault, 1995, p. 26).

As Rose (1999) writes:

The self is a vital element in the networks of power that traverse modern societies. The regulatory apparatus of the modern state is not something imposed from outside upon individuals who have remained essentially untouched by it. Incorporating, shaping, channeling, and enhancing subjectivity have been intrinsic to the operations of government… [The] government of subjectivity has taken shape through the proliferation of a complex and heterogeneous assemblage of technologies. These have acted as relays, bringing the varied ambitions of political, scientific, philanthropic, and professional authorities into alignment with the ideals and aspirations as individuals, with the selves each of us want to be. (p. 217)

Self-development is then a form of govermentality, or self-governing practice, wherein techniques of practice come to produce normalized patterns of behaviour to which individuals must try to adhere. These technologies exist "where the political apparatus and its functionaries take the responsibility in arranging the affairs of a nation to maximize employment, security, tranquility and so forth, in favour of an enabling state that will govern without governing 'society' – governing by acting on the choices and self-steering properties of individuals, families, communities, organizations" (Rose, 1999, pp. xxii–xxiii). In his study of the "psy sciences," such as psychology and psychiatry, Rose (1999) suggests that governmentality as a strategy configures citizens as individuals who are autonomously responsible for their own conduct, yet also obligated towards certain moral choices as citizens, but also as consumers,

employees and participants in a democratic civil society or public sphere. This is produced through the psychologization of certain fields of life for modern, liberal citizens, wherein citizen subjects are "educated and solicited into a kind of alliance between personal objectives and ambitions and institutionally or socially prized goals or activities" (Rose, 1999, p. 10).

Government agendas influence citizens' choices "about family life, work, leisure, lifestyle, and personality and its expression… forging a symmetry between the attempts of individuals to make life worthwhile for themselves, and the political values of consumption, profitability, efficiency, and social order" (Rose, 1999, p. 11). Standards, norms and moral codes come to infiltrate "into the very interior of our existence and experience as subjects" (Rose, 1999, p. 11), established in key domains, such as the workplace and education systems. This process unfolded over the course of the twentieth century, but accelerated in the period following World War II. Within the workplace, growing human resources departments, contracted occupational psychologists and management consultants with expertise in employee productivity administered rationales to ensure that employees would develop a deeper relationship with the employer, so that they would take personal pride in their own capacities as workers. In this sense, "the forging of a new image of work, based upon a new image of the worker, and a new role for psychology within this complex" (Rose, 1999, p. 116) ensured that "the citizen, at work as much as outside it, is engaged in a project to shape his or her life as an autonomous individual driven by motives of self-fulfillment" (Rose, 1999, p. 116). Work came to be understood as an essential component of self-actualization. Those who did not take pleasure or find fulfilment in their work were considered maladaptive and were encouraged to seek out counselling measures. And so, it became commonsense that workers would work to seek personal development and satisfaction.

Within the work of childcare, there existed a further opportunity to administer control through a normalization of common sense forms of knowledge. "Children came to the attention of social authorities as delinquents threatening property and security, as future workers requiring moralization and skills, as future soldiers requiring a level of physical fitness – in other words on account of the threat which they posed now or in the future to the welfare of the state" (Rose, 1999, p. 125). These various waves of moral panics justified governmental authority through psychological assessment in the family unit and classroom alike, but also created new opportunities for programming that would encourage young people to become active and engaged citizens.

As outlined in the previous chapter, international volunteerism became a specific strategy of the Canadian government in 1960s. This served various strategic ends, namely: exerting soft power using diplomacy throughout the Global South within the Cold War context; positively branding Canadian identity as "peacekeeping" nation, well-suited to mediating and resolving complex global problems while simultaneously re-imagining and erasing the nation's own violent legacies of racism and colonialism; and as within the context of resource rich nations like Peru, establishing a precedent of interventionism that would allow for ongoing industrialization, investment and resource exploitation.

Beyond this, as an instrument of governmentality international volunteerism draws on the psychologization of both workers and youth, in order to produce highly useful citizen subjects. Engaging and mobilizing the nation's increasingly anti-establishmentarian youth in government approved international activities created desire. Young people began to actively seek international work experiences out of duty to the nation and an internalized need to develop their own characters. Aligning the two produces young citizen subjects, eager for international

experience in order to participate in a global workforce that demands their full comprehension of global issues and compassion towards those who are perceived to suffer abroad.

Fostering an ethic of voluntarism among young people neatly accomplishes the primary ambition of self-governance. By creating citizen subjects who are eager to work for free on projects contributing towards some kind of social improvement agenda, the state alleviates its own responsibility, passing it along to eager young people who feel personal obligation to help those that have been marginalized or oppressed by global power structures. Feelings of care are outsourced. The importance of experiencing these feelings, which are foundational components of the international volunteer experience and therefore of successful demonstrations of citizenship and civic engagement, is not an end goal in itself. Rather, the significance is interpreted as a stepping stone toward an ongoing process of maturation and personal development.

Although the Canadian federal government has an ongoing commitment to funding volunteer cooperation, the practice has proliferated far beyond. The private sector offers boundless options to volunteers, which I discuss in Chapter 3. For universities and colleges, service-learning and study-away programs have become key features of undergraduate education and university life, and, simultaneously, crucial marketing and publicity tools for recruiting students. The following section reveals how global citizenship education has become an increasingly valued component of post-secondary curriculum, and how the (often ambiguous) pedagogical models serve to produce subject citizens and docile workers within a neoliberal economy, in spite of the rhetoric of moralism that is associated with the university's mandate for community service.

Global Citizenship Education

"Global citizenship" is a widely contested term that is often used casually and interchangeably with "cosmopolitanism" to imply a notion of active knowledge, engagement and participation in an international community. It entails normative but often highly vague notions of human rights, collectivism and an easy, harmonious proximity between disparate groups around the world. In spite of the vast differences between these citizens – racial, cultural, religious, economic, geographic differences – global citizenship implies a common planetary constituency. As Oxfam puts it, "Global Citizenship is about understanding the need to tackle injustice and inequality, and having the desire and ability to work actively to do so. It is about valuing the Earth as precious and unique, and safeguarding the future for those coming after us. Global Citizenship is a way of thinking and behaving. It is an outlook on life, a belief that we can make a difference" (Oxfam as cited in Benham Rennick & Desjardins, 2014). Specific citizenship practices that are informed by this outlook or belief system are open to debate, but ultimately the worldview is concerned with "our global relationship to others, about our place in the world, about our perceived interests and, most fundamentally about our identities" that stem from "a moment of unprecedented social and ecological interdependence on a planetary scale" (Karlberg, 2008, p. 311). The application of global citizenship discourse helps "to structure our mental and social realities", so while "global citizenship is not yet an accepted legal construct, the term is becoming a significant discursive construct that can play an important role in the creation of a more peaceful and just global order" (Karlberg, 2008, p. 310).

The discourse of global citizenship is not easily contained, however. The meaning of the concept is not self-evident, and tends to change in signification depending on how it is invoked. As Lewin (2009) notes, "Everyone seems to be in such a rush to create global citizens out of

their students that we seem to have forgotten even to determine what we are even trying to create" (p. xviii). When it relates to education, such as in universities that coordinate exchange or study abroad programs, international internships or volunteer placements, some scholars, such as Cameron (2014) contend that the language of global citizenship "is used in many university programs with almost no grounding in the political and ethical debates that might give it any real meaning … Indeed, any serious grappling with the range of possible meanings for global citizenship suggest that the current popularity of the term relies heavily on its conceptual vagueness as it is used to represent many different and often contradictory ideas" (p. 21). The language of global citizenship often relies on the application of voluntary actions or practical choices, as opposed to cosmopolitanism which Cameron posits emphasizes specific moral duties – both "positive duties of aid but also negative duties to prevent injustice… [i.e.] climate change, global trade rules, and other institutions such as university pension, endowment, and scholarship funds that may benefit individuals in the Global North while harming people in the Global South" (p. 31).

A cosmopolitan ethic obligates global citizens to act on moral standards of justice, rather than individual, emotional choices that suit students' lifestyles or self-images. This ethic clashes against neoliberal understandings of globalization, including in university settings that seek to train globally-competitive employees and entrepreneurs (Shultz, 2011). In an extensive review of various educational institutions' conception and practice of global citizenship education, Jorgenson and Shultz (2012) suggest that the term "has become both an empty signifier and an overflowing container of discourse, practice, and policy" (p. 2). In particular, universities treat global citizenship education as a graduate attribute, or a marketable learning outcome from a degree or diploma program that allows for participation in a borderless employment economy.

Global citizenship education endows graduates with "the human capital to move freely across the world to access opportunities … Education for this type of citizen provides students with the necessary skills to successfully participate in the global market" (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012, p. 4). Linking global citizenship and cosmopolitanism with the production of internationally competitive, world-savvy graduates allows universities to brand themselves with highly recognizable, international profiles, to generate revenue, create strategic alliances with international organizations and to enhance their own research production, but this may come at the cost of their public service mandate which is framed as a catalyst for this learning outcome for students, and not an important goal for the university in and of itself (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012, p. 14). Framing citizenship in this way emphasizes the needs of students while ignoring concerns of the entitlements, exclusion, access and equity of globally vulnerable populations that they wish to serve (Jorgenson & Shultz, 2012, p. 4).

It is unsurprising that universities implement international programs to reflect their own self-interests, but it is nevertheless disappointing to bear witness to how they involve the language of service, justice and moral duty without fulfilling them. Once again, impacts on graduates – the production of elite, hyper-mobile youth—and the institutions that mediate these excursions (universities) are valued above tangible outcomes for host communities. As Cameron (2014) puts it, "the term global citizenship is often used in ways that appear intended to make students and universities feel and look good but leaves up to them decisions about what goodness entails" (p. 24).

This is in spite of a long history of ethical uncertainty surrounding the practice of sending university and sometimes high school aged students abroad as volunteers, interns or pupils. In a widely cited essay, Epprecht (2004) was among the first Canadian scholars and practitioners to

questions the ethical and pedagogical implications of sending students abroad on work/study programs, asking:

> Is it possible that well-intentioned, liberal, humanist, anti-colonialist ethics developed in the context of elite institutions in the North could be perceived as (or in fact *be*) colonialist in specific situations in the South? And how serious is the risk that unexamined good intentions and high deals could backfire in pedagogical terms, for example, by actually hardening Northern students' pre-existing negative or exotic stereotypes about the South, by fostering a missionary zeal that alienates the wider public audience in the North from a critical understanding of North-South relations, or by creating in the Southern hosts feelings of burden or exploitation by the North? Clearly, a pedagogy that fails to address those feelings is deeply problematic in development ethics terms, irrespective of how successful it is in educating individual students to the complexities of development. (pp. 688–689)

In spite of good intentions, the implication and interference of university students on development projects in the Global South will always carry an underlying risk of perpetuating colonial ideologies and practices.

This reading runs against the optimistic assumptions that pervade global citizenship education discourse, suggesting that ethical and pedagogical risks exist for community partners and participating international students. The primary ethical risk is how to account for institutional power relations in the field, given their reach, complexity and pervasiveness. Institutions like universities are not reliable evaluators of their own students' impacts on communities, and it cannot be assumed that all volunteer contributions will have positive enduring effects. Unknown costs might accrue for Southern organizations due to the burden of

hosting. Staff may not be adequately compensated for this extra time, community members may burn out on their obligations to host various waves of travelers, and added costs might accrue for the organizations. This is not to mention the charge that volunteer student interventions act as a form of scab labour, taking away jobs that locals might do for wages. The economic, as well as environmental impacts are not guaranteed.

Epprecht (2004) further questions if a true exchange is possible, or if Western values, norms and ideals will get imposed upon community members. This may occur because of certain entitlements, rights or privileges which visitors may demand (for example, a higher standard of accommodation or food than locals), or even just the mere presence of relatively wealthy international students risks creating either envy or acrimony between community members and the developed North, or on the other hand, the exaltation of Western values over local customs. The placement of these students obligates a constant balancing act between universalist and culturally relative approaches to human rights that organizations or universities may find it challenging to negotiate. For example, Epprecht considers the very presence of young, unescorted women in public spaces in some parts of the Global South to clash against local expectations around gender norms. Gender equality and other forms of anti-discrimination are often deeply held, important tenets of the liberal, humanist volunteers that Epprecht describes, but they do not necessarily correspond to a local worldview. At what point do Northern participants risk proselytizing their own moral codes onto the communities that they serve? And at what point does this replicate patterns of imperialist authority that undermines local beliefs? (Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2014; Matthews, 2014; Peacock, 2014; Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014)

Many universities do not have clear answers to this question, and the debate remains ongoing. Willis (2012) describes the foundational secular assumptions of international development programs in Northern universities that often clash against the religious and spiritual organizations that occupy extremely important positions in civil society throughout much of the Global South. He reported that students participating on trips that he supervised on various volunteer projects throughout Africa often had difficulty discussing religion with their community counterparts. Northern volunteers assumed that their own secularism implied a religious neutrality, which was not shared by local community members, who frequently asked "Are you saved?" or "Do you believe in God?" Although religious and spiritual differences could serve as interesting starting points for lively discussion and an inter-cultural exchange, it often did quite the opposite, creating a gulf and a sense of unease between participants when volunteers' reactions to the overt religiosity of their counterparts caused offense. "Snickers, chortling and laughter from the northerners was not reciprocated; in fact, the strange looks on the faces of the southern students betrayed their unease and an unwillingness to pursue the matter further. That was an off limits subject – better to stick to the sports pages" (Willis, 2012, p. 3).

In a Latin American context (as with much of the Global South), the historical irony is that Catholicism, the dominant religion of the region, was a colonial imposition that served to legitimate foreign rule. That international volunteers would today be surprised by, or at all derisive towards, the strong religious character of public life in Latin America demonstrates another ongoing history of presumed intellectual superiority over the Global South. This presents a fundamental challenge to the fabric of GCE programs that promise volunteer participants that they will come back with new friendships, expanded worldviews and outlooks on life.

In fact, several of the pedagogical outcomes for either volunteer visitors or host community members remain dubious. Stints abroad are often for just one semester, while Epprecht (2004) suggests that a minimum of six months, and ideally two years is required for an impactful cultural immersion experience; an impossibility given the rhythm of university education that demands evaluation (and payment) on a semesterly basis. Students' experiences in the field may also not even be particularly immersive, as overprotective administrations tend to shelter participants from various communities, regions or activities out of fear of potential harm coming to them. Often, groups of volunteers abroad tend to interact more with each other than local community members anyway, which Epprecht attributes largely to the common lack of language education prior to departure, which effectively ghettoizes students with each other and undermines the point of cultural exchange on these kinds of trips. Furthermore, learning outcomes are extremely difficult to evaluate. He asks how professors can truly measure desired learning outcomes in a milieu that is so unfamiliar to students.

Sin (2009) argues that "individual experiences of volunteer tourism vary from person to person, and what each volunteer tourist takes out of his or her experience often results from a complex interplay between his or her original motivations, the specific context of volunteer work … and the composition of the volunteer team amongst other factors" (p. 483). Volunteers' motivations are heterogeneous, as are the spaces in which they work, ranging from desires to see the world (p. 488), to learn through community work (p. 489), or to challenge one's own abilities and gain new skills (p. 490). One conclusion that Sin made in her own case study of a group of Singaporean youth working on a project in a South African township was that "Instead of grooming a generation of youths who are passionate about volunteer work, research for this

paper seems to suggest that respondents interviewed are instead passionate about travelling and going overseas" (p. 494).

In another example, Simpson (2004) has noted the gap year students she observed in Kenya explained their encounters with poverty by describing the locals that they met as "poor-but-happy," stating that developing community members are accustomed to their lives of poverty and therefore are unbothered by their circumstances (p. 688). Volunteers romanticize poverty from their experiences in the field, relating it to conceptions of "social and emotional wealth" (Simpson, 2004, p. 688). That is, while the community members that these volunteers observed were understood to be materially and financially poor, they were nevertheless still "lucky" because they found happiness, meaning or purpose in their lives through close kinships with their friends and family. That they could experience these pleasures in spite of (or perhaps because of?) their poverty, justified the Kenyans' economic marginalization to the volunteers.

So while this exposure to different cultures and lifestyles may provide educational moments, responses such as these indicate that participants do not necessarily learn about different ways of life in the Global South, but more accurately project their own values and assumptions onto the experiences of others in order to explain worldviews that they already held to be true. According to Crossley's (2012) study of volunteer tourists, also in Kenya, the personal transformation that occurs for these young people is based around the recognition of gratitude and appreciation for their own privilege. For participants, "Encountering destitution is narrated as an unpleasant yet necessary experience that one must go through in order to trigger emotions such as sadness and guilt, which in turn facilitate the positive change in the self" (Crossley, 2012, p. 94). Witnessing poverty becomes an emotional catalyst for the self-transformation of the volunteer, but this transformation can hold unintended consequences such as an "appreciation for

Western luxuries and privilege [that] actually reinforces adherence to capitalist ideology" (Crossley, 2013, p. 175).

In these case studies, volunteers and VCAs assume that volunteers' interaction with poverty provides a unique and fruitful learning opportunity. While the experience may be emotionally challenging it ultimately serves the volunteer, who will grow from the process of negotiating these negative feelings and mature into a compassionate, informed and active global citizen. Ideally, sustained participation in social justice movements will follow from this transformation. However, these volunteer experiences are framed from the outset in ambiguous ways by the institutions that coordinate them (universities, in the above cases), as the values of global citizenship are themselves interpreted and contested by different stakeholders. Furthermore, it is pedagogically unsound to assume that a specific learning outcome will emerge within the context of a volunteer placement. As the case studies above demonstrate, creating opportunities for inter-cultural communication do not automatically engender consensus or cooperation among all parties. As much as we would like for these exchanges to be constructive and to create strong networks of friends, allies and colleagues, this is particularly not the case when there is such an enormous disparity of power and privilege between host and guest, as is the case with international volunteerism. Worldviews clash, as we can see with different approaches to spirituality. Different parties have different expected outcomes, and it is my claim that volunteers expect to leave the field of their practice having personally benefited; having extracted the experience of time in the South as an opportunity for the development of their sense of Self.

Morally Magnetic Missions?

The promises of volunteer tourism nonetheless remain alluring. They pledge to cultivate empathetic, intelligent and civically engaged youth, as well as to plant the seeds for burgeoning transnational social movements. What about travel abroad for this kind of leisurely intervention is so compelling that it has been forgiven, excused or rationalized, in spite of the evidence of self-interest, if not narcissism that volunteers exhibit? Guttentag (2009) speculates, "It is instinctive to sympathize with these attitudes, as one is naturally inclined to believe that a volunteer working with a host community will have a more 'meaningful' interaction with locals than a tourist in an all-inclusive resort, for example" (p. 545).

Yet proximity does not necessarily lead to meaning, or at least not a meaning that is oriented in notions of equality. Guttentag's (2009) findings indicate that volunteer interventions neglect locals' desires by implementing projects "solely based on their own opinions of what was best for the host community, and dissenting opinions voice by key members of the host community were deemed insignificant" (p. 543), for example, promoting conservation efforts in impoverished communities that benefit from the exploitation of natural resources for commercial gain, such as hunting wildlife. The lack of local contexts can further compromise or disrupt local economies as "volunteer tourists frequently perform jobs that locals could do instead" (p. 544), creating a cycle of dependency by taking work opportunities from locals. In many cases, volunteers' on-the-job performance may not be adequate, and their efforts risk incompletion and ineffectiveness, which is largely due to the lack of particular skills that are required to complete projects volunteer projects ranging from construction to data collection among scientific communities (p. 543). Moreover, a lack of local language skills often results "unavoidably [in] a burden rather than asset to an organization" (p. 543).

Tiessen and Heron (2012) conducted a recent evaluation report on the perceived impact of international volunteers, funded by the Canadian International Development Research Council (IDRC) that challenges "the general assumption that Canadians *should* learn about the world by travelling on short-term assignments of anywhere between two weeks to six months" (p. 2). They note that these programmes are often widely funded within Canada by government agencies, NGO's, private sector companies and universities. Rather than study empirically observable changes within participating communities, the researchers investigated how volunteers perceive the impacts of their own interventions. The study observed that youth participants in international volunteer programs are rarely asked to justify their time abroad (to themselves, nor to Canadian taxpayers) and are seldom held accountable for their actions while traveling. These volunteers identified positive impacts that they perceived their work had on communities, such as the opportunity to facilitate cross-cultural learning, impart new ideas and Canadian values, and generally act as role models for community members. They also identified a number of negative impacts that their work had, such as the creation of false hope for change in the community, the creation of Canadian stereotypes and the perpetuation of cycles of dependency on foreign development agencies. Some also considered their skill-level and time spent in the field as inadequate to address community issues. As a result, volunteer participants in the study were frequently unable to provide answers when asked if they perceived that their intervention in a developing community was justified. Thus, volunteers were themselves dubious or unclear about how effectively they contributed to the capacity development of Southern partners.

The results from this study suggest a potential counter-narrative to Canadians' assumptions that international volunteerism present overall positive benefits for all parties involved, including both volunteers and community beneficiaries. Canadian practitioners reveal a

certain ambivalence, or even skepticism, about the impacts of their overseas expeditions. As Tiessen and Heron point out, there is a dearth of literature from which to evaluate the impacts of international volunteer programs abroad. Rather, "the perceived impacts of youth who travel abroad reflect the imagined impact, aspirations and hopes of youth who volunteer abroad on short-term placements" (Tiessen & Heron, 2012, p. 46).

There is a common impulse to assume that youth volunteerism is inherently productive, useful and desirable. The works of Eliasoph (2011, 2013) demonstrate this assumption, illuminating that even when the best intentions are in place, a perpetuation of an unequal power relationship is always a risk. These types of programs are what Eliasoph calls "morally magnetic missions" (2011, p. 2). They contain goals that appear self-evidently positive for participants, such as fostering civic engagement, constructing safe spaces and comfortable kinship networks comprised of culturally diverse members, or promoting innovation in the third sector's ability to provide alternatives to social welfare by encouraging an ethos of participatory democracy. Often, the multiple ambitions of these types of programs and their organizers tend to contradict one another. When participants of different socio-economic, class, cultural and/or racial backgrounds participate together, they do so with different assumptions.

Eliasoph (2013) frames the difference as between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged youth. Disadvantaged youth participate under the assumption "that they themselves were considered the community problem" (p. 19) and that their participation in the project is itself worthwhile because it prevents them from engaging in risky behavior such as sex, drinking or drug consumption. This is juxtaposed with non-disadvantaged youth who hold additional agendas of self-development based on their own understandings of mobility, such as inevitable university attendance and CV-building. At times, participants recognized the tension between

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helping others and their own agendas, and "nervously questioned themselves and each other about whether they were really involved just to puff up their resumes" (p. 18). Often, Eliasoph fears, the inequality between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged participants is elided or outright ignored by program managers to focus on the celebration of diversity and shared experience. Programs, then, neutralize difference and disagreement, which are essential components of deliberative democracy, as a necessary step for organizers who are required by funders to quantify the number of disadvantaged youths (or, in other words, racialized or otherwise marginalized participants), in order to ensure that funding continues. Subsequently, a variety of outcomes occur in these projects – both intended and unintended, some of which reinforce a power dynamic that is far from empowering. Following Eliasoph, I recognize the potential downsides to missions that promise such optimistic results for all stakeholders.

A paradox exists within international volunteer discourse. Although international volunteerism emerged as a practice that was funded and coordinated by the state, and may in the end demonstrate the exertion of state power into the practices of volunteer subjects, it is also commonly understood by volunteers, and the programs that support them, to enable collectives to organize and work on behalf of vulnerable populations who have been marginalized, oppressed or otherwise disadvantaged by elite governmental or corporate interests.

McGehee and Santos (2005) suggest that volunteer tourism experiences may promote ongoing participation in social movements, in addition to the contributions towards selfhood described by Wearing. They do so by fostering social networks, wherein "high levels of interaction with other volunteers, researchers, local officials, and residents facilitate the establishment of an alliance" (p. 764). Of particular importance, however, are the networks that form among volunteers. In spite of a lack of overtly political goals, "volunteer tourism

experiences, through their uniqueness and emphasis on participation, are likely to predict or promote further activism, and be reasonably expected to draw together like-minded individuals from far-flung geographical areas, enabling the establishment of networks and idea exchange" (McGehee & Santos, 2005, p. 764). In turn, these networks may foster or promote participation in transnational social movements that are oriented in justice moments.

This kind of activist participation relies on notions of consciousness raising, which McGehee and Santos (2005) describe as "an individual's identification with and awareness of the 'battlegrounds' of social conflict" (p. 762) and on which I will elaborate in Chapter 4. The dynamic of the volunteer tourist experience that fosters these networks often "involves a major change in an individual's perceptions about society, more specifically about the about the origin, perpetuation, and solutions of social problems" (p. 765). The potential for consciousness-raising suggests that volunteers may become politically engaged based on these experiences. By actively engaging in international issues such as environmental, economic, social and political problems, participants gain insight into how they might change and how participants themselves might work towards this change. In this sense, these experiences may offer participants an opportunity to think beyond their own self-development, or, perhaps for their self-development to become informed by the need to become concerned with and actively invested in social justice issues.

Like Wearing, McGehee's (2002, 2012) research is rooted in the study of "alternative tourism," and suggests hopefully that contact between host and tourist populations can create greater communication, cooperation and collaboration across international borders. Nevertheless, her work also acknowledges the harmful, neocolonial aspects of the practice, which she describes as the "inherent contradictions … particularly concerning the interplay of oppression/emancipation, dependency/resistance, and dominant hegemony/agency" (McGehee,

2012, p. 84). In this reading, the magnetism of volunteer morality is not presumed, as the

practice contains simultaneously the potential for reward or risk. The framework suggests the

complexity of the practice, the industry and the discourse that surrounds them both, as well as

how high the stakes are for those who are invested in either the promotion or cessation of the

international volunteer movement.

For McGehee and some other volunteer tourism scholars, it is the volunteer coordination

agencies – the institutions that recruit, train and deploy volunteers, that "have the potential to act

either as catalysts for positive social change or facilitators of neo-colonialism and dependency"

(McGehee, 2012, p. 86). The institution that coordinates the volunteer trip undoubtedly will

influence the experience to some degree. It will coordinate placements, it will arrange activities

(both work-related duties and in many case, excursions), set the parameters for the kind of work

to be done, not to mention rules, and in many case housing accommodations, meal plans and

transportation. The organization may also frame the experience from the outset with some sort of

pre-departure training curriculum or orientation session upon the volunteer's arrival. Generally,

evidence suggests that private sector tourism operators and the shift in NGO frameworks towards

corporate partnerships bodes poorly for the possibility for projects to fulfill emancipatory

ambitions within host communities, as for-profit organizations are primarily concerned with their

revenue than with actual transformative work in the field (McGehee & Andereck, 2008; Wearing

& Lyons, 2008).

However, some scholars have noted problems that are endemic to the very practice of

international volunteerism, regardless of the coordination organization, due to the structures of

neoliberalism[13] that inform international volunteer practice and the international development

industry at large. These policies have been in place since the implementation of the largely

disastrous Structural Adjustment Plans of the 1970s and 80s. These conditional loans to Southern

nations were designed to revamp national economies through privatization and deregulation

measures, as well as the promotion of free, unregulated international trade. The lack of social

services arguably decreased foreign debt but resulted in widespread poverty and complete

inability to cope with environmental devastation, famine, increased crime and health issues of

the poorest of the poor. Escobar (2012) has argued that this development discourse problematizes

poverty in the Global South as an issue to be managed through imported systems from the Global

North like industrialization, urbanization and modernized agricultural productions. Additionally,

as Ferguson (1994) has asserted, neoliberal development strategies frame development issues as

technical problems to be resolved by experts. Local knowledge systems are devalued at the

expense of international intervening organizations, such as the World Bank or International

Monetary Fund. By claiming that development issues are technical, rather than political

problems, these institutions obscure and justify the colonial legacies that lead to such an

inequitable distribution of wealth, power and decision-making capacity in the first place.

Ferguson writes in particular about the role of international institutions acting as technocratic

experts in this process, leading to the depoliticization of development initiatives that also occurs

through the implementation of non-expert, volunteer placements as well.

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[13] Harvey (2005) describes neoliberalism as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices" (p. 2). The absence of state involvement within neoliberalism values "have promoted 'private' *competition, self-esteem,* and *independence* as the roots of *personal responsibility*, and excoriated 'public' *entitlement, dependency*, and *irresponsibility* as the source of social ills" (Duggan, 2003, p. 14).

In her study of volunteer tourist English teachers, Jakubiak (2012) describes the practice as firmly rooted in neoliberal ideology because "one can address dissatisfactory social issues through consumption (i.e. the purchase of a volunteer vacation) while ostensibly providing others with the tools for life-long learning (i.e. the English language) and personal responsibility (i.e. increased self-esteem)" (p. 439). Mostafanezhad (2013b) agrees, "The dominant discourses in volunteer tourism privilege a particularly neoliberal strategy that suggests that individuals and increasingly … NGOs are legitimate and often primary actors in social development" (p. 151). This allows individual consumers to support social change initiatives of their choosing through the consumption of these trips. It is less humanitarian labour than the consumption of an experience, as a form of "emotional capitalism -- which refers to the entanglement of economic and emotional as well as public and private relationships" (p. 155). The personal relationship to the development cause is of key importance; notably, of greater importance than affecting the desired social change or fostering social movements, as McGehee (2002) has posited that "while the personal becomes the political, it often becomes political in particularly neoliberal ways where questions of larger social inequalities are addressed through consumer choice" (p. 164). Just as Vodopivec and Jaffe (2011) have described volunteer tourism as "a child of the neoliberal era: it presents a marketable product in which the outsourcing, privatization and commodification of development are merged, enhanced strategically through discourses of difference and altruism" (p. 125). Even efforts to work against an unfair global economic order replicate "neoliberal modes of conduct and encounter within the Global South"(Mostafanezhad, 2013b, pp. 163-164) and perpetuate a commodified development agenda.

Looking Toward Solidarity or Just Looking?

If this is the case, then how can we conceive of transnational solidarity through volunteerism whatsoever? Mahrouse (2012) defines "solidarity tourism" as "a form of alternative tourism which enables travelers to help improve the living conditions of communities" (p. 228). These are typically trips that operate through not-for-private or civil society organizations, as opposed to private or state-run tour operators and they tend to hold two-fold agendas to "engage in 'public solidarity with communities in the South' while at the same time they help build 'young people's aptitudes' in a range of areas including journalism, environmental issues, and information technologies" (p. 227). Activists such as citizen journalists or witness-observers/human shields (Mahrouse, 2009) in occupied Palestinian territories who seek to challenge global, social injustice through independent travel to conflict or war zones far off the beaten voluntourist track, risk unwittingly perpetuating racialized power relations. For example, some of these activists adopt a "spokesperson role uncritically… [believing] themselves to be non-partisan, objective observers" (Mahrouse, 2009, p. 662) when speaking to media agencies or relaying stories back home.

Commitment to transnational solidarity requires intentional and ongoing work to actively mitigate the racial and class based privilege that volunteers tend to enjoy within communities in the Global South. The desire alone to be in solidarity is not the same thing as demonstrating the ongoing support, cooperation and deference to needs that are of a higher importance than one's own, nor is it this desire the same thing as showing respect to the abilities and agencies to communities in struggle. This nuance is lost in international volunteerism, where participation in the field is treated as an act of solidarity. The extractive act of temporarily visiting these sites of

presumed poverty and hardships is assumed to be an act of empathetic identification with those

who suffer. Volunteers interpret and make sense of these visits as deeply moving experiences.

Yet living in an impoverished community for a pre-determined amount of time, while in

possession of valuable foreign currency, a passport and a return ticket is not the same as

experiencing poverty. Rather, it is an act of witnessing poverty, albeit witnessing it from very

close proximity and as an active participant. Rentschler (2004) describes witnessing as "far more

than to just 'watch' or 'see'; it is also a form of bodily and political participation in what people

see and document that is often masked by their perceived distance from events" (p. 298).

Typically, the act of witnessing implies a corollary act; an ephemeral event, like a criminal act of

violence such as an attack, or a sudden cataclysmic disaster. While the event does not happen to

the witness, they do not go unaffected by it, as "to watch, see or hear another's victimization

from afar can nonetheless constitute affective and political forms of participation in others'

suffering" (Rentschler, 2004, p. 298). The discourse that frames witnesses as bystanders suggest

the role as one of "possible agency. Situated between victims and perpetrators, bystanders can

enable harassment and violence or they can disrupt it" (Rentschler, 2015, p. 21). Typically, these

bystanders stand apart from a crime scene or a catastrophe; volunteers bear witness to a

perpetual, quotidian theft and disaster for the communities where they have come to visit, work

and serve. It is one in which they are wholly, although often not consciously complicit. They are

witnessing a global world order in which they are the powerful and their hosts are weak.

As with volunteering, witnessing engages the civic self and it informs citizenship. There

is a perceived moral duty for citizens to bear constant witness to the suffering of others through

mass mediated news images of war, terror, famine or other social problems. These images

engage us as citizen witnesses; they are affronts to our sense of decency, and to our selves as

caring, compassionate souls, so we must stay informed! It will surely be argued that volunteering cannot be aligned with witnessing because it actually demands contact, interactivity and communication between subjects. Admittedly, international volunteerism does not happen behind a screen. Yet the various institutions that I have already mentioned such as the state, various private sector organizations and the academic-industrial complex nevertheless heavily mediate volunteer experiences, and infuse the practice with neoliberal values that in many ways prohibit relationships based on solidarity and legitimate their own interests. As I have tried to demonstrate in this chapter, volunteerism, like witnessing, also demands practices of looking, learning and documenting the experience in order to re-inscribe it as a testimonial that reflects key aspects of the self.

Razack (2007) describes how witnessing the trauma of others re-enacts a "specifically national version of the politics of rescues" (p. 381) that informs Northern citizens' –and especially Canadians'—understandings of themselves. Through witnessing foreign atrocities like the Rwandan genocide, mourning the suffering – not just of the Rwandan people, but of celebrated Canadian heroes like General Romeo Dallaire, who experienced severe and highly public post-traumatic stress disorder based on his experiences, the suffering others may be "transformed into our pleasure, the good feeling that we get from contemplating our own humanity" (Razack, 2007, p. 382).

The extractive nature of this kind of witnessing allows volunteers to use this experience to frame their own lives and lifestyles. As Wearing and others have argued, the practice does allow for the formation of the volunteer self, engaging the participant as a global citizen who has learned about world issues. The volunteer does not necessarily respond as an ally or activist who will be automatically inclined to struggle alongside those who suffer. Volunteering may have

several unpredictable impacts on the volunteer, like complacency or self-involvement. As

Razack (2007) notes, it is through witnessing that the Canadian (in this case, volunteer)

constructs their own identity "as a sensitive humanitarian who feels the pain of others deeply" (p.

386). These feelings of pain might just eclipse those of the Southern community partner who is

hosting the volunteer. But perhaps, as Rentschler (2004) argues, "witnessing may actually not be

about empowering citizens to act so much as it enables them to passively support state violence

and the selective (and non-existent) commitment of humanitarian aid" (p. 301). By granting

opportunities to look at, to learn from, and to emotionally identify with a vulnerable, global

underclass under the pretense of training youth to be compassionate and caring, the nation

reproduces itself through its citizens; irrespective of the policies it enacts, the wars it starts or the

resources it plunders. In either case, for the Northern citizen or nation from, the South remains a

resource for experience and for profit.

Chapter 3: Mediated Recruitment Practices and Structured Experiences of International Volunteerism

In this chapter, I identify the strategies and structures of the international volunteer recruitment media landscape, focusing primarily on digital sites such as online search engines, volunteer recruitment websites and e-magazines as well as the brochures, catalogues, fliers and other such print media that circulate to students. Although different organizations have varying expectations and requirements for the volunteers that they accept, in terms of the duration of the placement or required skillset for the job, most organizations rely on a diversity of these tactics to attract volunteers.

I analyse these recruitment media alongside interviews that I conducted with a number of volunteers and volunteer coordinators working in Peru between January and March 2015. I will ultimately argue that volunteer experience in the field, and the relationships that volunteers create while in the field, are shaped and given meaning by the expectations they form through use of these recruitment media. Recruitment media, in other words, set out the contours of volunteer experience and expectation in ways that are not easily dislodged or challenged in the field.

These recruitment strategies contribute to a humanitarian imaginary among volunteers that relies upon volunteers' own orientation towards self-development. First of all, volunteer-sending organizations compete with one another to attract volunteers by creating the most enticing volunteer opportunities possible, and diffusely circulating these advertisements through several different outlets – most notably online in popular volunteer recruitment databases. These organizations permit highly customizable itineraries and flexible work hours that do not necessarily serve or benefit the constituents or communities the volunteers intend to serve. The

competition to attract volunteers to particular projects means that organizations must adjust their mandates to meet the expectations of these volunteers, who increasingly insist upon controlling a pre-determined start and end date, negotiating their duties and job descriptions, creating itineraries that allow time for travel or site-seeing and in some cases, hiring cooks and cleaning staff to take care of them in their living arrangements. Although volunteers may not perceive that this occurs, this shifts organizations' resources and energy away from the needs, desires or goals of community members and towards volunteer recruitment and accommodation. Prioritizing volunteer needs from the first few moments of contact between the organization and the participant – the recruitment stage – sets a tone for the entire expedition, establishing a hierarchy of needs to be met between volunteers and community members. Volunteer organizations in turn become, primarily, providers of volunteer experience over that of community service. The community is no longer the beneficiary of volunteer service but the host to the volunteer experience. These great lengths of volunteer accommodation reflect an individualistic form of "lifestyle solidarity"; wherein activism and civic engagement are understood through the logic of consumption patterns that are oriented around personal preferences and positive feelings about oneself.

At the same time, volunteer recruitment media invoke a unique combination of competing discourses. The images and text in these advertisements rely on a politics of rescue that uncritically invokes colonial fantasies about Peru in order to make prospective recruits feel as though they will be needed on site *and* that they will have fun while volunteering. Within these advertisements, Peru becomes a frontier space, signifying at least two opposable ideas simultaneously to prospective volunteers. The first is that Peru is a nation where its citizens suffer. Images of impoverished or otherwise disadvantaged children playing with, learning from,

or receiving medical attention from smiling, young and typically white volunteers come to signify the overall vulnerability of the nation while offering the participation of volunteers as a solution to these problems. The other genre of images represents Peru as a potential playground. Beautiful mountain vistas, scenes of Machu Picchu and other ruins, along with groups of smiling hikers and young women performing a traditional *huayla* dance promise volunteers that they will enjoy new experiences, new friendships and new opportunities for recreation. While they depict vastly different versions of the same nation, these two messages do not actively contradict one another when deployed to target prospective volunteers, but coalesce to describe the ideal volunteer experience; one where the volunteer can intimately witness the brutal realities of poverty, but still manage to enjoy the pleasures of a holiday while doing so. What's more, he or she expects to undergo a transformative experience through this act of witnessing; they will mature, become informed and therefore a responsible global citizen.

In spite of the customer-service approach through which volunteer recruitment operates and the reductive images of the nation that the advertising imagery connotes, the overwhelming majority of volunteers that I interviewed identified being "open-minded" or "flexible" as the most important attribute, skill or personality trait that a volunteer should possess when working in Peruvian developing communities. I conclude this chapter by noting the irony that volunteers who increasingly hold the power to curate all aspects of their experiences in Peru to their personal tastes nevertheless might still claim to value open-mindedness while in the field. In the end, I note the extractive ontology that informs international volunteer recruitment, and subsequently international volunteer practice, noting these trips are marketed as resources for the enjoyment and development of the volunteers, as much if not more so than the communities that receive them.

Volunteer Recruitment: Strategies and Approaches

Volunteer recruiters employ diverse strategies to attract volunteers to their organizations. In my findings, online advertisements such as posts on job boards or non-profit databases are the most common way in which volunteers find their placements in Peru, recruiters also send ambassadors to "volunteer abroad fairs" and other live events such as on-campus presentations. They distribute catalogues and other promotional material, or place advertisements in travel magazines, or form partnerships with specific institutions like universities, community or churches. Other organizations find success driving up their volunteer numbers by outsourcing the job to intermediary private sector travel agencies who will take on the task of publicizing the organizations as widely as possible through the aforementioned channels.

Recruitment strategies tend to vary between organizations, depending on the financial capacity of the organization to hire volunteer coordinators responsible for this work. Large scale, private sector organizations tend to implement the most extensive recruitment strategies by hiring multiple coordinators to develop and maintain a strong web presence, mailing list and also act as ambassadors at study/work abroad fairs or to his information sessions on campuses, primarily throughout Canada and the United States. The director of one study and volunteer abroad agency with bases in Cusco, Costa Rica and Nicaragua described the multiple approaches that his organization uses for recruitment:

> We have recruitment officers that go into expos, into conferences, into study abroad
> fairs, they go into universities and they offer our services and answer all questions. …
> That's just one aspect of what we do. But we also have our review sites, like Go
> Abroad, Go Overseas. We also have our Facebook, not necessarily for people to find
> us, but just you know to pass the word along. All the review sites are great for people

just randomly surfing the internet for volunteer opportunities. They can come across

us, get references from other people. And then word of mouth, because the reference

of a friend who had a really amazing experience is also an important recruitment

strategy (Interview with Joseph, 02/24/2015).

He described the organization's standards for volunteer qualifications as "open door," wherein

all applications are welcome provided they present a background check (for select positions) and

adequate medical insurance. He also indicated the willingness of the organization to provide

flexible programming options to participants. For example, students in the organization's

Spanish language classes will often decide to volunteer for specific projects upon their arrival, in

which case they are accommodated so long as they pay the difference in fees.

Other organizations, such as one women's shelter based out of Lima, partner with private

sector travel agencies from overseas that specialize in volunteer coordination and orientation. As

a not-for-profit organization lacking the resources to invest in the staff to maintain a strong web

presence or print catalogues and fliers for international distribution, let alone to arrange events

and travel throughout the Global North to recruit volunteers, they found it much more efficient to

develop a partnership with a European travel agency that would take on recruitment duties on

behalf of the organization in exchange for a finder's fee, for every volunteer confirmed (to be

paid by the volunteer, and not the organization). Some travel agencies would also arrange the

volunteers' housing accommodations, book their tickets and offer in-country assistance, such as

coordinating language classes, city tours or other recreational excursions on days off. As the

volunteer coordinator at the women's shelter noted:

We are already on different platforms online. But they also find us through the web, I

suppose. We do have a volunteer section on our website. We started a volunteer blog.

I suppose that's one of the things that they find in us. It's clear that we receive

volunteers. But most importantly, we also have alliances with several groups that

mediate the way the volunteer comes. We work closely with two groups. (Interview

with Juana, 25/01/2015)

These partnerships prove particularly useful for the organization, which has recently developed a

new mandate to provide workshops and classes for precariously or illegally employed domestic

workers and their children, as well as outreach programs to the *pueblos jovénes* that surround

inner city Lima, where these women and children typically live. The use of intermediary

organizers to increase the number of volunteers allowed this expansion of operations. Volunteers

run the workshops, act as support staff at the shelter and community centre, and also work for

after-school and library programs for children in the *pueblos jovénes*. As Juana explained, "We

pretty much accommodate everybody. I do go through an interview process as well, not to select

them as volunteers but more to make sure that I'm putting them in an activity that they're going

to feel happy with and I'm going to feel happy with." Since daily operations of the organization

rely on volunteers, she does not turn away any applicant. Instead, she tries to manage their

expectations so that volunteers will arrive with a sense of what the organization requires of them.

They can also express any concerns or needs of their own that they may have.

Other, smaller organizations do not attract the attention of intermediary recruitment

agencies, or prefer instead to administer their own recruitment drives so that they may maintain

tighter control over who is accepted. One child advocacy NGO in Huaraz, with only a single

staff member – the organization's director – advertised only online, on various volunteer-

oriented websites. He was able to generate 70 short to medium term volunteers, averaging one-

month visits over the course of the year, by maintaining frequent, informal correspondence with

all interested applicants. As a counter-example to the two previous organizations, he tended to be more selective of who he accepted based on who seemed to hold the right attitudes and who would share his organization's vision:

> I'm very selective in who I pick which is probably different than a lot of people. First
> I want to sit them down and talk to them on Skype. Everybody writes a fantastic
> resume. I want to have a Skype face-to-face conversation though. What's their
> interest? What do they want to take out of this? I don't want them serving us, I want it
> to be mutual. If people say, well I'm coming down because I think it would be neat, a
> cool experience and my mom is driving me crazy, that's the wrong
> answer. Sometimes mommy and daddy can't put up with their 22-year-old so they just
> say pick somewhere, and we'll pay for you to go (Interview with Sam, 02/10/2015).

In spite of this criticism of some volunteer's intentions, the program director still allowed volunteers to come for as long as short a trip as they would like, insisting that flexibility is crucial for the organization to successfully attract participants. The following section demonstrates how recruitment practices structure volunteer experience, so that they have come to expect an active role in planning the scope and extent of their volunteer experience.

A One-Way Street: Online Searches for Volunteer Opportunities

The greatest number of my interviewees indicated that the first place they turned to when deciding to undertake a volunteer experience was the internet, where they consulted various online resources. This is an unsurprising point of departure. Although initial Google searches proved overwhelming, these lead them to various, more narrow search engines through volunteer and non-profit sector job boards, such as Om Prakash (https://www.omprakash.org/volunteer-abroad), Idealist (http://idealist.org) and Ecoteer (http://ecoteer.com). Each of these databases

offers prospective volunteers the ability to find a volunteer opportunity specified to their precise

interests while promising travel experiences that are in tune with volunteers' desire for certain

types of experiences. Their services are offered either for free, as is the case with Om Prakash or

Idealist, or for a membership fee, which amounts to £25-100 pounds per year for Ecoteer. All

organizations also accept donations to pay for their operational and staffing costs. On their side,

volunteer recruiters post advertisements or calls for participants to each service. They are able to

edit, update or otherwise maintain these posts, add new posts as they become available and

interact with respondents, either providing information or scheduling interviews over e-mail or

Skype if a particular candidate is interested.

In spite of small differences in their interfaces, and the locations of their head offices

(Om Prakash is based in Seattle, WA and Idealist has offices in Portland, OR and New York

City, while Ecoteer operates out of the UK), these organizations all have very similar mandates

to connect prospective volunteers with meaningful, fulfilling projects that promise to contribute

towards various social justice-related objectives. Ecoteer (2106a) offers its members the chance

to "travel with a cause" by connecting "travellers with grassroots charities and social enterprises

around the world. More than that, Ecoteer is a community hub for those interested in responsible

tourism, conservation and sustainability. As well as overseas volunteer placements, we help our

members find information, paid jobs, green holidays and lots of like-minded people to share

ideas with." With 12,000 individual members Om Prakash (2016b) describes its goals of:

> connecting grassroots health, education, and environmental organizations with a
>
> global audience of volunteers, donors, and classrooms that can learn from and support
>
> their work… We promote mutual learning through dialogue and human

relationships... We believe that personal relationships generate powerful learning and positive social change, and this vision guides everything we do.

By far the largest of the three, Idealist has over 116,000 members who also use the service to locate job or internship opportunities in the Global North, as well as volunteer positions abroad. Idealist's (2016a) welcome page laments, "Too many good ideas for making the world a better place go unheard or unrealized. Idealist is all about connecting idealists – people who want to do good – with opportunities for action and collaboration." They go on to describe their vision "to help build a world where all people can lead free and dignified lives by making sure that no opportunity for action or collaboration is missed or wasted" and their mission "to close the gap between intention and action by connecting people, organizations, ideas, and resources" (Idealist, 2016a).

Each organization explains its goal of connecting prospective volunteers with placements throughout the world, but predominantly within the Global South, through the development of global solidarity. Ecoteer emphasizes that through their service, likeminded individuals will coalesce and cooperate in the service of social and ecological goals. Likewise, Om Prakash celebrates the formation of human relationships as catalysts for learning and cultural understanding, which are in turn act as catalysts for social change. Idealist questions the solipsism of change agents, suggesting that global problems such as poverty exist because of a lack of unification of those with the ideas, capacity and interest to do something about it. The solution to most world issues is therefore, a question of simply connecting the right people with the right projects.

All of these organizations then share a common goal of facilitating relationships between volunteer and host organizations. They promise an exchange of ideas, knowledge and abilities,

but they also promise unity; that individuals and organizations around the world share harmonious worldviews, goals and values, regardless of the cultural, geographic, economic or national interests that may have shaped their experiences as activists or individuals thus far.

As aggregators, each site also presents the user with several thousand options for where and how they might like to make their own unique contribution. In order to navigate the enormous number of posts that are available for volunteer users, and to enable the most effective browsing, each site has its own search engine interface that uses a handful of different filters that allow volunteer users to specify precisely what kind of experience they are aiming for. The appeal and success of these resources depends on the high number of posts available for users to navigate through a multitude of potential options and to compare and contrast them according to suitability or personal taste.

Put differently, the experience of wading through pages of prospective volunteer placements reinforces to users that they are capable of finding an organization that will meet their precise needs, desires and tastes. Since the industry is vast, and so is the need for volunteers, it is up to the interested party to determine how precisely they wish to structure their volunteer experience.

Om Prakash's search interface (see Figure 10) shows a map of the world, asking three questions. The first is "Where do you want to go?" Users can hover their cursor over the screen and select the region of their choice. Drop-down menus will appear when you hover over, for example, Latin America & the Caribbean, allowing the user to click on an alphabetized list of countries of interest – Argentina through Venezuela – or to simply "select all". The next question, "What do you want to do?" offers another drop-down menu with fields for health,

disaster relief, environment, women's empowerment, education, economic development,

construction, or once again, the option to select all. At the bottom of the menu is an optional field

Figure 10. Screencapture of Om Prakash's homepage. Retrieved 06/24/2016.

where users can also check their own skillset (i.e. accounting, fundraising, construction,

translation, working with children) in case an organization is looking for something in particular

that might match their abilities. The third question asks "When do you want to go?" allowing

users to select their desired beginning and end dates for travel, or to select "Anytime!" for

immediate deployment.

Both Idealist (see Figure 11) and Ecoteer (see Figure 12) have similar search functions on

their homepages. The former has three fields as well, allowing users to filter between jobs,

volunteer opportunities, internship opportunities or to search for organizations, events,

individuals or blogs. The second field allows individuals to search based on "keywords", such as

their skills, interests and the third field asks "Where?" Ecoteer's (2016b) homepage, embossed

with the organization's slogan "Start Your Adventure" also features three search fields for its

users. The first asks "When"? Clicking on the field pulls up a dropdown menu with options for

"Today", "This Week" or "This Month". The second asks "What?" and a similar menu appears
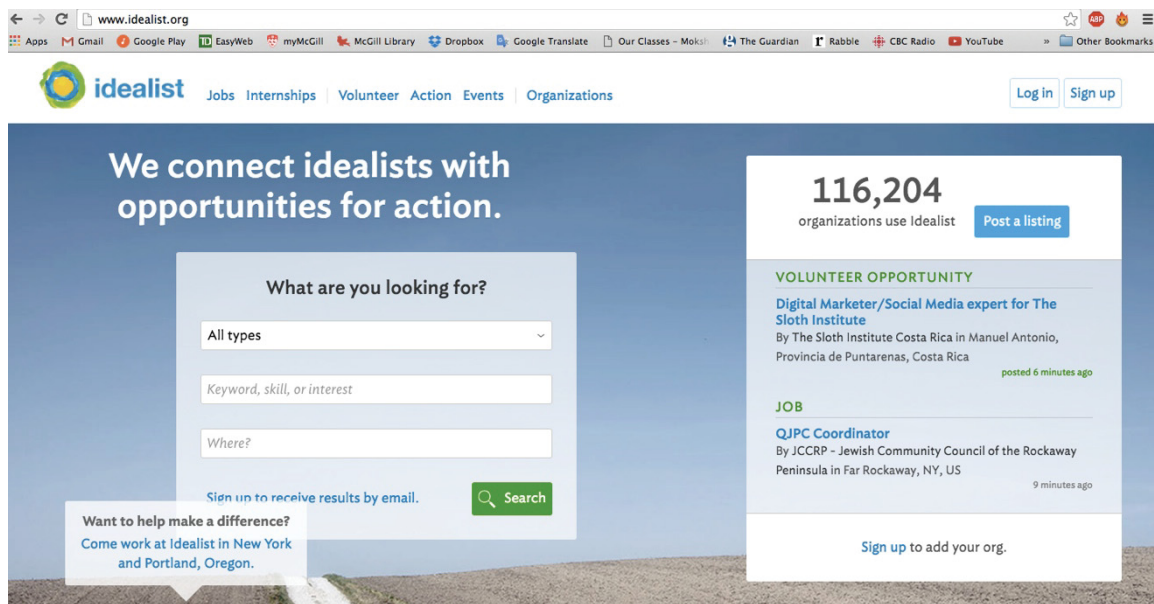

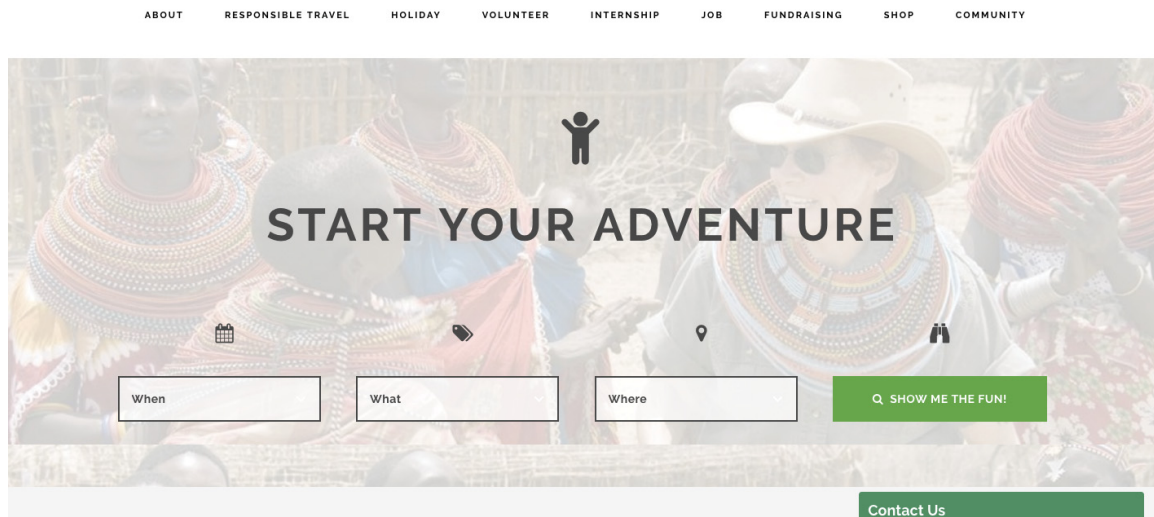*Figure 11*. Screencapture of Idealist's homepage. Retrieved 06/24/2016.

Figure 12. Screencapture of EcoTeer's homepage. Retrieved 06/24/2016.

with key words describing types of volunteer projects (i.e. Big Cats, Conservation, Construction, Teaching, Elephants, Short Break, Women's Empowerment) and the third asks "Where?" with a final dropdown menu of alphabetized host countries, arranged by continent. Each of these search engines streamlines users to their declared areas and locations of interests and presents, maximizing the ease of searching for a placement or opportunity.

Volunteers create their own profiles for each service. They can upload photos and bios that indicate their interests and can participate on the sites' message boards, chatting with prospective organizations or sharing resources with other volunteers. These profiles are optional, however, and are not retrievable in the same way for organizations that seek assistance from individuals that have particular skills or credentials. Each search engine configures the volunteer as the active party in need of a placement. Recruiters, on behalf of the organizations and communities that they represent, may describe the ideal candidate for a particular position in their post, and they are free to turn down candidates who apply for volunteer positions but do not meet the organization's standards or qualifications. In the recruitment model of connectivity, however, the personal relationships that Idealist and the others celebrate, volunteers are entitled and empowered to select an experience that suits their own tastes. Before they have even signed up to participate, volunteers understand that they may select one of any number of opportunities to help a community that they deem is vulnerable and deserving. If the organization is noncompliant or inconvenient in some way, a different experience can be substituted just as easily. Meanwhile, organizations that rely on volunteer labour to meet their objectives, and in some cases provide key services to communities, must satisfy these volunteers' interests and desires before they are to receive their assistance.

Self-Development and Humanitarian Communication

Volunteers aspire towards certain kinds of experiences that simulate, but do not necessarily replicate, modes of collective struggle or participation in social movements. These experiences tend to provoke feelings of benevolence, usefulness and gratification, but these feelings are entirely individuated; they are pre-determined outcomes of structured programs that ultimately aim to satisfy volunteer expectations over host communities' goals or needs. In this sense, international volunteer programs reflect a model of lifestyle solidarity; wherein humanitarian gestures are motivated by desire for certain kinds of positive feelings or personal benefit, as opposed to a commitment to helping others who are perceived to be vulnerable. Volunteer expeditions become techniques for self-cultivation in the same vain as described by Rose, wherein modern liberal citizens develop their own characters through work that is deemed to be personally gratifying and beneficial to society at large.

Chouliaraki (2013) defines late modern humanitarianism as *post-humanitarianism*, considering its ability to blur the boundary between commodity exchange and "sentimental obligation towards vulnerable others … In doing so, it manages both to turn the ever-expanding realm of economic exchange into a realm of private emotion and self-expression and, in a dialectical move to simultaneously commodify private emotion and philanthropic obligation" (pp. 5–6). As Chouliaraki suggests, the communication of solidarity with vulnerable others who are perceived to require humanitarian intervention is no longer based on grand narratives of common humanity or a cosmopolitan sense of justice. Instead, solidarity is primarily imagined in individualist terms, where the "emergence of a self-oriented morality, where doing good to others is about 'how I feel' and must, therefore be rewarded by minor gratifications to the self" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 3). The feel-good approach to post-humanitarian solidarity is reinforced

constantly through the technologization of communication media. Advertising appeals

for donations circulate throughout the internet, where celebrities like Angelina Jolie or Madonna

act as ambassadors for important social causes while Bono headlines charitable concerts. All of

these messages "may deprive us not only of the voice of vulnerable others but also of moral

discourse that would link vulnerability to justice" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 19). It is the

emotionality of western donors, "rather than the vulnerability of the distant other" that serves "as

a key motivation for solidarity" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 17).

Humanitarianism may have always been "a historically specific articulation of

cosmopolitan solidarity, which acts directly on the global South through specialized institutions

(IOs and INGOs), yet seeks legitimacy in the West through a communicative structure that

disseminates moral discourses of care and responsibility" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 27). But the

theatricality of contemporary post-humanitarian constructs a *humanitarian imaginary,* "a

communicative structure that disseminates the imperative to act on vulnerable others through a

wide repertoire of popular genres – from appeals to news and from celebrities to concerts"

(Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 172). That is, humanitarian calls come to us packaged in hyper-

commodified media formats and marketing-based appeals.

Rose (1999) warned that that communication media exacerbated governmentality's role

in citizenship formation, defining notions of the self more and more closely to models of

governable subjectivity, where "subjective commitments to values and ways of life" were

"generated by the technique of choice and consumption" (p. 229). In the neoliberal context, these

structures of communication deploy a consumerist logic wrought in irony, wherein this

imaginary "risks transforming our moral bonds with vulnerable others into narcissistic self-

expressions that have little to do with cosmopolitan solidarity" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 173). At its

worst, solidarity becomes a highly individuated, emotionally affective activism based less on the importance of collective action than on lifestyle agency,

> a light-touch activism, where online petitions or donations are part of the multi-
> tasking of everyday desk life and where care for vulnerable others may take place
> tweeting one's feelings, following celebrity online or buying the 'Make Poverty
> History' wristband. Solidarity is here embedded in a public culture of consumption
> and an ethos of mutual benefit with minimal effort. (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 178)

Lifestyle solidarity does not define the relationship among a collective of individuals. It is an affect that individuals may experience when they schedule in specific activities into their daily lives, like buying wristbands or benefit concert tickets, signing or sharing online petitions or discussing contemporary issues on social media. Lifestyle solidarity does not require any ongoing, sustained involvement in a social or political movement. Rooted as it is in a culture of consumption, this type of solidarity is one of many transactions within an experiential economy. It is not a relationship, but it is a feeling that can be purchased, consumed and then purchased again. One does not undertake this type of humanitarian action because they are morally compelled to, out of a sense of duty or altruism. Rather, they do so to enjoy the fleeting pleasure that comes along with giving, helping or sharing.

While international volunteer expeditions require more effort and intention than simply signing an online petition, I do not see this expenditure of time and money as yardstick that measures the moral superiority of volunteers. If anything, the growth of the industry demonstrates how entrenched and far-reaching the consumption model of solidarity has become over the last several decades. Participants approach their volunteer experiences as a reciprocal relationship, where the donation of their time and energy may be exchanged for the

transformation of their character, their own self-development and personal growth. In Peru, this post-humanitarian solidarity is only the most recent iteration of centuries of extractive enterprises.

Consumer choice allows this post-humanitarian practice to enjoy substantial growth. Given the number of experiences that are now on offer, prospective volunteers realize that they are able to locate or design their own ideal volunteer experience. Online databases contain thousands of placements to choose from, as a prospective volunteer. Organizations accommodate volunteers depending on their interests (i.e. childcare/teaching, environment/ecology, economic development) personal preferences (i.e. living in a city as opposed to a town, in a boarding house or with a host family, proximity to particular attractions or landmarks) and time frames (i.e. spring break or semester abroad trips, trips for the summer, or an internship in a particular field from that aligns with the semesters and their breaks in the Global North). Development assistance from volunteers is not awarded based on the need of the community. It is provided in accordance with the volunteers' "needs", or perhaps even their whims.

Evidence abounds that the industry caters to volunteers' desires for particular experiences. Older, established volunteer coordination agencies like Canada World Youth (CWY) have significantly adjusted their programs in order to stay competitive within the industry. Founded in 1971 with over 37,000 alumni volunteers, CWY was among the first organizations in Canada to focus on providing volunteer opportunities to Canadian youth. Unlike private and many other not-for-profit sector volunteer coordinating organizations, CWY historically tended toward a lengthy and rigorous vetting process of its recruits for its various programs. Programs lasted from eight weeks to six months and entailed two segments of the travel; the first is in a Canadian host community and the second is in a community in the Global

South. Recruits were teamed up into groups of eight or so participants that ideally reflect Canadian diversity. Considerable efforts were made to ensure gender parity and representative participation of Franco-Canadian, as well as Indigenous and Northern youth. However, unique to many other volunteer programs, Canadian volunteers were "twinned" with counterparts from the second host country that they will visit. Each pair of counterparts lives together in two host families; one Canadian and one international. In this sense, a Canadian community also became the site of a development project. During the program, they were expected to design and implement a number of different community enhancements projects in each community depending on the specific project's theme: gender and development, environmental or public health.

Recently, CWY has changed its recruitment process. Previously participants were able to request either a preferred region or theme but generally were asked to accept placements based on program availability, which was negotiated between the CWY staff and their partner organizations spread out around the world in South and Central America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. Since 2013, two recent changes have occurred. The first is that the organization is phasing out the part of the process in which Southern partners travel to Canada, in turn moving the organization away from a volunteer exchange model of cooperation. The "exchange" is now unidirectional and without counterparts. Secondly, CWY now allows Canadian participants greater flexibility in determining where they will go, and for what duration of time. While trips were previously organized seasonally, allowing for four weeks in Canada and four weeks in a partner country, or three months in Canada and three months in a partner country, prospective Canadian volunteers can now plan their departures around their own school, work or family's schedules. Dropping the exchange with counterparts allows greater malleability of scheduling for

the Canadian volunteers. With the flexibility in scheduling, then, has come a loss of cultural exchange opportunities originally built into the programming, with its possibilities for extensive language apprehension, greater and more proximate learning opportunities during homestays, skill development in terms of team-building, cooperation and communication skills, among other things. CWY has thus overseen a broad shift in what constitutes the volunteer experience for Canadian volunteers and the members of Southern communities who once came to Canada as part of their volunteer programs. In the larger scheme of things, this shift has also re-focused the location of service provision elsewhere, outside of Canada in the global South. As a result, through CWY and other organizations, Canada is no longer conceived of as a site of in-community service reception for Canadian youth volunteers and the programs of exchange in which they used to participate.

The shifts CWY has undertaken indicate a broader trend in international volunteerism towards the customization of experience for volunteer participants with a view towards the global South. This shift in focus may be to the detriment of community need as a target of volunteer energy. While programs were previously created by such longstanding organizations as CWY to meet the demands of community beneficiaries, the mandate has adapted to instead meet the expectations of volunteers themselves, who increasingly insist upon their own abilities to determine how, where and why they might allocate their time. While this could, perhaps, allow for particularly focused volunteers to create trips around issues that match their knowledge, skills and interest, my findings do not necessarily suggest that this is the net result from the shift.

Rather, the change reflects the insistence on the part of youth volunteers who desire a customized experience, and an ability to ensure they can know the exact circumstances of their volunteer trip before they agree to undertake it. While these volunteers may have every intention

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of working tirelessly on behalf of, or alongside the community that will receive them in Peru, this work nevertheless will only take place within the limitations of the volunteer's timeframe commitment. These volunteers expect for meaningful work to take place, as well as for meaningful relationships to form that will impart upon them important lessons in the nature of collective struggle; this is what they have signed up for. Yet these lessons are thought to only take place under the volunteers' own terms and on their own schedules. Solidarity is programmed into the experience as a feeling and as an outcome to be consumed in exchange for an agreed upon number of hours of labour and a registration fee.

Images from the Field: Children and Play

Although these experiences have become increasingly customized to suit volunteers, participants come to understand that any time they are willing to invest will serve as an important, if not essential intervention within a community in the Global South. Recruiters use an array of imagery in their marketing materials to justify this position by depicting Peru as a vulnerable, deprived nation; incapable of helping itself and dependent upon the benevolent interventions of others. These images circulate not only in online job posts, but also throughout recruitment fairs and on-campus presentations, where visitors receive free giveaways like tote bags embossed with organizations' logos, and are encouraged to collect as many program guide books, catalogues, fliers and brochures about travel events as possible. Similarly, a visit to Career Services at any university will reveal walls and tables lined with this same promotional material available for students. This content is often also available online in pdf format, to be distributed to students electronically.

One of the most prominent, reoccurring tropes within the genre of volunteer recruitment oriented photography, is the depiction of (typically white) volunteers embracing Peruvian

children. The imagery is so commonplace that a Google image search of "volunteering in Peru" reveals nothing but this genre of photography (see Figure 13). Often, the image is set in a classroom, with volunteers crouched beside the young children's desks, demonstrating how to solve a homework problem, or assisting them with some other craft or project. In others, they play together in a park, or in a natural environment, foregrounded in front of a lush jungle or mountainous backdrop. In other images, the volunteers administer tender responsibility over the children by helping them brush their teeth or conducting a medical inspection of some kind, while wearing white plastic gloves. In many of these images, the volunteers stand or crouch while surrounded by young, smiling children; all laughing, hugging and beaming towards the camera.
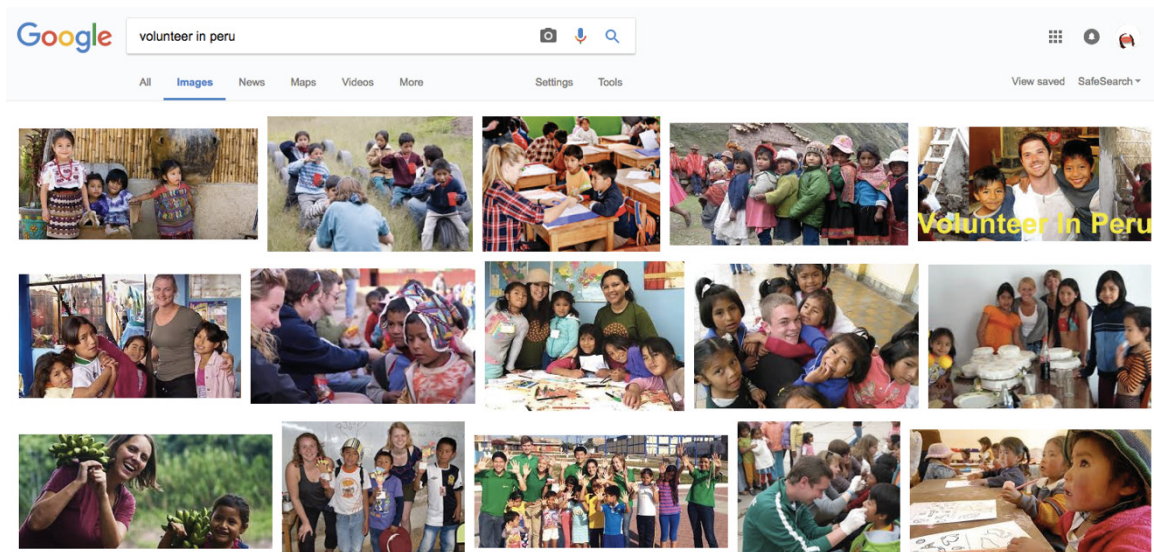

Figure 13. Screencapture of first results page in Google Images search for "Volunteering in Peru." Retrieved 05/13/2017.

The use of children's bodies to communicate specific messages concerning humanitarian intervention is not unique to volunteer recruitment imagery. While the relationship between childhood and national development remains under-theorized (Millei & Imre, 2016; Stephens, 1995), Cheney (2007) argues that within the Global South, "childhood is constructed in everyday discourses as a primary space in which prosperity will either be made or broken" (p. 2). Cheney's study examines Uganda specifically, which of course has its own distinct history and set of development challenges. Without conflating these different national contexts, I find her argument to be persuasive in its formulation of how the lives of children come to bear meaning for citizens, institutions and social movements that extend far beyond the awareness of any individual child. This discursive practice takes place in multiple institutions, including individual family units, all levels of government policy or among international bodies like the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For example, the vulnerability of the impoverished child serves as a powerful motivator to donors or philanthropists that contribute to humanitarian campaigns. Vestergaard (2013) notes that these images aim to incite fundraisers by revealing the shocking circumstances in which children in the Global South may live and appealing to their sense of moral duty, but nevertheless deny these children of their own stories, individualities or identities. In her analysis of Red Cross campaigns depicting images of child victims of famine in Africa, she argues that, "The child in the image has no identity. No gender, no history, no family, no emotions. Stripped of all humanity and appearing almost alien-like, the child seems reduced to a symbol" (p. 455). Such images rely on a "Western preoccupation with the spectre of the missing, lost or abused child" (Nunn, 2004, p. 271) that renders these images of suffering children as traumatic – not just for the represented child, but vicariously, for the viewers who encounter these images (Nunn,

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2004, p. 283). The preoccupation with images of children provokes a sentimental response that often "neutralizes the political response that the amelioration of chronic poverty and structural violence against the poor necessitates" (Mostafanezhad, 2013a, p. 323).

Sinervo and Hill (2011) analyze postcards depicting scenes of childhood poverty that are sold in and around Cusco and the Sacred Valley, noting the emotionally productive work that these achieve. The strategy relies on images of "young and largely *campesino* children, alone or in small groups, often appearing abandoned, neglected and poor" (p. 115). In these images, "poverty is often indexed through markers such as ragged clothing and dirty faces. Children are usually photographed in the countryside, intensifying the hinging of rural poverty to Peruvian underdevelopment" (p. 118). There are various typologies of these images of poverty, depicting children as abandoned, orphaned and suffering or in contrast, as idealized, aestheticized or beautiful, however all collude to "reflect, reify, and reinforce (neo)colonial and imperial ideologies, practices and agendas" (p. 124). Sinervo and Hill note that some photos have been salvaged from early ethnographers, some are taken by philanthropic organizations and others by local activist groups, and each compete in local market places for circulation.[14] Often children themselves will vend these postcards in popular tourist hubs like Cusco. These transactions themselves confound tourists' understandings of local poverty, as these children are often local, urban children from the town center or surrounding area, although they are commonly confused with the *campesino* or Indigenous, Quechua-speaking youth depicted in these images; a strategy that the authors claim the vendors use to their advantage through intentional cultural performance, in order to attract more sales.

[14] Sinervo and Hill (2011) connect the production and consumption of these images to a volunteer tourism industry that takes place in the high Andes. They describe an interview with one volunteer coordinator who intentionally used photos of children interacting with volunteers for publicity photos for their organization, to post online (p. 136).

The authors note that those who consume the postcards tend to have "divergent reactions, in which some desire authentic social exchanges with children to learn about or 'help' them, while others express desensitization or are overwhelmed by witnessing child labor or poverty" (Sinervo & Hill, 2011, p. 133).

The insertion of the chipper, helpful volunteers into images of Andean childhood poverty create an altogether different representational regime that nevertheless functions through the construction of a racial logic depicting white bodies as saviors and Indigenous bodies as helpless, infantile and dependent. The images create a narrative that justifies volunteers' interventions by suggesting that these children would not receive care or attention otherwise.[15] While Shohat and Stam (2014) have argued that fantasies of rescuing the Global South are a trope of imperialism that often manifests in popular media, their examples tend to represent the Global South as a female body in danger of rape. Within international volunteerism recruitment media, communities are infantilized, shown almost exclusively as helpless children.

The visual economy of Andean poverty is interrupted here by the presence of (mostly white) tourist saviors, who have presumably arrived not just to help resolve domestic social issues like poverty, but to spread joy and happiness while doing so. Like Red Cross ads or the postcards of children, these depictions of volunteerism rely on the evocative imagery of childhood poverty to compel action on the part of the viewers. Unlike these first two examples, however, the insertion of the smiling volunteer provides an example of a specific and personal way that the viewer might "help." Rather than sending money out of a sense of moral duty, or from the indignant horror – even, the vicarious trauma – of identifying with the suffering of a defenseless child, the volunteer is offered the opportunity to personally attend to a child's needs.

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[15] See Walzer's (1995) "The Politics of Rescue" for a thoughtful analysis of the politics of intervention when nations respond to humanitarian crises.

The joy shared between each represented figure, volunteer and child, promises that the volunteer's contribution is worthwhile and beneficial. The children are cared for and volunteers are content as well, through both the satisfaction of their efforts and the fun of spending time with loving, playful kids.

These images relay optimistic, highly palatable narratives of the good work undertaken by international volunteers. By relying on depictions of happy childhood to stand in as the indicators of Peru's success as a nation, these advertisements frame volunteerism as a successful and personally satisfying strategy for individuals to address international development obstacles. Focusing on children provokes a reaction from viewers, inciting them, perhaps, to volunteer. Nevertheless, the emphasis leaves a series of unanswered questions. For example, where are the children's parents, guardians or other caretakers, when volunteers are not present to fill this role? Are they unable or unwilling in some way to participate in child-rearing or childcare? If so, what are the circumstances preventing them? The simplistic narrative within these images suggests that volunteers provide childcare because Peruvian adults are absent, unwilling or unequipped to do so, presumably because the nation is unable to support its underclass. Volunteers can and do occupy these positions of care and authority – as teachers, medical workers or surrogate parents – and what's more, they take visible pleasure in filling these roles. Just look at those hugs and smiles!

Smiles, and the promise of happiness, play an essential role in the marketing of these experiences. It is known, however abstractly, prior to the volunteer's departure that they will visit a site where people, and especially children, require assistance to make their lives more bearable. Although volunteers anticipate encountering poverty, deprivation and overall suffering, recruitment images depicting these journeys still promise to rouse positive feelings, such as the

intimate bond between a volunteer and child and the satisfaction of making a positive difference in the lives of others. In spite of, or perhaps even because of, the suffering of these vulnerable others, volunteers come to know that they will personally benefit from their time spent in these communities.

Images of the interaction between children and volunteers are by far the most common tropes in volunteer recruitment media, but there are several other tropes that connote the overall pleasurable experience of volunteering in Peru. Two examples of typical fliers advertising volunteer organizations taken from the many examples distributed at the Go Global Expo in Montreal in 2014 demonstrate these competing messages associated with the marketing of international volunteerism. Where There Be Dragons (WTBD), an organization that offers guided "learning adventures in the developing world" on gap years and summer vacations for high school and university students, boasts in its catalogue (see Figure 14), "By immersing ourselves into the daily lives of Peruvian people, we have the opportunity to engage in challenging service-learning projects while celebrating the beauty and resilience of Andean culture" (WTBD, 2013). Aside from the community service and learning objectives described as leadership skills, Spanish skills and a critical development education, students are also promised the opportunity for cultural exchange while living in homestays with Indigenous families, as well as the opportunities to travel to the Amazon and Andes for trekking and site-seeing.

Basecamp International (2013) demonstrates the same strategy. Its catalogue (see Figure 15) contextualizes the request for volunteers in a brief blurb titled "The Need," explaining, "Peru is still recouping its losses after years of political upheaval and revolution. Today, the main threats to domestic stability are unemployment and poverty, with over half of Peru's population

Figure 14. Where There Be Dragons promotional flier. Retrieved from the Go Global Expo Fair, Montreal, September 2013.

living below the poverty line." It also lists its placement options that range from medical, social, teaching, conservation and micro finance programs. Above this is another blurb describing "The Country" and all that Peru has to offer by way of travel opportunities, "From the Pacific Coast, through the desert and over the Andes into the Amazonian lowlands, the geography alone is reason to visit this amazing country … Add to that the rich history and culture of Peru, from Machu Picchu and the Inca Trail to the mysterious Nazca lines, and it is easy to see why Peru is considered to be one of the most exciting and rewarding destinations in the world."

The Country

Peru's landscape hosts a diverse environment. From the Pacific Coast, through the desert and over the Andes into the Amazonian lowlands, the geography alone is a reason to visit this amazing country. With eighty percent of the world's ecological zones represented within its borders, Peru has one of the most diverse landscapes in the world. Add to that the rich history and culture of Peru, from Machu Picchu and the Inca Trail to the mysterious Nazca lines, and it is easy to see why Peru is considered to be one of the most exciting and rewarding destinations in the world.

The Need

Peru is still recouping its losses after years of political upheaval and revolution. Today, the main threats to domestic stability are unemployment and poverty, with over half of Peru's population living below the poverty line. Many people live outside cities in abandoned or underdeveloped areas without access to potable water, medical care or sanitation services.

Placement Options

Volunteers coming to Peru will be connected with organizations that strive to promote medical, social, teaching, conservation and micro finance programs. Volunteers of all backgrounds are required to assist in day cares and school improvement projects, teach English and help provide additional support at medical centres.

Program Fees

1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks	6 weeks	7 weeks	8 weeks	Extr wk
$295	$445	$595	$745	$855	$965	$1075	$1185	$110

Medical & Nursing placements have an extra cost of $5 per day and National Parks placements have an extra cost of $7 per day to cover organization surcharges and materials.
All prices are in US $ and are accurate at time of printing. For current pricing see our website or contact us.

The BaseCamp Centre

The BaseCamp Centre in Lima is located in the Miraflores district. This area is known as one of the most comfortable and safest parts of Lima, with many parks and a spectacular view of the ocean! The Centre is set up with dormitory style rooms and a large comfortable common room. The back courtyard and garden make for a peaceful place to find solitude from the constant activity of the city.

1.866.646.4693

Figure 15. Basecamp International promotional flier. Retrieved from the Go Global Expo Fair, Montreal, September 2013.

Both fliers feature a patchwork of photos to catch the eyes of their readers. There are prominent photos in each of Andean children. WTBD shows a young man in a classroom, laughing with four uniformed school children, suggesting that he is helping to teach or tutor them. In Basecamp's a young woman with butterfly face paint holds a young boy in her arms, both posing with smiles for the camera. These photos are juxtaposed with other images of the same size, showcasing other aspects of Peru's tourism industry. There are labeled maps with major cities and landmarks, indicating major backpacker destinations. Each flier shows picturesque scenes of Machu Picchu, as well as stunning vistas of the Andean mountain ranges, inviting viewers to imagine visiting the scene. Basecamp also depicts an image of twirling in the middle of a performance, suggesting the rich, cultural displays that volunteers might see and participate in while in Peru. WTBD shows two images of hikers; one group is smiling widely for the camera, the other traversing a plateau towards a far-off snowcapped mountain.

The collage of images conveys a wide range of pleasurable experiences for volunteers. The deployment of the children embracing volunteers photos manages to elicit a sense of the need for volunteer intervention within Peru, but the happy scene, which is placed within the patchwork of images promoting Peru's thriving tourism industry, still suggest that the experience of providing care for these children is but one of the many positive benefits that a volunteer will enjoy over the course of their trip. Caring for these children is just another positive aspect of a travel experience that is equally defined by the natural beauty of the Andes, the historical significance of Machu Picchu and the cultural traditions of the Peruvian people.

Evidence from my research suggests the overall effectiveness of these strategies in recruiting volunteers for youth program facilitation, teaching or other child care-related positions throughout Peru. Of the volunteers that I interviewed in my study, all but five of the 32

participants worked with children or youth in one of these capacities over the duration of their volunteer experience. Many of the volunteers that I interviewed suggested that they were drawn to volunteering with children because it seemed somehow simpler, easier or less intimidating than working in a program with adults, where they felt they might be judged as outsiders or made to feel unwelcome.

Beatrice, a 19 year old from Luxembourg, working in the women's shelter in Lima expressed ongoing stress about assisting in workshops that were aimed towards helping women working as undocumented domestic laborers find formal sector jobs. She mostly feared how she would respond to the "emotional stories" that she feared women would tell about the difficulties that they faced in their challenging lives. Many were internal migrants from the Andean highlands and lived throughout the *pueblos jovénes* on the outskirt of the city. In some ways, she was probably right to be concerned, as a gap year student with no training and an admitted lack of knowledge on the subject before her arrival four months prior to our interview. In comparison, she described her relief working with children in an after-school program, where she felt confident that she could help them with their homework and supervise crafts and games like baseball in spite of a lack of proficiency in Spanish. "You can just walk right in," she claimed.

A volunteer coordinator with a childcare center in Cusco, Elsa, who was on a one-year placement from Holland commented:

> You can play with kids even if you don't speak a lot of Spanish. One the one hand it's easier, because kids are flexible and they learn to understand what you mean. On the other hand, I was with one of the small kids yesterday, she was crying and crying. My Spanish is pretty good. But I didn't understand what she was saying through crying. If

it's through tears, I just can't. I could just take her and comfort her and that's it.

(Interview with Elsa, 03/05/2015)

In spite of her basic competency in Spanish, Elsa's skills were not quite sophisticated enough to interpret the needs of a child in distress. The incident suggests that everything may run smoothly only until there is an issue that cannot be resolved through simple intuition or commonsense.

Framing childcare as unskilled labor for which any volunteer from the Global North is qualified, provided they don't mind playing with kids, seriously undermines the complexity of care-giving relationships fostered in the context of international volunteering. While these assumptions may mislead or misrepresent the extent of volunteers' influence as change agents, the practice much more seriously jeopardizes the health and safety of the very children whom these organizations would hope to care for. The largely open door recruitment policies suggest that unqualified or unsuitable volunteers may take positions where young people are under their care. Most alarmingly, few of these organizations require police checks or references when filling positions. Some, like Elsa's, were so understaffed during the low season for tourists that she found herself on some days standing out in Cusco's central plaza – a main attraction for tourists – handing out fliers for her organization, trying to recruit volunteers off the street to spend a day or two volunteering in the day care center. It is outside the scope of this project to provide an in depth analysis of models for early childhood education that are administered through non-profit sector organizations operated primarily by volunteers. Suffice it to say that these organizations' use of volunteers risk as much harm for children in their volunteer recruitment strategies, as they do in the potential rewards that they may yield.[16]

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[16]"Orphan tourism" is widely criticized within volunteer tourism studies for risking attachment or intimacy disorders among children due to the wax and wane of volunteers (Conran, 2011;

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The presumption that volunteering with children is somehow less challenging or less risky than working with adults or in other capacities relies on the presumption that children lack opportunities to play or have fun due to the misery of their circumstances, and therefore, the most beneficial role a volunteer can take in their placement is to act as a playmate. The common wisdom that "kids need the chance to be kids"—meaning the chance to play, run around, use their imaginations, etc. – came up frequently in my interviews. Sam, the director of an organization that runs clothing and toy drives for children in the communities around Huaraz described his goals:

> We do whatever we can to bring them some toys and games down there. Just to try to help them have a memorable childhood, instead of 'Wow, I grew up in a village with no electricity or running water and it sucked! I wanted to kill myself.' We want them to have something to look forward to (Interview with Sam, 02/10/2015).

For Sam's organization, the most effective contribution to childhood – and therefore, international – development was to make sure that kids enjoyed themselves, played and had fun. With this logic, if important utilities like electricity and water cannot be provided, than at least volunteers, and the toys they bring with them, can alleviate some of these kids' suffering by giving them a chance to play, which in turn is thought to inspire hope for a better future.

The duties of most of the volunteers I interviewed reflected this same mentality. Although within the orphanage outside of Lima, volunteers were responsible for all aspects of the children's daily schedules, including meals, bedtime, and transportation to medical appointments, volunteers for the most part ran recreational or quasi-educational activities, such as English classes for children. The expectations that volunteers will enjoy all aspects of their

Richter & Norman 2010), the heightened risk of abuse and exploitation (Wilson, 2015), and perpetuating neoliberalism (Carpenter, 2015; Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2015).

trip, from sight-seeing to playing with children, results in the projection of the importance of "fun" as a solution to childhood/international developmental issues. Fun, play and entertainment come to stand in for community enhancement outcomes, as well as solutions to hardships facing children within these communities. However, they tend to ignore other potential issues that emerge from global poverty beyond the scope of leisure, such as hunger, forced or unfair labor conditions, inadequate healthcare, environmental justice or public safety. Focusing on childcare, and more specifically, on play, creates a demand for international volunteer intervention, but also seriously limits the extent that volunteers can contribute to addressing complex global issues that face these communities.

Expectations and "Open-Mindedness" in the Field

The international volunteer industry continues to expand and alter the scope of its programming to promote greater flexibility and comfort. Its campaigns also rely on highly racialized imagery that relays colonial narratives of salvation through white, Northern intervention. These campaigns structure volunteers' expectations and create a false sense of importance while in the field. Nevertheless, international volunteers tend to frame one of the most important qualities of a volunteer as "open-mindedness." This came to light frequently, and nearly unanimously, in interviews with the volunteers participating in this study. When I asked volunteers what characteristics an ideal volunteer possesses, the answer almost always reflected the importance of having an open mind, or one of its synonyms such as, flexibility/adaptability, being easy-going when things don't go as planned, willing to try new things and accepting of different opinions, views or cultures.

It was clear that for volunteers, "open-mindedness" generally had two senses. On the one hand, it inferred openness to the benefits of a cultural exchange, and a refusal of the

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preconceived notions or negative stereotypes pertaining to the communities where they serve. It also meant a willingness to take on tasks without complaining and participate not only in organizational operations but also in the cultural and social practices of the host communities. No volunteer responded by calling for the importance of a degree, or for education in development issues, social work, teaching, conservation, or any specific skills relevant to the position they were undertaking. In fairness, a handful of participants did have backgrounds in the fields in which they were working. A marine biologist worked with an ocean conservation organization; one social worker worked at an employment centre, and a nurse and doctor each worked with an orphanage for children with physical disabilities, providing medical care. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these participants were all over 25 years old and had received a minimum level of a Master's education. The greater majority of the interviewees skewed much younger and were exploring career options rather than pursuing fields in which they had previously worked.

The disposition towards keeping an open-mind makes a certain sense in the context of youth volunteers. Young people sign up for volunteer experiences precisely because of the open minds that they maintain regarding future paths that their lives might take. Through the post-humanitarian lens, the frontier imaginary of Peru promises these young people that through these experiences, they will come to locate greater self-awareness, develop their characters and determine a sense of purpose for how they will conduct the rest of their lives. Participants are at an exciting, if not impressionable stage in their own personal development, when they are meant to be open-minded, as they navigate possible career paths and explore where they might live and how they might structure their personal relationships. International volunteerism is thought to promise greater clarity in all these aspects of life. That if only volunteers decide to challenge

themselves through undertaking this rite of passage, they will gain the necessary perspective to undertake the arduous process of determining how and what to be in the world that they live in.

Since this knowledge is thought to come from the field of experience itself, none of the volunteers I interviewed suggested that an important quality or characteristic of volunteers involves a prior knowledge of the community or the local context in which they are serving. Open-mindedness, in the way in which it was described, in fact precludes volunteers from having knowledge of the communities, cultures or needs of the stakeholders, supposing instead that this information will be accessed, decoded and clearly understood upon the volunteer's arrival in the field. Retaining an open mind about Peru often meant purposefully not learning about the nation's history, diverse Indigenous cultures, languages or geography before arrival. As a journey of self-discovery, these variables will all be revealed on the course of the volunteer's personal and emotional growth.

Indeed, a second point that emphasized the value of an open mind for volunteers arose when I asked volunteers how they prepared for their trips or researched Peru and more specifically, the city/community where they would be living and the organization with which they would be working. I was surprised with the disproportionately large number of volunteers who claimed that they did not really take the time to prepare. Many cited logistical reasons for this: they booked their trips fairly quickly, they wanted to prioritize time getting necessary vaccinations and insurance or saying good bye to their loved ones or tying up loose ends at work or at school prior to leaving. Chloe, a 30 year old from Ottawa with a background in international development studies and multiple experiences abroad in Latin America and South Asia, commented that she didn't bother to prepare because "You never fully know what you're getting into. You just can't. So the thing is to have the personality to stay up beat. Or to make connections

with people and not let little things get you down. Especially if that's your first experience and if you're going through a big transition." When I asked about her own preparation, she nevertheless replied:

> I did get a *Lonely Planet* [tour book] before we went but I honestly barely touched it. I figured I had time. I anticipated living in Peru so I didn't need to know the hotspots before I arrive. I had time to figure it out. And I don't feel that I did that in the wrong way. I practiced Spanish before we arrived, which was hard at the time. You feel like you're going to get so much better when you get there and it requires so much more effort. (Interview with Chloe, 30; 02/12/25)

While I agree that it is indeed impossible to truly know a country without visiting it, I also question whether there is a difference between forming preconceived notions or learning what to do and where to go as a visitor, as opposed to understanding the history or broader political and social contexts that influence the nation in which one might travel.

Many other respondents besides Chloe also indicated a clear and strong preference for not researching or learning about the communities in which they would work before arrival, maintaining that these pre-conceived notions might interfere with their ability to keep an open mind about the places in which they would work and live. Often this was circumstantial due to the business of preparing for departure in other ways. This was particularly the case for students, such as Mitchell, who was a pre-med student from California, volunteering in an orphanage, or Kristin, a psychology student from Germany who was volunteering in a women's shelter. Neither of the two opted to volunteer for school credit. Mitchell took time off between semesters to volunteer and Kristin took a semester off before the final year of her studies. Subsequently, both found that they were pressed for time and unable to prepare before their departure:

To be honest I didn't prepare. I had a final the night before. Then I hopped on a plane the next morning. I didn't know what to expect. I was pretty confident that whatever it was I would be able to handle it. I've seen diseases, I've worked in the hospital, I've studied some diseases, although not as extensively as a medical student. But I guess I did find myself unprepared. (Interview with Mitchell, 23; 01/19/2015)

I had a lot to do with my exams in Germany before I went. That was also the reason why I came with an organization. I had to set my priorities and study. So I let someone else do the planning and I would just come in. I was not really well informed. I read some advice on my embassy site, I read a little bit on Wikipedia. Just the basic things. (Interview with Kristin, 27; 01/27/2015)

In Kristin's case, it made more sense to hire an intermediary organization to plan the logistics of her trip. She felt that she did not have time to properly research an appropriate or desirable volunteer placement, let alone book her tickets or arrange her living accommodations. This allowed her the flexibility to "just come in" immediately following her exams and to maximize the time that she could spend in country before returning for the final year of her undergraduate degree.

Logistics and busy schedules were not the only variables that prohibited volunteers from researching the communities where they would be working. Frequently, respondents celebrated the lack of knowledge of their placements, claiming that this would be an asset to ensure that they didn't form preconceived notions or prejudices about Peruvians. As two American volunteer framed it:

I didn't really wish to know anything. Expectations are often misleading and I liked showing up and not knowing what to expect. (Interview with Andre, 18; 01/12/2015)

I didn't do any of that. Honestly I just wanted to come and see for myself. Without

jumping to conclusions, I didn't want to make any types of judgements. (Interview

with Hillary, 28; 01/12/2015)

Andre, a high school graduate from Georgia who was taking a gap year before starting his

undeclared undergraduate degree, and Hillary, a Masters student in nursing, both celebrated the

importance of entering their placement in the orphanage where they both worked, as blank slates.

I would differentiate between forming simplistic preconceived notions and beginning a

process of unpacking the complexities of life in another country. Volunteers seemed to decide

that pre-departure research of almost any kind was inappropriate because it would risk negatively

effecting one's experience in one's placement by irrevocably influencing thought processes or

assumptions about Peru, in unknown ways both general and specific. I question the association

of open-mindedness with volunteers' willingness to avoid "preconceived notions." What does it

mean to not have a preconception of a place where one purposefully decides to travel, live and

work? I have trouble believing that young volunteers have no expectations or guesses of what

Peru is like, even if they are unable or unwilling to articulate these thoughts or feelings in

hindsight. Even if volunteers have absolutely no prior knowledge of Peru's cultures, geography,

cuisine, people or anything else, they have decided somehow to take this trip. In the act of

deciding this, some sort of meaning-making process must take place that creates an impression

of the nation, some sensibility of why they are going and what kind of contribution(s) they think

that they will be making.

Furthermore, when we consider these comments in the context of the myriad volunteer

recruitment media present, I am skeptical of just how open-minded these volunteers who claim

to have no expectations about life in Peru truly are. The number of options that are available for

prospective volunteers, and the presentation of these travel opportunities as a highly consumer-oriented, customizable experience based on the finances, price point and availability of the volunteer, would suggest that volunteers already have an exceptional amount of say in how to structure their contribution in Peru. Although some organizations have stricter standards than others, many find themselves accommodating the ebb and flow of volunteer arrivals, simply in order to keep their organization operational. The burden of adaptability and flexibility is much higher on these receiving organizations that it is on the volunteers themselves, who are simply asked to show up and participate, regardless of their skillset or knowledge. Keeping an open mind in this sense means "giving it your best try," valuing the best efforts of young people who are testing themselves by getting outside their comfort zones. This experience is in some ways ignorant or indifferent to the outcome on the lives of those who the work purports to help, and it may even contain great risk.

In spite of the steadfast claims from volunteers that they value open-mindedness in their volunteer practice, and identify themselves as open-minded individuals, the importance for organizations to cater to volunteers' experience and expectations has resulted in a customer service approach to volunteer coordination while in the field, especially when volunteers claim dissatisfaction with their experiences volunteering. I interviewed several volunteers who expressed dissatisfaction with their experiences in the field. As a result they left the project that they had initially requested, either transferring to a different project offered by the same organization, or seeking out a different organization entirely where they could volunteer. The specific circumstances changed depending on each volunteer. Sofia, a 25 year old based in Toronto, Ontario originally signed up to work on a project in Sucre, Bolivia through her organization. In Bolivia, she began a six month long project as a marketing and communications

intern for a charitable foundation, where she was expected to develop a website and social media platform for the organization. After four months, she requested a transfer through the organization that placed her, in order to relocate to Lima for the remaining two months. The decision to switch positions and countries was difficult, but she ultimately decided on moving to Lima to accept a different position working with an economic development consultant for social enterprises, as this more closely corresponded to her own career ambitions of working corporate social responsibility. Beyond that, she admitted that she felt bored and claustrophobic in Sucre, which was a much smaller town than she was accustomed to.

> Sucre was a bit of a decision making process. It was tiny, for me anyway, because I have always lived in big cities. But I wanted to try out a town structure of living, just to see if I liked it or not, just because I had never done it before. I did not like it. 4 months was more than enough. I missed traffic! (Interview with Sofia, 25; 01/30/2015)

The challenge of living in a small town proved to be the final straw in the decision to request a transfer. While Sofia was looking for an experience that would be the best fit for the development of her career and for her lifestyle, she was able to "try out" living in a town in order to determine that this was not for her; she preferred big cities. She also gained the experience of working briefly in marketing and communications in order to realize that she was certain that it was not the right career path for her.

Sofia expressed that one of her favourite aspects of her placement in Lima was that she was able to meet and interact with the consultants' clients. She felt that this "human interaction" was one of the more satisfying aspects of the position, particularly "because they're very responsive to feedback and they do come back and ask a lot of questions. So I get the sense

through that they want our support. And when they do work on their documents or whatever they're working on, they do take their suggestions and apply them." For Sofia, the desire for her support and the utility that she could provide working with these consultants justified the experience and made her confident that she made the right decision to relocate from Sucre to Lima. Sofia said nothing negative about her colleagues and the community members in Sucre. Only, that the particular work profile in that particular community were not to her personal taste. In order for her to benefit from the human interaction that she desired as a volunteer, the conditions had to first meet her expectations and needs.

I read this decision to relocate for a more preferable kind of human interaction (i.e. as a consultant, in a city) as a sign of the fickleness of voluntary solidarity; the ability and ease to request to leave a community of service at any time. It was unclear to me if the objectives of Sofia's project in Sucre were completed when she left, or if a replacement came to take over. This was not of particular importance in the timeline that she narrated to me of her volunteer experience; only that she gradually decided to leave after experiencing dissatisfaction in the placement to which she had originally applied.

The story was not altogether uncommon. Another volunteer, Cheryl left her post as an English language teacher to a class of kindergartners in Huancayo[17] less than one month into her placement, deciding instead to relocate to work in an orphanage in Lima, which is where I met her. Cheryl was just 19 at the time and left her home in Cincinnati, Ohio, after taking one year off after her first year at college. She found the listing for the school through an online search engine that she consulted with her mother, who supported her decision to travel. She knew that

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[17] Huancayo is a medium size city in the Andes with a population of approximately 320,000 residents. It is about 8 hours by bus, due east of Lima.

she wanted to work with children, but quickly realized that she did not feel as though her experience teaching matched her expectations whatsoever.

> The program was a lot different than what was said online. I also had Skype dates with past volunteers and they just had a lot of different opinions and viewpoints than when I got there. The host family was not very welcoming. I didn't know any Spanish. The actual town I was in was not safe so I couldn't really go out by myself. They also told me there would be multiple volunteers and there was nobody the entire time I was there. So it was a lot different than what I expected. But I was there for almost a month and my mom told me, you know, you made a 9 month's commitment. It was July. She said I'll buy you a ticket home for Christmas, but I want you to wait and do something else until Christmas. (Interview with Cheryl, 22; 01/19/2015)

Cheryl also confessed that she "hated" Huancayo and that she "cried almost every single day" while she stayed there. In retrospect, she realized that she had very little idea what she had signed up for, in spite of making the effort to contact previous volunteers who had worked at the school. She had not anticipated the loneliness that she would feel as the only volunteer with the organization and with her limited Spanish abilities. In particular, she did not realize that she would be made to feel unsafe the community where she worked. Fortunately, Cheryl's second placement at the orphanage in Lima turned out to be much more successful. By the time I interviewed her, she had volunteered at that placement for three and a half years; an exceptionally long duration of time compared to any other volunteer included in this study.[18]

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[18] In Chapter 4, I will describe Cheryl's decision to stay as a long-term volunteer, and later to pursue her medical degree from a university in Lima in order to maintain a status as a permanent resident within Peru. This discussion will focus on the spectrum of learning outcomes and personal transformations that volunteers undergo in their experiences.

Her comments reveal the difficulty of accurately and adequately preparing a young, inexperienced volunteer to adjust to a cultural, linguistic and economic milieu that is so different from their own. As a young, 19 year old woman, who felt lonely and frightened, Cheryl felt reasonably justified in her decision to leave the organization, even if this presumably left the school where she worked completely understaffed. I sympathize with the challenges of her unenviable circumstances. If I were in her position, I would have likely left under the same conditions, and I suspect many readers might as well. Nevertheless, I look to Cheryl's understanding of keeping her "commitment" as an indication of her orientation towards a lifestyle solidarity approach to volunteering. She did not perceive that she violated her commitment because she, as her mother suggested, found "something else" to do until Christmas. The commitment was not ever in fact to the kindergartners in her class, specifically, nor the community in Huancayo, generally. Rather, it was always a commitment that she had made to herself. Unlike Sofia, who worked for an organization with multiple offices and projects throughout Latin America, Cheryl worked for a smaller NGO with only one location. When she found that her experience was unsatisfactory, Cheryl was able to easily log online and locate a different, preferable organization where she could volunteer her time. She made this decision and left Huancayo within just one weekend in order to find an experience that better suited her preferences.

While Cheryl uniquely dedicated many years of her life to one organization, many other volunteers simply return home or decide to travel onwards to pursue other experiences, like backpacking or enrolling in language courses. Organizations unsurprisingly discourage their volunteers from leaving their placements early on, however it is easy enough for volunteers to do this without any interference, provided they have the means to purchase tickets out of wherever

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they might be placed. Volunteers that I interviewed frequently relayed stories of those they had known who had left their positions abruptly; one young woman was working with her friend, who had a very severe eye infection that could not be treated in the Sacred Valley, and who opted to return to Scotland; two others left an after-school program where they were teaching children because they had personal issues with staff members from the NGO that worked there. The mixed group of Canadian and Peruvian "twins" that I interviewed in the Cordillera Blanca originally consisted of 10 Canadian volunteers when I arrived, although 3 had left for home from Peru before I arrived, due to a variety of reasons that were explained to me as a mixture of homesickness, discordance with the rest of the group and an unwillingness to participate.

I am not interested in speculating which of these cases are legitimate reasons to leave one's position, and which are not. The trend of quitting midway through a placement suggests that regardless of their intentions, the young people that sign up for these positions may be unreliable partners for communities who request and require their assistance with community projects. When their expectations are not met or maintained, it cannot be presumed that volunteers, who understand themselves as clients or consumers, will remain out of a sense of duty or obligation to the communities who host them. The commitment to these communities only goes so far as volunteers are satisfied customers, whose experiences match the promises made to them by recruiters.

Conclusion

Through recruitment practices of international volunteer organizations, volunteers come to realize their own ability to customize their experiences to their own standards. They form expectations about their own roles as volunteers and about the communities that will host them. The vast number of opportunities available via online databases afford volunteers the freedom to

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customize the experience towards their own tastes while imagery depicting Peruvian children as dependent on volunteer's attention frames the volunteer's expectation that their primary role as change agents are to spread joy and fun. This role comes to stand in as international development practice or social change in spite of the relatively superficial impact that it has on actual structural barriers to development, as well as the potential harms that may be inflicted upon children under their care. Since volunteers are encouraged to think more about their experience and the impact it will have on their lives, these realities unfortunately tend to go unnoticed. In the following section, I explore the various potential learning outcomes and personal transformations that volunteers undergo in order to assess what a pedagogy for political consciousness raising may look like within these scenarios.

Chapter 4: The Experiential Dimensions of International Volunteerism

This chapter explores the experiential dimensions of international volunteerism through an analysis of volunteers' descriptions of the transformations that they underwent while in the field. In spite of the service-oriented nature of these trips, volunteers overwhelmingly describe these transformations in highly individualized terms; that is, how the experience affected them personally in terms of their outlook, personality or self-perception. Rarely did volunteers have a sense of the lasting benefit that their work would have on their host communities. In this sense, I argue that within the environment of international volunteer practice, personal transformation comes to stand in for the social transformation of the community. In many cases volunteers reported that they anticipated some kind of personal change or growth would take place as a result of their travel to Peru before their departure, and the assumption of this change acted as one of the main factors that motivated them to volunteer in the first place. Subsequently, positive impacts on the community members or organizations were viewed as secondarily important. Volunteers often reported strained or difficult relationships with colleagues, host families or various members of the community. In other cases, I found that volunteers misinterpreted the politeness or friendliness of strangers in villages where they worked as meaningful connections or friendships. Although pleasant, these interactions indicated the conspicuity of the volunteers and arguably even the deference of the community members to them, rather than the formation of any lasting bond or intercultural alliance between them. This fits into a broad trend of volunteers overestimating the impact of their work in their assumptions that performing volunteer service is synonymous with anti-oppressive activism.

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the potential benefits of viewing international volunteerism as an opportunity for transformation by drawing on works by key theorists and

activists working in a critical pedagogy framework. They argue that undergoing a personal

transformation can be extremely powerful and critically important to participation in social

justice movements. These transformations, however, are not determined by the neoliberal ideals

of self-empowerment, individual ability or personal satisfaction, but rather through a

commitment to empowering the voices of others and acting as an ally. Within this chapter I

locate many examples of volunteers who confuse these types of transformation to the detriment

of their own political learning outcomes. However I do conclude the chapter with positive

examples of the development of critical consciousness of certain volunteers, demonstrating that

international volunteer practice may in fact be recuperable to a point.

Critical Pedagogy and International Volunteerism

Long before the popularity of international volunteerism, critical and radical pedagogues

have theorized the transformative process of individuals and collectives who come to recognize

unjust systems of oppression that marginalize and oppress groups based on their (intersecting)

gender, race and class-based identities. They view this process as a crucial form of popular

education that is essential to ameliorating the conditions of marginalized and oppressed groups.

Whether it is described as "conscientization" (Freire, 2000), "political learning" (Brookfield,

2005), "democratic learning" (Walker, 2009) or resistance to neoliberalism as a "public

pedagogy" (Giroux, 2005), these theorists contend that individuals transform through their

awareness of, and participation in social movements and community-based activism (Choudry,

2015; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Hall, 2012).

Informed by his anti-oppressive teaching practice in Brazil's favelas throughout the

1960s and 70s, Freire (2000) argues that emancipatory education is a form of praxis: the merging

of theory and action needed to create political consciousness and facilitate social and political

revolution. Education is understood broadly as a project or process-based approach. Teachers facilitate and encourage critical reflection through dialogue. This in turns leads to critical consciousness, defined as "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 2000, p. 17). Through this dialogic practice, the oppressed learn to explain the circumstances of their own oppression and determine strategies to transform the world around them (Freire, 2000, p. 35). Dialogue is both a critical awareness of the world and the "practice of freedom" (Freire, 2000, p. 77) standing in opposition to a "banking model of education" that posits learning as a transaction, wherein teachers merely deposit "facts of knowledge" into the minds of students without encouraging active participation or critical engagement with the learning process (Freire, 2000, pp. 54–59). The oppressed student becomes a self-directed learner. Educators' principal duty is to facilitate the learning outcomes of the oppressed, as identified by the oppressed through dialogue. Consciousness cannot be taught. It must be cultivated through concurrent thought and action in dialogue (Freire, 2000, p. 35).

Although it has inspired theorists and educators in their own teaching practices within a number of different institutions, including higher education with the Global North, Freire's pedagogical ambitions remain explicitly concerned with empowering the underclass. hooks (1989, 1994) points to the frequent and ongoing incommensurability of a critical pedagogy approach in the contemporary corporate university.

Unlike the oppressed or colonized, who may begin to feel as they engage in education for critical consciousness a new found-sense of power and identity that frees them from colonization of the mind, that liberates, privileged students are often downright unwilling to acknowledge that their minds have been colonized, that they have

learning how to be oppressors, how to dominate, or at least how to passively accept

the domination of others. (hooks, 1989, p. 102)

Privileged students' reluctance to accept their roles, either explicit or complicit, in the subjugation of others is unsurprising in the context of a Freirian imagination of liberatory pedagogy. He places the onus on the oppressed by claiming that only they have the ability to liberate both themselves and their oppressors. Through the insubordination of the underclass, the dominant class distorts and negates what it means to be human. This dynamic dehumanizes the dominant class as much as the oppressed class. Since the dominant class will never relinquish their privilege, Freire (2000) points to the "power of the weak" as the only possible, universally emancipatory force: "The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, rape by the virtue of their power cannot find the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only the power that streams from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both" (p. 26). In other words, the social groups who directly and personally experience disenfranchisement and oppression must be the ones to lead the way in establishing social change agendas to dismantle these systems.

This raises a fundamental question underlying the ethics of intervention, in general, and of international volunteer practice, in particular. How, and in what ways, do volunteers participate within community development projects throughout their visits among host communities? If we accept the Freirian argument that the oppressed must be the catalysts of their own emancipation, then volunteers have no business undertaking this work in the first place. Volunteer projects that are not strategically planned, administered and directed by community members will not result in long-term success, because they will not have emerged from the constituents who would most directly benefit from them.

While there is undoubtedly a risk of perpetuating inequitable power dynamics, theorizing a critical pedagogy of international volunteerism suggests a tempting starting point for the conscientization of all parties involved. This would rely on volunteers' recognition that their own learning outcomes will emerge through a commitment to amplifying the voices of community members, and by encouraging them to create social change for themselves through a commitment to collective problem solving via dialogue. An ideal dialogue in this kind of volunteerism, then, is to connect volunteers' individual stories and experiences to larger socio-historical, political, ethical and institutional frameworks in order to teach participants to think more critically about their experiences in the world and those of others; to engage in what Brookfield (2005) refers to as "political learning" (p. 2). This refers to communal experiences of learning drawn from a sense of shared political purpose. The goal is for participants to feel as though they have personal interests at stake in the group's learning outcomes and to act in concert to achieve collective goals.

Thus, critical consciousness forms as individuals learn about their need for collective actions. Along these lines, we see the potential for international volunteerism to develop a critical pedagogy that moves beyond replicating a popular pattern of service learning as tourism, as participants come to consider "activism-as-curriculum" (Sandlin & Milam, 2008, p. 346) wherein volunteers come to recognize their own capacity as political agents, and their own abilities to work alongside others. Critical pedagogy hinges on such moments that swing the individual outside the self and into relation with others, thereby putting the personal in touch with the social. In order to facilitate this experience, a critical public pedagogy is invested in expanding the learning beyond the classroom to incorporate and create transitional spaces of nontraditional learning environments that "facilitate new, creative, spontaneous ways of learning

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and seeing the self in relation to others" wherein learning is not dependent on achieving the "final correct answer" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 76). These conditions could allow the participants to explore a new language and new relationships to themselves through their encounters with others, as well as new relationships with others by encountering themselves.

In their study of international social work, Thomas and Chandrasekera (2014) frame this kind of work as the formation of an alliance, between the visitor and the host community whom they hope to serve. Becoming an "authentic ally" in this way, requires a commitment to an "action-oriented practice of anti-oppression and anti-racism" (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, p. 103), an ongoing willingness to advocate for social change by empowering host community members to determine strategies to create agendas for the transformation of their own communities. Importantly, the authentic ally "understands, acknowledges and engages in self-reflection regarding the power and privilege that they wield in the world …. Not only acknowledges, but validates others' experiences of marginalization and oppression" (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, p. 103). From the perspective of consciousness-raising and personal transformation, "authentic allies engage in multilateral learning, so that both the oppressor and the oppressed can be educated about the causes and impact of oppression, without placing blame" (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, p. 103). This model of volunteerism presents the opportunity as an equal exchange; where no one party is deemed an expert, a leader or a manager, but rather all are equal partners with unique contributions to make in achieving common goals of learning and transforming as individuals, and collaborating on a project or process that will improve the community that has received volunteers.

For transformational learning to take place among volunteers, participants must trace a movement "from unreflexive assumptions and practices to a more critical consciousness in

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which perspectives and practices are seen as historically and culturally contingent" (Peacock, 2014, p. 171). Often this transformation is understood as the development of critical analytic tools. These skills are undoubtedly important but lack significance if they are not deployed to undermine or destabilize an oppressive status quo. As Langdon and Agyeyomah (2014) ask, "Is this critical reflection merely a form of critical thinking designed to generate better citizens, better neighbours, better volunteers, or is it designed to generate a deep sense of reflexivity that is connected to action that is constantly engaged in challenging power relations and the status quo?" (p. 57). They call in turn for a *hyper-critical reflexivity* that acts as "an ongoing, always-evaluating process, but also a decidedly action-oriented stance" (Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2014, p. 57). Hyper-critical reflexivity demands that volunteers consider their own motivations, experiences, biases, and ways of knowing in such a way that recognizes their own place within systems of oppression.

Importantly, the very organization through which volunteers are recruited and hosted should be critically evaluated so that volunteers may come to question the dynamics of their own intervention within a community. This kind of reflexivity is not prescribed to make volunteers feel guilty about the privileges that they enjoy (such as the means and ability to travel internationally) and it is certainly not intended to make them pity community members who host them, in spite of their material disadvantages and the challenges that they may face if they are effected by poverty. Rather, it is intended to make volunteers aware of how their privilege may be used in the service of helping others and to develop ongoing plans to become allies with the communities that have received them. To be considered successful, this does not just occur in the field but extends upon their return home. Hyper-critical reflexivity thus undoes the boundaries between "away" (where one must reflect on cultural differences, power and privilege and work

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towards problem-solving) and "home" (where "real life" continues as before, and one is no longer required to work on social justice projects to help the struggles of one's allies) (Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2014, p. 56). Once it has been gained, critical consciousness is an irrevocable transformation.

Yet while the potential for consciousness-raising through volunteerism is substantial, it is rarely achieved in practice. The transformations that volunteers undergo are typically framed through recruitment media, and understood by volunteers themselves, as opportunities to work on or develop their character, to mature or to grow professionally. This self-development stands apart from the context of broader, collective struggles and it does not rely upon a politics of solidarity or working as an ally. Most volunteers do hope to engage in some aspect of community development, or to "make a difference" within the organizations where they work, but the actual outcomes of this difference are rarely defined or measured, and as a result, tend to remain tacit and unrealized.

Volunteers' prioritization of their own development, and not that of the communities where they live and work, may seem like a considerable oversight, but this actually reflects the expectations of these programs that are constructed by recruitment media. As I argued in Chapter 3, the industry's recruitment strategies reflect an increasing commitment to cater to volunteers' experiences rather than to program outcomes within host communities through the customization of travel itineraries and an abundance of different opportunities to suit multiple tastes. They also rely on simplistic imagery in their advertisements, depicting Indigenous and racialized communities in hardship and volunteers as benevolent interveners – or saviors – to show that volunteer intervention is highly desirable or even desperately needed, when in fact the work of childcare is confused with international development practice.

Volunteers' experiences epitomize lifestyle solidarity in the age of post-humanitarian communications (Chouliaraki, 2013), as the ultimate goal of the action is to invoke positive feelings of accomplishment about one's intervention, rather than promoting social change in an ongoing and committed way. Yet, as hooks (1989) notes, the experience of political awakening can often feel "difficult, frightening, and very demanding" as "to change consciousness, cannot necessarily be experienced immediately as fun or positive or safe" (p. 53). Learning about oppression is often a painful process, and rarely does one's first recognition of injustice illicit feelings of pleasure.

International volunteerism ensures pleasure in its simulation of the positive, personal affects of solidarity such as, accomplishment, empowerment, pride or gratification. But these pleasures sit outside the practice of collective struggle and instead are prioritized alongside a neoliberal status quo that emphasizes individuality and personal success. As such, this model of volunteerism offers few opportunities for ongoing, collaborative action to take place, nor for the construction of transnational alliances between the vested parties. In short, the nature of international volunteerism that I have described leaves little room for the development of a critical consciousness, given the emphasis that volunteers place on their own personal transformations.

Instead, volunteer experiences from the field produce different kinds of humanitarian subjects. In contrast to the authentic ally described by Thomas and Chandrasekera (2014), most kinds of travel opportunities succeed only at producing apathetic allies. These volunteers are unable to break beyond the shell of their own subjectivity and to engage in a critical self-reflective practice that reveals their own implication and participation in neo-colonial power structures, which are entrenched by their very presence in the community in the first place. Their

work is "duplicitous" in that "their espousal of anti-oppressive practice and commitment to broader international issues of social justice leaves their work unexamined and obscures how their beliefs are incongruent with their actions" (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, pp. 102–103). The apathetic ally understands volunteer labour as a problem resolved through accumulated effort. It does not matter how effective one particular individual is, so long as they participate in some capacity then the community will reap the benefits. The position subscribes to the logic of donorship; that eventually, once enough hours of volunteer labour accrue, the social problem will cease to exist. Following from this, the attitude implies that a willingness to come to Peru at all, is sufficient to effect social change, regardless of one's sustained commitment to the cause.

Thomas and Chandrasekera (2014) classify the characteristics of an apathetic ally into various archetypes that may appear either innocuous or egregious, but ultimately undermine their own intended learning experiences and project outcomes. The Socially Innocent recognize and understand processes of colonization and oppression, yet "they are unable or unwilling to acknowledge that they may also be contributing to the oppression of others in the present day" (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, p. 98). By identifying with the role of "helper", this form of benevolent imperialism (Martinez-Brawley, 1999) allows their own actions and attitudes to go unchecked within the field. Thomas and Chandrasekera note, as an example, that participants often reported that their experiences abroad were the first time that their whitneess was not the norm, and that they were made to feel highly visible and different by this demarcation. The scholars note, however, that while participants commented that they were always being stared at or they were the only white person in the room.

What was often not reflected upon was how their whiteness afforded them privileges

… for example, how their suggestions and recommendations in program meetings

overshadowed those of local staff, or how their intersecting identities of privilege, whiteness, citizenship, foreign education, class, etc., permitted them authority in many professional and social interactions within the local communities. (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, p. 100)

The other archetypes of the apathetic ally respond to this set of experiences in different ways that still manage to reinforce the same discrepancy in power relations. Passive Backlashers struggle with encounters of difference by claiming that they are victims of "reverse-racism" while in the Global South. When they are overcharged or targeted by tourist touts, for example, or when community members remark upon cultural differences between the two groups, these participants became angry and even aggressive, claiming victimhood, and all the while failing to acknowledge their economically dominant role. The Guilty Ally is able to identify relationships of power and privilege in the world and to articulate them when they see them. They nevertheless lack the self-reflexivity to identify themselves as potential oppressors, as "the experience of guilt associated with their privileged identity has a paralyzing effect on their analysis" (Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014, p. 101). They are unable to engage in critical dialogue, in a Freirian sense, because the encounters with oppression become overwhelming and burdensome. However, these feelings are entirely about the volunteer and fail to acknowledge the experiences of community members who actually live in those conditions.

In the following section, I explore how these archetypes of apathetic allies manifest within the volunteer experiences of those I met in Peru. I begin by exploring how they conceived of the importance of transformation prior to their departure and while in the field. I also suggest that transformation through volunteerism is commonly understood by these volunteers as a rite of passage, and a necessary component to their own growth as political subjects and caring

global citizens. Ultimately, however, the subject that is produced reflects neoliberal values of self-care over those of collective action and resistance to systems of oppression.

How Do Volunteers Conceive of Transformation?

The proliferation of volunteer abroad opportunities demonstrates a desire for and recognition of the value of alternative models of learning and pedagogy that have been expressed by students and educators alike. Students yearn for opportunities to leave the confines of the classroom and enter into what they perceive to be the "real" world; that is, a world that is markedly different from the one that they know as their own home, school or work environment. They desire autonomy and self-direction in learning, while simultaneously they aspire to make some kind of difference in the lives of others—however abstractly or concretely this kind of difference is conceived—through contributions toward global problem solving at a local level. Educators and administrators recognize the validity of these desires, along with the pedagogical potential for participants to learn through their experiences, test various career paths and engage in cross/inter-cultural learning.

Peruvian communities come to stand in as viable alternatives to a classroom-based education; as sites not just for academic learning, but for personal growth that is not thought possible to take place within the context of the classroom, given its value and emphasis on theoretical as opposed to applied knowledge. Spending time in these communities allows participants to test themselves, their abilities and their interests in order to gain new skills and insights into how they perceive the world. In short, it is a process of personal growth and maturation; a rite of passage that symbolizes not only entering adulthood, but becoming the kind of worldly, knowledgeable and practiced adult who is able to effect change in the world.

While this process of maturation may very well take place, it does not necessarily mean that a critical consciousness takes shape as well, instilling in volunteers values and norms oriented in a sense of social justice. Volunteers tend not to see themselves as allies or participants in a common struggle with the hosts of their experiences, to whom they share a common responsibility to work towards the collective freedoms of those who suffer. They do tend to interpret successful outcomes from these programs through the lens of highly neoliberal ideals; chiefly, a strengthened sense of individuality and feelings of personal empowerment, ability or agency to act independently and with self-determination. Their orientation towards community service is interpreted much more as a form of charity or philanthropy, and the benefits of their work are assumed or implied, rather than ever comprehensively evaluated. Volunteer labour is a service that can be rendered or delivered. Upon completion of the task, or after a certain duration of time that has previously been determined, the service is deemed complete and the volunteer may leave, confident that the work that they have performed as demonstrated their solidarity with the hardships of vulnerable others. While political learning takes place in this field, it is not a pedagogy with a deep orientation in justice; it lacks the commitment and the drive that this would require. Instead, it trades the values of committed solidarity, the importance of collective organizing and of empowering others for feelings of personal agency and individuality.

The volunteers that I interviewed commonly connected their desire to travel with a willingness and openness to find new learning opportunities. They framed this desire in opposition to their negative experiences with classroom-based education, which they felt structured their lives but failed to provide them with a sense of purpose or an excitement about their own opportunities or life choices. In their estimation, their high school or university classes

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offered, at best, passive learning opportunities, where they received the credentials required to move on to the next stages of their lives, such as further degrees or certifications and meaningful, or at least lucrative, entrance into the job market. This was particularly the case for younger participants, who craved engagement with the world and learning that was connected to life outside the classroom.

As these students put it:

Before I was studying in Glasgow and, I don't know, I didn't really like it. I didn't know what I wanted to do so I left and moved to Barcelona. I was studying social sciences. And I was just kind of doing what they tell you to do in the UK. "Well, do social sciences and then you can think about it." I met this girl from Barcelona and she told me about these courses, TEFL and CELTA.[19] So I went to Barcelona [to take the courses]. I was living with some Mexican guys and I was just totally drawn to their way of life, how laid back they were. And they said, well you need to go to Mexico or somewhere in Latin America. And that's basically where the idea came from. (Interview with Jane, 24; 01/24/2015)

I went to college for a year. I didn't enjoy it. I was working, I didn't enjoy it either. I had to find a new outlook. [Laughs] It was just the same stuff, the same thing every single day. The routine, it drove me nuts… I was talking to my college advisor. He said to me he noticed my heart was not where I was when I was in college. He was

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[19] Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) training programs are popular ways for educators to receive certification to teach English as a Second Language (ESL). Such certification was generally not required by the organizations that I interviewed and worked with in Peru, however a handful of volunteers nevertheless did hold one of these certifications, or an equivalent such as Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL).

like, "you're not ready for college, I know this program you can do." So I said, cool, I

signed up and got accepted. (Interview with Angie, 19; 02/03/2015)

Well, I'm a pre-med student. So volunteerism and community outreach with

undeserved peoples is kind of an obligation of a physician. Medical schools want you

to foster that mentality and engrain the importance of that. So I thought this was a

great experience and opportunity to do that. (Interview with Mitchell, 23; 01/19/2015)

Although each was at different stages of their academic career, they all expressed similar

dissatisfaction with their learning environment, and a desire for new experiences. Jane, originally

from Glasgow chose to live abroad, moving to Barcelona in the year preceding her decision to

come to Peru, where she accepted an ESL teaching position in Urubamba in the Sacred Valley.

Angie followed the council of the adviser at her college's career center and withdrew after the

first year of her program to take some time off and participate in the Aboriginal Leaders

exchange program in Ancash. For Jane and Angie, this meant actually temporarily leaving

school, although both had plans to re-enroll the following year, upon their return from Peru.

None of these particular respondents were in fact participating in a volunteer project for credit.

They viewed their experience as entirely outside their formal education, which was a significant

motivational factor in participating. Jane and Angie each expressed dissatisfaction in formal

education's significance or relevance to their own lives. They failed to see how it would impact

them and were in search of a novel experience that could enrich their lives.

Participants' desires to get outside the classroom and learn from experiences drawn from

the real world are not new. The concerns tend to echo the educational pragmatism and

progressivism of Dewey (1938) who decades before criticized traditional classroom education

for its decontextualization of learning, or "mis-education." Among the first to develop the field

of experiential education, Dewey argued that field experience within particular environments created the necessary conditions for students to direct their own learning outcomes by forming connections between current and new knowledge systems. In this way, learners could prepare themselves for a lifelong learning process, as the cognitive ability to relate new experiences to old ones provides the ability to see a continuity of experiences and make sense of the world. As Johnston, Drysdale, and Chiupka (2014) note, "[Dewey] was also concerned about the narrow notion of citizenship being taught in conventional schooling, and cautioned against patriotic 'indoctrination' of students, especially with a singular reference to the dominant cultural or political regime" (p. 50).

As the compulsory classroom education proliferated through the 19th and 20th centuries, it was not so much that everyone needed certain forms of knowledge like reading, writing and arithmetic, but rather that people needed to be prepared for their place in paid employment, family relations and the state (Lloyd & Thomas, 1998; Sears, 2003). The importance of classroom learning is often not the actual content, but the "hidden curriculum" made up of "those non-academic but educationally significant consequences of schooling that occur systematically but are not made explicit at any level of the public rationales for education" (Vallance, 1983, p. 11). In this light, it is plausible to believe that students like Jane and Angie, who craved the novelty of experience and the rupture of their strict routines, were perhaps responding to the impetus to maintain social control in their traditional, classroom-based college experiences.[20]

As the respondents in my study demonstrate, often the context of international volunteerism does not necessarily lead them to diverge from status quo paradigms about their

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[20] For a broader discussion on the conflicting politics of experiential education in the contemporary university classroom, see forthcoming works by Laywine and Sears (in press) concerning the "Alternative Spring Break" trend among students and Laywine and Tanti (in press) on experiential education in the context of pro-diversity and anti-racist pedagogies.

roles in the world, or current world order. Mitchell signed up for a month long trip during the break between his fall and winter semester, working in an orphanage and childcare center just outside Lima. His job duties included administering meals, coordinating events and activities, assisting staff put the children to bed for naps and at night time as well as frequently taking the children to medical appointments. He felt that this was an important supplement to his education, framing his motivation to work at the orphanage as a reflection that medical schools want their students to practice outreach and engage in community service. He frames this as an "obligation"; not to assist children in need, but rather to what he perceives to be the standard requirements of working as a doctor. In this sense, we could say that Mitchell sees a volunteer experience as a chance to gain practice becoming *like* a doctor; to perform the duty of care that a doctor provides to patients and to demonstrate this ability to perform such care so that medical schools will recognize him as a worthwhile candidate for admission. From his perspective, the desire to help others belongs to the institutions that convey the importance of this message. It is not his own wish to help these children, but to become a doctor who will want to help others in accordance with the objectives of the profession.

I am unconvinced that critical consciousness was attained for Jane, Angie nor for Mitchell, as this was not framed as one of their objectives, nor was a perceived duty to help others in need framed at any point throughout our interviews as inherent or crucial component of their experience as volunteers. Each participant was motivated by an assumption that their post-secondary education was removed in some way from an experience that would prove necessary to their own growth as students and as individuals. For Angie and Jane, this was mostly disinterest and boredom with a curriculum that failed to inspire or engage them. For Mitchell, it was the chance to perform a caretaker's role and to demonstrate a desire that he does not

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personally have, that is to practice community outreach with populations perceived to be vulnerable or suffering. In the end, none of these experiences were primarily concerned with supporting communities in the capacity of an ally. They were about experiencing a personal transformation that it was assumed could not otherwise be attained while at home.

Like Mitchell, some participants decided to travel as supplements to the education that they had already received. When young people take a yearlong break from their academic pursuits, typically between degrees (secondary and post-secondary, or post-secondary and graduate) to travel around the world, this is often called a Gap Year. It is commonly considered an opportunity for young people to gain new skills or benefit from experiences that a classroom education does not allow. Miriam, a 23 year old originally from Bristol, in the United Kingdom was working out of Cusco with a social enterprise[21] that seeks to empower rural, Indigenous women from surrounding communities by selling their fair trade textiles on an international marketplace. All the profits that do not cover the enterprise's overhead return to the collective of textile workers. Miriam recognized that this experience would help her as she applied for her Masters, and would also provide valuable work experience for a future career in fashion design and marketing:

> I'm only 23! I've got very limited work experience. There are very few places in the
> world where you would freshly graduate from university and having learned all these
> business economic and marketing skills … and it's very rare that you can come out of
> this situation and someone gives you their textile program and is like, basically
> everything you've studied and you've tried to learn, you get to put it into practice

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[21] "Defined as the use of nongovernmental, market-based approaches to address social issues a social enterprise often provides a 'business' source of revenue for many types of socially oriented organizations and activities" (Kerlin, 2012, p. 91).

here. Okay, cool, let's see what I can do! It's interesting in a sense because I won't

have that for a long time again. I'll be entering a big company where I'll be learning

from people above, and that kind of thing. Which is something that I want and need,

but at the same time it's been fun and interesting to see what works and what doesn't.

As well as learning what I'm good at and what I want from a work environment and

don't want from a work environment. (Interview with Miriam, 23; 03/05/2015)

From her perspective, traveling to Peru offered Miriam the opportunity to gain professional

experience in her field that she would not be allowed to have in the United Kingdom. Had she

remained, she would need to pay her dues by working in an entry-level position with fewer

responsibilities or opportunities to act independently. In this sense, she is able to test herself – "to

see what I can do!" with her education and her abilities to apply the theoretical skills that she

acquired in a practical placement. Miriam hoped for the responsibility to make executive

decisions and solve multi-dimensional problems. At the same time, her placement served as a

testing ground for the kind of career that Miriam imagined. She anticipated entering a large

company; likely one with a rigid hierarchy, where she will be much more subordinate than in her

relatively autonomous position in Cusco. Her volunteer opportunity allowed her to reflect upon

what she would and would not enjoy in a work environment, and to learn more about what kind

of professional characteristics she would like to develop in order to work within this context.

Heron (2007) describes the "specialness" in her study of white, women development

workers in Africa, who are given responsibilities and power far beyond their experience or

training. "Often our achievements in our postings are in fact contingent on our special status as

development workers, in terms of the kinds of things we get to do or initiate, and the people we

know" (Heron, 2007, p. 100). This was not necessarily a specific motivator for the women in her

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study to participate in development work throughout Africa; rather, it was a bonus that they discovered only on later reflection. For Miriam, however, the opportunity to advance her career is described as one of the overarching reasons why she chose to volunteer, and why she hoped to work for the organization she chose in particular. Before departure, Miriam mulled over the choice between working in Cusco and a different organization in India. In the end, she ended up where she did because it offered her independence and most closely matched her future career ambitions.

Miriam did not anticipate how much she would enjoy the opportunity to work with the collective of women who weaved the textiles that her organization sold internationally. Although she predominantly worked from the office in Cusco with other volunteers and international staff members, three weekends every month she would travel several hours by bus and by trekking to visit the remote Indigenous communities where these women live, in order to distribute shares, collect and deposit orders, measure textiles, inspect the materials, take inventory and act as an intermediary liaison between the head office and the weavers, in case any concerns might arise. She would often spend the night in the home of one of the women and they would spend time together and share food that she would routinely bring as an "offering", or thank you gift for hosting her. She described herself as "incredibly fond of" and "impressed by" these women upon each meeting with them. She described the difficulties of communicating with these women as they relied on an English to Spanish and Spanish to Quechua translator, but also felt that much could be inferred by these women's body language, which she described as "friendly, smiley, welcoming, and very thankful whenever they received gifts." In spite of the language barrier, Miriam felt that the women she met with were very gracious, as well as grateful for her visits to the community. They were grateful for the income and for her interests. Miriam hoped that they

understood how grateful she was in turn for the unique opportunity to come and visit their

communities.

My impression was that Miriam brought a lot of useful skills to the organization where

she worked. In addition to the warm relationships that she described with the weavers, she also

maintained close contact with international wholesale clients who purchased their textiles. Her

knowledge of social media allowed her to establish and maintain Instagram, Facebook and

Twitter profiles for the textile program, as well as design the visual content of their website and

online catalogues. She seemed to take initiative in each of her tasks, stating to me her desire to

leave behind something sustainable for future volunteers who would take her position.

In this sense, Miriam's goals and those of the women weavers are the same; all would

like to see the success of the textile program, measurable in terms of the growth of its clientele

and generated revenue. However the stakes of the accomplishment are radically different. The

textile program describes its long term objectives as the ability to lift several villages out of

poverty, economically empower participating women and foster a global awareness and

appreciation of the ongoing tradition of Andean textile arts,[22] although none of these goals are

realistically expected to be achieved through the labor of just one volunteer. For Miriam, the

success of the program can be marked upon her departure from Cusco, as one step on her career

path, to be used as leverage in a portfolio of her experience when she enters the job market in

London. I have no doubt in all parties' earnest and mutual desire for the program to do well and

for the textiles to sell. I also do not doubt that the weavers wished Miriam well and that she

earnestly wanted to leave a positive impact on the weavers too. In the lifestyle model of

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[22] It is open to interpretation whether or not the commodification of textile arts in fact helps improve the lives and livelihoods of its creators. One might look to Meisch's (2002) work *Andean Entrepreneurs* for further insight into the effects of the international sale of textiles on local Quechua politics and social relations.

solidarity these desires become interwoven and unified, so that building the foundations for economic growth in otherwise industry-less villages in the highlands of Peru and creating a portfolio to share with fashion houses are both achieved through the same tasks (which in this case, are through creating a successful Instagram account).

Miriam's alliance with these women, while mutually enjoyable from her account, cannot be considered anti-racist or anti-oppressive, and the duration of her commitment remains unknown; there is no evidence to suggest that it will continue upon her return home, given her plans to work for a corporation. The outcomes of their shared goals will more immediately impact her own chances on the job market, than the lives or livelihoods of the weavers, which could take years if they are ever indeed achieved. Furthermore, the friendly bonds between Miriam and the women that she met belie the comfort and ease with which she is willing to risk their livelihood in a "test" of her own abilities in and commitment to the industry; one in which the outcomes would have drastically different impacts on her or the other participants. As the first to admit that a company in the United Kingdom would not give her the responsibilities that she undertook in Cusco, Miriam felt that her lack of experience could still be tested in this milieu, even though the presumed "failure" of this test could potentially have directly negative impacts on the women and their families who rely on her.

This example of the presumed mutual enjoyment of a relationship between a volunteer and their hosts reflects the neoliberal values of personal pleasure and individual achievement that underscore this dynamic. In the following section, I explore the emotional appeal of this brand of lifestyle solidarity among volunteers. In this way, individual feelings of personal transformation often come to stand in for the less immediately gratifying work of participation in social transformation.

The Emotional Appeal of Empowerment

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, most volunteers stated matter-of-factly that they had almost no knowledge of Peru before they arrived in the country. In spite of this (willful or intentional) ignorance of their travel destination, volunteers nevertheless expected it to change them for the better. It would seem that not knowing about Peruvian customs, cultures or lifestyles allows volunteers, in their own estimation, to best facilitate their own processes of personal growth and transformation. They expressed openness to feelings of unfamiliarly and discomfort, as these experiences would provide them with the appropriate stage for a challenging testing ground that would facilitate their own self-development. While the variables of Peru and "Peruvianness" – including the languages, the cultures, the political systems or the colonial history – were mostly unknown, predetermined outcomes that were measured in terms of personal transformation were taken for granted among participants. Volunteers expected to transform in some ways. In certain cases, as with the following volunteers, the expected transformations were very specific:

> Before I came here I was a bit of a drunk, just partying all the time. And I was starting to feel kind of guilty about it. Like I was making a fool of myself but I didn't know what to do to change my path. And then I slowly decided that I was going to come here. And then that was it! (Interview with Jane, 24; 01/21/2015)
> Leaving university can be quite a big thing, not really knowing what you're going to do. It can be a sad thing as well. I come from a big family, I went to a boarding school, I lived in a house with 8 girls in university. I'm very used to being surrounded by people all the time. Whenever I had a problem, there was always someone around to listen. I'm lucky I had built a great community because I love being around people.

But one of the reasons for me to come here and then travel on my own was so that I could feel confident and that I'm independent. So when I do move back to England, and I'm surrounded again by a large network of family and friends, I can be independent and I can do things on my own. I didn't want to have a boyfriend or a best friend or someone doing this with me. It would be a shared experience as opposed to my own experience. (Interview with Miriam, 23; 03/05/2015)

I live in Washington and I love it there. But home is almost too comfortable. I was looking for a change of pace. I was also having kind of a rough year and I was looking to escape a bit… I was looking for a place where I could explore different concepts and inspirations. So I could find a different purpose, in order to refresh and keep me motivated for school. I was also living in a house with 8 other people and it was time to leave. (Interview with Fran, 21; 03/03/2015)

Each of these young women came from different circumstances; Jane was from Glasgow by way of Barcelona, and working as an English as a Second Language teacher in Urubamba (the Sacred Valley); Miriam, from Bristol, worked for the social enterprise selling textiles in Cusco, and Fran worked for a similar but unrelated social enterprise that also sold textiles weaved by local women, that operated out of Ollantaytambo, another community in the Sacred Valley. Yet each volunteer's motivations reflect their own experiences, and their desire to change or improve their lives in some way. This purpose might have been abstract, like Fran's desire for new purposes and motivations in her life. Or it might have been with particular goals, including Jane who was outspoken about her struggles with sobriety before traveling, or Miriam who felt like she used her vast social network as a crutch, and needed to experience independence as a test of her own limits, as well as gain important professional experience as previously stated.

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In each case, travel and service abroad present themselves as opportunities to improve one's own circumstances and one's own lifestyle or point of view. The volunteers frame the motivation for the experience as dissatisfaction with life at home – due perhaps to boredom or lack of inspiration, the restrictive comforts of one's relationships with friends and family, or a growing dependence on alcohol or other substances. The proposed answer is akin to a classic hero's journey archetype; where the volunteer must travel abroad to gain an important skill, lesson or attribute that will aid them in their life at home. The journey is an adventure; one that promises difficulty, challenge and struggle, but also the positive emotions of pleasure and triumph, as rewards for the effort put forth.

This learning outcome results in personal experiences of empowerment, gained through the feelings of accomplishment after volunteers get outside of their comfort zones and challenge themselves to achieve goals that they feel never would have been recognized without the trip. Participants reported that they developed a number of different positive attributes from their experiences volunteering. These ranged from increased confidence when speaking in public and meeting new people, working through anger issues, learning to slow down one's pace of life and to practice mindfulness:

> Before going up to speak in front of people would make me short of breath and nervous. Now I can just speak like I'm talking to one person. I found out that I'm good at public speaking... I found I got better at forming relationships. I don't know. I have a sort of different view on life now. Here, everyone basically has the bare essentials. They have nothing and they're so happy. I find that amazing. And at home everyone has everything and they're miserable. I'm going to go home and it's going to drive me crazy. (Interview with Craig, 21; 02/03/2015)

Before I got into this program I was really an angry person, I was really selfish and I kind of didn't care about anyone else but myself. I started this like 'Whatever, I'm not going to talk to anybody'. I'm here for me. I'm not here to make friends. But then my counterpart and I met and I was like, 'Well, I have to talk to you'. And then being here changed my perspective on so much. It made me so humble. I feel like I changed a lot. Just talking to my mom she says, 'You grew up so much. I'm so happy for you!' (Interview with Angie, 19; 02/03/2015)

Coming here has slowed my thought processes down. Taking the moment to appreciate what is going on around me rather than thinking what's going to happen tomorrow or a week from now. I need to appreciate what's going on today. Also, materialism and technology really don't matter to me. I think the most important part of life is your support system, and having your friends and family. Living in New York sometimes make me forget that I need to soak in the moment and slow down a bit. Because I'm always doing something. And being here has made me realize that maybe New York is not where I want to be. And that's why after school, I'm going away! It's not the lifestyle that I want to live for myself or that I want my future kids and family to experience too. (Interview with Hillary, 28; 01/19/2015)

Craig found that he was able to overcome his shyness and forge bonds with others more easily, as though they were his family. Angie worked through her anger issues so that she felt herself "growing up" and willing to cooperate or work with others when needed. In the fast-paced and often stressful work placement in an orphanage, Hillary learned the value of slowing down and practicing mindfulness, as well as the importance of the social network and support system she had at home. She also inferred from this experience that she no longer wanted to live in New

York and hoped to settle down with a "different lifestyle" than the one she had become accustomed to in New York. Each experience clarified their values, their senses of self, and ultimately empowered them to make decisions about how they want to conduct themselves and what they want to do in their lives moving forward.

Since this fieldwork was conducted, we do not know if Hillary left New York, if Craig's shyness returned or if Angie continues to lose her patience. These questions are well worth asking although they are outside the scope of this project, given this study's time based limitations. Follow up interviews would no doubt prove very illuminating, but for the purposes of this study, I would like to dwell on the intensity of the transformations reported by the volunteers. While still in the field they emphatically described to me the feelings of transformation. The quotes listed above are detailed examples, but not everyone was quite as articulate; participants often struggled to put into words how precisely they felt they changed, but they knew that something had taken place that made them different. It was clear that their travel experiences *felt* as though they were transformative and *felt* as though they had changed the way that the volunteers related to the world and understood their abilities and agency within it.

Empowerment in the context of volunteerism is frequently described as an emotional experience that arises through the expression of individual agency and the joy of learning how to overcome personal challenges. I remain unsure if there is a definitive or empirical way of quantifiably measuring these transformations. However it is important to establish that there can be a substantial gap between one's experience and one's feelings about the experience. The difficulty with the self-assessment of these journeys inside oneself, arriving at a destination point of personal growth, is that often volunteers lack the self-reflexivity to know for themselves if the feelings that they experience on their trips will be permanent and life-altering, or if they are

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rather swept up in the moment from the exhilaration of travel. Indeed, how objective can any one of us truly be when we undergo powerful, emotional experiences?

The emotional dimensions of travel are not particular to international volunteerism, and can be identified in any number of tourism contexts. Reminiscent of Wearing's description of volunteer tourism as a "journey of the self", Picard (2012) has described the emotional responses that typify all tourism experience as "inner journeys" where individuals experience "forms of embodied 'emotional knowledge' which evolves at the interface between personal experiences of the world and collectively held moral orders of specific tourist attractions" (p. 3). Encounters with other cultures, customs, landscapes or attractions can stimulate these embodied emotional processes, leaving the tourist with notions of awe and wonder about these experiences. These experiences are highly individuating, as they are experienced through the "tourist gaze" of the traveller (Urry & Larsen, 2011).

MacCannell (1976) framed this process within tourist destinations in terms of sign systems that are arranged in order to evoke particular sets of emotions among tourists. When analyzed, these indicate an underlying moral order about the host community receiving tourists. Robinson (2012) expands on this, arguing that "a reading process" takes place on any tourist expedition, in which "the tourist processes and interprets the landscape in a particular, culturally and socially informed, way" (p. 28).

Said's (1979) critique of Orientalism comes to mind, as Robinson describes this as a particular power relation between the Global North and South; the top-down production and dissemination of information about the Global South by the Global North that discursively constructs imaginary assumptions about the destination before arriving. "In the context of contemporary tourism … we already 'know' the world, consciously, deliberately but also

passively and fleetingly. An unending circulation of images and texts of places and peoples greet us every day, whether we wish them to or not" (Robinson, 2012, p. 30).

In spite of their statements to the contrary, which I mention in Chapter 3, this argument casts doubt on volunteers' claims that they formed no expectations about Peru as a country, prior to their departure. It is clear that they do hold pre-conceived notions about Peru as a desirable site for their own journeys of self-discovery and empowerment. Citing various anthropological studies of emotion (Eid & Diener, 2001; Goody, 1993), Picard (2012) argues that:

> While all humans appear to have a talent to experience various emotions, the largely unconscious moral norms guiding social practices in society can prescribe an active cultivation of some emotions and repress others. As a consequence, the actively encouraged learning of certain emotions is likely to lead to increased abilities at the personal level to experience such emotions. (p. 8)

In other words, volunteers have already been conditioned to expect transformative experiences prior to their departure to their placement. Their experience of individual empowerment occurs because they have come to Peru specifically to experience this particular feeling. The transformation that takes place is, in essence, pre-scripted, projected onto the host community and then enjoyed as a benefit, regardless of the volunteer's contribution in their volunteer placement.

Nothing about the volunteers' desire for a transformative experience is in itself a negative thing. The initiative of their endeavors and their dedication of their time, energy and money are admirable. But my critique of these transformations harkens back to Freire's description of consciousness-raising, echoed in Langdon and Agyeyomah's (2014) call for critical reflexivity; neither of which are apparent in these processes of transformation that are described through

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neoliberal ideals of individual empowerment. In the cases that I have described, the transformation is non-dialogic and located specifically in the interior heart and mind of the volunteer describing the experience. The community members act as players or helpers to facilitate this transformation. But no mutual social learning process necessarily takes place that implicates the learning outcomes of the volunteer within those of the community or community members.

Community solidarity has been vacated from the transformation; a strange and troubling irony, considering the pretense of the volunteer experience is to help others who are assumed to be vulnerable and in need of a humanitarian intervention. As opposed to the predetermined plan for individual change, Freire's model of conscientization does not predetermine an outcome beyond a commitment to justice and collective struggle; the form and scope of this struggle is directed by the collective goals and needs of learners. Unlike the development of hyper-critical reflexivity, which is ongoing and sustained commitment to justice, volunteers describe their transformation in the field as something that has happened and will henceforth go on to effect the course of their lives. Yet there is no way to measure if this will be the case, as the process is entirely interior.

As an example of the difficulty of self-evaluation, I will take Mitchell, the pre-med student as an example. When I asked Mitchell about his impressions of what it takes to be good at one's volunteer position he commented, "There's no real difference among volunteers here. If you do a lot you help out a lot. If you do a little bit then you help out a little bit. As long as you're not reckless. That's the main thing for the safety of the children. But I haven't seen anybody be reckless." From Mitchell's perspective, if someone does "a lot" of work than they are more successful than someone who only does "a little." But either way, volunteers contribute

to cumulatively address and resolve social issues, which he interprets as commendable. I also privately interviewed several of Mitchell's colleagues, who volunteered in the same orphanage, and when I asked them how they differentiated between good and bad volunteers, three others named him, specifically, as an example of someone who did not contribute their fair share. They cited him for staying in his room and spending time on his phone at key moments in the day when he was expected to help feed, bathe or attend to the children. His behavior annoyed the team who felt that they were left to pick up the slack for his share of work. Mitchell was unbothered by, or unaware of these sentiments. This indicates that in spite of his willingness to cultivate a benevolent and community-oriented nature, he nevertheless failed to live up to the expectations of his workplace.

Mitchell ranked himself on par with other volunteers in terms of his contribution, without recognizing that his actions demonstrated a lack of solidarity to either his team members or the children in his charge. In spite of this, Mitchell, like so many other respondents felt he had changed. I noted the emotion in his voice when he recounted his feelings of transformation:

> It has opened me up. I think maybe I wasn't as compassionate before. I was more selfish. This helped to open my eyes and has made me more understanding. We're a little isolated in the US. I worked in a hospital before but I haven't seen nearly as many traumatic events as these kids have. (Interview with Mitchell, 23; 01/19/2015)

Mitchell's transformation is dubious, at least in relation to his perceptions of how to show solidarity with vulnerable community members and his unwillingness to participate, as reported by his peers. Or, at the very least his self-proclaimed compassion and openness did not translate to a direct desire to contribute his fair share to the assigned duties. Perhaps the stories reported by his co-workers were due to "sour grapes" of some kind, or a personal conflict that occurred

between them, to which I was not privy. I do not intend to rely too heavily on gossip as reliable evidence of Mitchell's behavior. Still, the story was corroborated by several volunteers who named him specifically when I asked them the same question about describing the characteristics of a good volunteer, as opposed to a bad one. Similarly, his response that helping "a little bit" is sufficient to consider oneself helpful indicates his lack of willingness to commit much of his time to actively work for the children. Upon the near completion of his tenure as a volunteer, he nevertheless felt personally affected by witnessing the disparaging conditions of Lima's public hospitals and the suffering of sick and injured children. Perhaps having feelings is not enough to prompt actual teachable moments that will cultivate inner growth, let alone broader understandings of cultural differences or structures of power.

Each of these volunteers framed their experience in Peru as a transformative process defined by the individual pleasures of personal empowerment. This stands in contrast to the potential that may arise from the collective consciousness raising that critical pedagogues suggest can emerge from dialogic practices that are rooted in practices of anti-oppression. Since these practices are largely absent from the volunteer experience, the following section explores other structures of relationships that stand their place, among volunteers and the communities that receive them.

Relationships and (Non-)Engagement With Host Communities

In order for volunteer participants to transcend beyond the interiority of their own emotional journeys, an important variable is the ability to form close relationships with local community members. These interactions allow participants to step outside of their own experiences and begin to understand the different worldviews, knowledge systems and political, cultural and social beliefs and practices beyond their own. Dialogue is encouraged, and sharing

takes place between those with relationships; whether these are friendships among colleagues, romantic relationships or the simulation of familial relationships among participants in homestay situations.

Volunteers assume that they will become close with members of the communities where they live and work. Recruitment strategies influence these assumptions, as recruiters promise volunteers the opportunity for direct engagement with community members. Often the experience is framed as a cultural exchange, wherein volunteers and local community members work alongside one another and develop friendships as colleagues. Commonly, recruiters offer opportunities for volunteers to stay in homestay situations; that is, as billeted guests in the homes of families within a particular community. This is more common in remote, rural communities, such as in Ancash or villages throughout the Sacred Valley. In Cusco and Lima, volunteers predominantly tend to stay in boarding houses in particular neighbors with other international travellers, however some organizations do still accommodate particular requests for homestays.

Yet in spite of the presumption that these trips will enable cultural immersion within a host community, the ability to form bonds with locals can prove more challenging than expected for volunteers upon their arrival. Several scholars have noted in their own case studies that volunteers tend to cluster together, and interact more with each other than with community members. This occurs for several reasons, such as language barriers, culture shock or a longing for familiarity in order to achieve a sense of personal safety in unfamiliar surroundings (Crossley, 2012; Simpson, 2004). No two experiences are alike, as each placement depends on a range of variables that will effect the relationships that volunteers and communities will form, such as duration of the placement, the type of work undertaken, the community's disposition towards the organization accommodating the volunteers, etc. In this section, I explore the

contours of volunteer experiences within host communities, by drawing on key examples of barriers to developing close relationships among volunteers and Peruvian community members.

My respondents tended to frame this challenge as reluctance on the part of community members to really get to know them, even when they had been there for months. Often, they expressed confusion and uncertainty as to why this might be the case. In other cases volunteers experienced discomfort upon close interactions with Peruvians, and sought to distance themselves from their host families or colleagues in order to retreat to more familiar surroundings. I will provide examples of each of these experiences in turn.

The difficulty of facilitating close connections between volunteers and community members occurred for a number of reasons, countering the volunteers' assumptions that they could make friends and develop affinity simply by showing up within the field. As volunteers with one organization in Ancash learned, the town's residents tended to show little interest in the volunteers' efforts to reach out by organizing various cultural events such as movie nights, meet and greets and parties. They also organized a week long "environmental awareness campaign". Volunteers were discouraged when these events were sparsely attended and none of the community members showed up in spite of their efforts to promote the events. It is possible that some of the content felt uninteresting or inappropriate for the residents of the town. The community in which they stayed was a small farming town, almost entirely inhabited by a Quechuan-speaking Indigenous populations who practiced traditional farming techniques. I was not present in the town during the environmental awareness campaign, which included volunteer-run workshops on sustainability and community-wide "beautification" projects like painting a mural and a day of picking up litter. But it occurs to me that however eager this group

may have been, their desires to "teach" this community about sustainable practices was probably misguided. It is hard to imagine what wisdom they might have imparted.

Beyond this, it seemed as though the town, which had hosted two different cycles of the same program over the previous two summers, was suffering from a kind of volunteer fatigue; where volunteers were once sources of interest and novelty for the community members, the locals were now somewhat disinterested in getting to know new volunteers. As Rehana, a 21 year old from New Brunswick put it, "it was really hard to get the community to be engaged in that. They had programs here for a while so the community is not pumped like they were before… I think that's one of the reasons why the excitement died down" (Interview with Rehana, 02/05/2015). The community's inability to get "pumped" about volunteers could be interpreted in a few different ways. It could be that the impact of the volunteer labour was not particularly effective, observed or appreciated by community members.[23] It could also mean that community members made previous attempts to get to know volunteers but these had not gone well. Some scholars corroborate these claims in their own research. Locals do not tend to easily forge bonds in contexts when there is a high turnover rate of volunteers within the community, but it is difficult to know exact reasons why the community members felt little interest in the efforts of this organization, as little research has attended to the perception of volunteers by host communities, nor on the lasting outcomes of these interventions on the communities, following volunteers' departures.[24]

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[23] The organization offered work placements such as teaching English in the local school, administrative jobs in the town hall or providing basic assistance in the clinic, as well as group projects such as repainting buildings and constructing ecological, adobe stoves and refrigerators for a smaller, isolated and extremely impoverished community in the highlands.

[24] Some exceptions to this paucity of work on hosts include studies by McAllum & Zahra (2015), McGehee and Andereck (2008), and McIntosh and Zahra (2007).

Volunteers who lived in homestays in various locations reported mixed results concerning integration. Some had specifically requested the opportunity to live with a family, expecting it would be the simplest and most straightforward way to integrate into Peruvian culture. Lara, a Canadian volunteer who worked with one of the textile-vending social enterprises lived in Ollantaytambo, a small town about an hour or two away from Machu Picchu in the Sacred Valley. She felt that she was very obviously a source of income for her host family and was never really made to feel welcome at home there. She felt more like a tenant than a guest; a factor that she attributed to the fact that the town of Ollantay was a frequent layover for buses full of tourists, en route to Machu Picchu from Cusco. From her perspective, the town was accustomed to looking at tourists as affluent sources of income on their short afternoon visits in the town, as opposed to cultural ambassadors or potential friends.

> It can be exhausting at times. Because you look like a foreigner and so you're mistaken as someone who is just passing through town. So you're always haggling, people are always overcharging you when you know things are overpriced. It can be a little tiring. There can be this mentality in general in Peru, and I totally get it. I get where it's coming from. It's the idea that you should try to extract as much money as possible from someone who is lighter skinned. So that becomes hard, when you're living off a savings account. (Interview with Lara, 23; 03/03/2015)

Lara's expression of exhaustion derived from never feeling fully welcome or embraced within Ollantay. She was always marked by her whiteness, and therefore foreignness, and struggled to avoid being taken advantage of or scammed, let alone to break through and develop close connections with the townspeople. Lara tried to relate or empathize with the mentality, she does replicate some characteristics of a "backlashing" ally by framing the behavior as the "mentality

in general in Peru," and somehow characteristic of the entire country. In fairness to her, the host family with whom she first stayed upon arrival seemed to perpetuate this dynamic. She stated that she was "generally ignored, and never invited to eat dinner with them." She was served later, served smaller portions than the rest of the family and "met with scorn" when she asked for more food. At one point, there were fleas in the house and she was accused of bringing them in. It became clear to her very quickly that her presence in the home was only due to the stipend paid by her host organization in exchange for taking her in. While she had anticipated a cultural exchange, she realized that she was instead viewed as an income source, which offended her deeply.

Other volunteers throughout the country echoed these concerns. Another volunteer named Reggie, who lived on the coast outside Lima, failed to relate to his host family for similar reasons. Although he had several "host brothers" around his own age, he was critical of them for the way that they treated tourists, in particular for trying to "scam on tourist girls and get drunk". Their behavior made him feel personally unsafe and worried for them. But he also expressed resentment and distrust in his interactions with his brothers. Both Lara and Reggie ended up moving out of their homestays early and electing to live in shared houses with other Canadian and American volunteer expats, which was not uncommon.

Other volunteers claimed it was hard to make friends with their coworkers or counterparts, pointing to cultural differences or a disinterest on the part of local communities, perhaps, as Rehana had said, because of local fatigue at seeing so many volunteers come and go, there was little interest in investing time and energy into forging relationships with them. Juana, the volunteer coordinator from the women's shelter in Lima, rejected this assumption, arguing

instead that the volunteer's own behavior lead to their disassociation with community members.

She noted an increasing trend among youth volunteers, in particular:

> Sometimes, especially when they are younger, they are too intense about social networks and their cellphones. It can totally be a problem because when they are working with the girls and adults we want them to get the sense that we are all there for them. And if you have a volunteer who is texting, checking Facebook or whatever, then it's not good for the environment we're trying to create… They are the leaders and the girls are here to learn from them. And when you are working with them they are the most important people. The people who need all your attention. All your attention is not only when you're doing an activity but also when you're having lunch and asking them about school, or asking about someone about her sister because her sister is sad about something. When you engage with them you create a relationship with them. You might think that the least important activity of the day is when you're having lunch. For me it's the most important activity of the day. Because that when I get to know my girls! And that's when they get to know me! It's a two-way thing. (Interview with Juana; 01/25/2015)

Volunteers must be willing to put down their devices and take the first steps to relate to others, particularly those in vulnerable positions who look to these volunteers as leaders. Although the organization where she works undertakes many initiatives from workshops and courses on a wide variety of subjects (English, applying for jobs, computer skills, cooking classes, etc.), offers counseling, community outreach, babysitting and childcare services, one of the basic services that Juana wishes her volunteers would provide is a friendly lunchtime companion and a sign of interest or care in the wellbeing of the women in the house. This interaction falls on the

shoulders of the volunteers. She also went on to add that while she will accept volunteers who are not fluent in Spanish, she strongly encourages all volunteers to learn as much of the language as possible in order to effectively communicate with the community members and the women and girls within the house.

Juana's complaint about social media usage among volunteers reflects more than just a frustrating trend among youth, but implies a significant challenge to the program's ability to accomplish its mandate to empower these women as well. Part of the process of empowering others is developing meaningful connections with them. Juana expects this to take place through volunteers' support, which is demonstrated by their presence, mindfulness and attention throughout their placements. If the women and girls in these programs perceive volunteers as leaders or role models who appear disengaged or disinterested when not "on duty", then this jeopardizes the connections that they will make with volunteers and the impact of the programs.

At the shelter, there appeared to be a problem of integration among a few of the volunteers with whom I spoke. Beatrice, who was a 19 year old from Luxemburg on a gap year trip, commented on the difficulties of becoming close to her colleagues. She worked in San Juan de Miraflores, about an hour by bus outside of town. She worked with several Peruvian employees who ran programs for children including homework help, arts and crafts classes and sports camps. It was Beatrice's job to assist. She noted:

> I was always feeling a bit apart. You have the *promotora*s[25] and you have the
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> volunteers. They were always nice, but I didn't feel like part of the team. But it

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[25] The direct translation of the Spanish word *promotora* is "promoter." In the context of this placement, it means a kind of camp counselor position; when older youths facilitate activities for younger children. In this case, the *promotoras* were youth leaders from San Juan de Miraflores, working within their community in partnership with the women's shelter that funded and administered the program.

depends because they knew each other for 5 years sometimes. They live next to each

other, they are friends, they go out together. We don't go out in San Juan de

Miraflores. So, there are some differences sometimes. It's bad though. Sometimes I

realize the differences. I realize I'm not totally part of the group. (Interview with

Beatrice, 19; 01/29/2015)

Nevertheless, Beatrice did have several friends in Lima. Not uncharacteristically, she found that

she had more international ex-pat friends than Peruvians, thanks to the international house that

she lived in; an occurrence that she found odd and somewhat disconcerting, although she didn't

know how to change these circumstances:

But the thing is, living in a city like Lima, sometimes there's a lot of change. So we

have a lot of friends, a lot of international students. From Germany, France, the US,

all over Europe, Netherlands. We had someone in the house from Australia, US,

Europe. So I think that's also really interesting. But sometimes I feel like I don't have

enough contact with Peruvians. Because it's not that easy. (Interview with Beatrice,

19; 01/29/2015)

Beatrice felt that she benefited more socially from the time she spent interacting with young

people from around the world in the ex-pat/backpacker community that abounds throughout

Miraflores. They were more interested in viewing tourist attractions and had the abilities to

travel. She assumed the Peruvians she met could not afford nor had any interest in but did not

bring up any further analysis in our conversation of why or how these acquaintances might be

uninterested or unable to participate in the kinds of travel that she did.

Her ability to speak Spanish improved over the course of her trip, but she still struggled

to communicate effectively. This often impeded her work, as she did not always clearly

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understand the *promotoras'* instructions, nor the children's questions. She tended to wait for instructions from others rather than taking initiative to plan activities or direct the children on her own. She expressed that she felt awkward and left out at times when working in San Juan, but she did not know how improve the bonds with the community members. She did not plan to spend time there after working hours, out of concerns for her safety, as well as the logistics of traveling between the community and her boarding house in Miraflores. "You don't go to the slums to hang out," she told me matter-of-factly.

Beatrice developed her closest friendship during her time in Peru with another Luxembourgian, Zara, also 19 years old, who worked for the same shelter. Although they were not acquainted before departing on the trip, they both applied to work in Peru through a volunteer recruitment agency in Luxemburg that recommended the shelter, and that also proposed they travel together and board in the same home so that they could work in a partnership together. Logistically it made sense. The rough timelines of trips were the same, so they agreed. They only met once briefly before flying to Peru together. In a separate interview following my meeting with Beatrice, Zara recalls, "It was kind of odd. We had a layover in Amsterdam and we sat in this coffeeshop and talked for 5 hours. And I said to myself, 'Okay, I'm going to spend a whole year with this girl so I better like her!' I was nervous." The two shared a room to save their money and were anxious before meeting, but to their relief, they ended up becoming best friends. "It's impressive how well we get along. We get along *so* well. We live together, we work together, we do everything together. We spend literally the whole day and night together and it's fine. At the end we're going to travel for four months together. It's awesome!"

Beatrice and Zara each expressed profound gratitude that they met each other and had someone with whom they could share and process the experience. They reflected on their group of international friends, whom they shared, and often discussed the strangeness of spending their days among the youth in the *pueblos* followed by spending their evenings in extravagant bars or nightclubs along the cliffs of Miraflores with their affluent, international friends. They tended to criticize these friends (many of whom were on exchange at Lima's major university, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru) privately for spending their money on expensive restaurants and alcohol, when the amounts of their bills cost more than several days wages of the women at the shelter who worked as domestic labourers.

Beatrice and Zara's most important friendship emerged from the similarities and common reference points that they shared. Yet this experience runs counter-intuitive to the implicit promises of volunteer coordination agencies that recruit participants through advertisements that are predicated upon forming strong relationships with locals and, in turn, growing as an individual thanks to these relationships. While the differences in culture could in fact provide productive learning opportunities for all parties, they do add to the difficulty in forging bonds for individuals who feel shy or reluctant to make the first move towards developing friendships in this new environment. Although cultural and linguistic differences present a challenge, the point of the experience is for it to challenge the participant. In this sense, a lack of Peruvian friends in Peru reveals a real limitation to intercultural learning opportunities that could take place during these experiences.

More volunteers than just Beatrice and Zara expressed that this was a challenge. Claudia, who was a 24 year old from Seattle, always wanted to travel to Peru. Her father was Peruvian, but had not returned to the country since the political instability of the 1980s when he moved to

the United States. As a result, she knew very little about the country or the culture and wanted to return to meet her family and learn about where she came from. Teaching English in Lima appeared to be a good way to meet and spend time with her family:

> I've been curious about Peru because my dad grew up here. It's a complicated feeling because I wasn't raised with any Peruvian culture or values at home. I didn't learn Spanish at home. But I still grew up with a Peruvian father so it kind of makes me feel like I am part of this culture. But that's an entitled way to think because I never spent any time here. I guess that's why I came. To actually say that I knew it.
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> (Claudia, 24)

Claudia is unique among the volunteers who participated in this study, insofar as she self-identified as being from Peruvian descent and she had extended family members living in Lima.[26] Meeting family, as well as learning and experiencing aspects of her cultural heritage were strong motivators for her decision to visit Peru. The personal dimension of her anticipated transformation could be interpreted as a desire to grow closer to her family and her sense of cultural heritage. She described the decision to volunteer as an English teacher as a secondary motivation to travel to Peru, along with her desire to take Spanish language courses and improve her linguistic abilities.

Although she even had looked into the process of gaining citizenship or permanent residency in order to stay indefinitely, the complicated bureaucratic processes of applying proved too complicated, time-consuming and expensive. In the end, she ultimately decided to return home to Seattle after living in Lima for 8 months, finding that teaching English was unsatisfying

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[26] One other volunteer had previously visited Peru on a family vacation when she was in primary school, and another described a close connection with her childhood nanny who was Peruvian that motivated her to travel to Peru.

and that there were not enough job opportunities for her to stay. Claudia expressed feelings of love and affection for the friends that she had made, but to her disappointment noted that there was a fairly substantial "awkward", "weird" and "uncomfortable" dynamic with her family whom she described as elite residents of San Isidro. She had what she described as "a very different relationship to money" than they did. As a child of immigrants and self-identified member of the working class, Claudia spoke at length about elite Limeno society and how much she disliked it. She observed how her family treated their domestic workers with rudeness, disdain and mistrust, and was acutely aware of how little they were paid in spite of their long hours and challenging work. She described a particular occasion when her cousins hosted a lunch party and expected that the workers would take care of all the arrangements including cooking, cleaning and serving guests, while also tending to their daily duties. Claudia was offended that they were offered no extra pay, nor thanked for their overtime.

She described her family's values as "superficial" and "materialistic," which from her view were aspects of Limeno society, as a whole. "…Your average Limeno is sort of what you see at the club. The stereotype is that they are more affluent. The kind of person who only goes out and parties, and they go to school, their only goals are to get a job, have a kid. Have basic lives." Claudia's reaction against the perceived "basicness" of the elite class's motivations stem from her own feelings of alienation for not holding these same ideals as a vision for her own future life and for not being affluent or interested in participating in her family member's preferred activities.

Instead, like Beatrice and Zara, she found that her closest connections in Lima came from her connection to other ex-pats, whom she met predominantly through taking Spanish courses in Miraflores. She described these friends as "alternative" to the mainstream Limenos; as metal

heads, hippies and artists. This group, from her perspective, stood apart from the rest of Lima, and were made to feel excluded because of their alternative styles of dress as well as because of the difference in values that they felt this signified. "It's not like in Seattle where you can be this total fucking weirdo but still mesh with the rest of the city and have a normal life," she commented. Avoiding the insular tourist scene in Miraflores, as well as the elitism of San Isidro's upper class culture, they would find live music shows together, watch movies and travel on weekends to nearby beach towns, or into the mountains and jungle.

Claudia was returning to Seattle in just two weeks following our interview, and reflected on how she would miss the many people that she had met, including her family, in spite of the differences in their worldviews that strained their relationship. In the end, when I asked about the positive outcomes of her 8 months trip, she described the feeling of confidence that she gained through meeting friends from around the world:

> I learned I can go anywhere in the world and meet people and feel like they're best friends for life. So that was a beautiful to come out of it. I feel like I have all these allies now around the world. You just need to meet one person face to face from another country and all of a sudden that world is a lot more real to you. (Interview with Claudia, 24; 02/12/2015)

For Claudia, who initially intended to travel to Peru to discover aspects of her own cultural identity, the greatest success of her trip was her increased confidence in the ability to meet people – allies, specifically – from around the world. She did not perceive that she had grown or changed as an individual due to the connections with her family, as she had hoped for, but instead through meeting a plurality of other individuals, from disparate cultural, linguistic and

national backgrounds, but who in the end shared common worldviews or ways of experiencing the world.

Claudia's experience is unique from that of Beatrice and Zara in that she felt an inability to form connections with the residents of San Isidro due to their affluence and unwillingness to accept non-normative, "alternative" lifestyles, while the other two young women found it in the end impossible to build on relationships with their colleagues in San Juan, due to the community's close knit relationship, language barriers and their concerns about the dangers of staying in the community after working hours, given its reputation for crime and violence. In spite of the polarities in their experiences of Lima, all of these young women nevertheless tended to form their strongest relationships with other members of Lima's ex-pat community. Relationships with Peruvians proved complicated or awkward in comparison to the myriad other young volunteers who were equally interested and willing in networking with other likeminded volunteers.

Although a significant goal of cultural exchange is to encounter and learn from difference, these cases demonstrate that volunteers felt most personally empowered through encountering like-mindedness and commonality; finding other internationally mobile young people from the Global North who share their interests and can relate to their own goals, interests and agendas for traveling throughout Peru. To my mind, this indicates that volunteer's Peruvian colleagues and hosts tend to play only a supporting role in the backdrop of volunteers' transformations. These volunteers described their own empowerment less in the act of helping others who are presumed to be different from the volunteer (marked by, for example, their class, race and language, as well as their political worldviews and the values and norms that they hold), but rather in the experience of processing their feelings about these communities alongside their

friends, who underwent their own concurrent experiences of encountering difference. The stronger, most impactful friendships emerge from the shared experience of encountering and processing difference together, than they do from engaging in a practice of dialogue with this difference directly. Difference becomes a frequent source of awkwardness and discomfort, which are undesirable attributes of an experience that is supposed to produce pleasure, positivity and growth. Therefore, volunteers engage in dialogue with one another in spaces that feel more comfortable and less emotionally risky, given the presumed common experiences of foreignness.

The problem with this behavior is that it marginalizes the realities of Peruvians from volunteers' experiences in Peru. Rather than working through the cultural, linguistic and political differences between volunteers and community members or colleagues, volunteers choose to invest in relationships with those with whom they already share common reference points. This in fact reifies the differences between volunteers and communities, rather than bridging them. Following from Juana's concerns about distracted volunteers in the lunchroom, I too question how effective volunteers' contribution to their organizations may actually be, if they are less invested personally in the welfare of the community members than they are in the friendships that they have formed with other volunteers. In these cases, volunteers treat their obligations within communities as, at best professional duties, but ones that afford them breaks and their own personal time to do with as they like outside of working hours. They fail to adopt a spirit of solidarity, or a willingness to participate in the more difficult task of empowering community members through their attention and support.

Misidentifications Within Communities

However, when volunteers did form bonds with community members, these proved extremely powerful. When I asked about what kind of impact these friendships had on them,

volunteers described them in terms of closeness and camaraderie. They mentioned that friendships in the field staved off homesick for their prior lives and made them feel as though they were living in "a home away from home." But volunteers' positive impressions of closeness within the community may still be subject to doubt. Often I questioned the profundity of the relationships that volunteers described they had with community members; particularly when they spoke very little Spanish and absolutely no Quechua. It often seemed that these relationships or friendships were over-emphasized or over-determined. While volunteers and community members were no doubt friendly towards one another, no sustained conversation of any depth ever followed these initial, brief interactions.

Among the group who reported that they had difficulty enticing community members to participate in their events, parties or workshops, respondents paradoxically reported that they had a number of friends in town, saying that everyone that they encountered would wish them "*Buenos dias*!" or say "*Hola, gringo/a*!"[27] as they passed one another in the streets. Those living in Urubamba said the same thing, noting the friendliness of the Quechua-speaking townspeople, even though they routinely would only exchange a few words to one another. The exchange of pleasantries was kind and indicates a certain level of affection between community members and volunteers, but describing this as a friendship, as many volunteers did is an overstatement of what could better be understood as cordial politeness amongst strangers, with no real connection to one another. The volunteers responded that they were friends or friendly with the townspeople because "everyone" knew who they were. This was likely the case. In small, mountain towns, new people, and particularly international visitors were indeed big news. But this visibility also

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[27] G*ringo* (or the female equivalent *gring*a), is a Spanish word for a white or non-Latino/a person. It can be used pejoratively as well as descriptively – as in the context of a greeting – when referring to, or addressing foreigners throughout Latin America.

confused the volunteers' notoriety and conspicuousness with integration or active membership within the community. In other words, volunteers may have misinterpreted the mode of address as more meaningful or impactful than it in fact was; a sign of politeness or a phatic recognition of the presence of a foreigner by a community of locals. In my view, this recognition from villagers indicated good will and welcomed volunteers to communities that until recently had been quite removed from the typical tourist's route. Yet the warmth of this greeting does not imply a deep relationality, as the volunteers interpreted it. The ambiguity of these greetings and the lack of substantial follow ups points to polite acquaintanceships rather than profound connections. These ultimately work to reinforce volunteers' sense of self-worth and the value of their contribution in the community where they stayed.

The misperception of one's role and recognition in Peru may occur within surprisingly long-term volunteer placements. Even when volunteers do form close connections among community members and colleagues, these are not necessarily informed through anti-oppressive frameworks nor do they promote a collective sense of critical consciousness. Volunteers may contribute significantly to the communities where they work, while unwillingly replicating and perpetuating racialized power dynamics. The complexity of caring for others with respect and dignity requires an active commitment that is measured by both the quality of the care that is provided in all interactions, as well as the deliverable outcome of the care itself.

At the orphanage in Lima, I met Cheryl, a 22 year old who was originally from Ohio, and who decided to stay permanently in Peru at the end of her initial 9 month commitment to the orphanage where she worked. At the time of our interview, she had lived and worked in the orphanage for nearly 3 years. She always intended to go to medical school in the United States, but instead applied to universities in Lima in order to gain a permanent resident status within the

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country. She now plans to open a pediatric clinic, in partnership with her university in one of the interior Amazonian provinces. She has already purchased the land using her own finances and is considered a co-director of the project, which plans to break ground and open its door by the time she anticipates graduating in 2018. At the time we spoke, she was in the process of completing her second of five years in medical school, but she had already hired her team of 6 staff members, including three doctors, two nurses and one physical therapist.

When I asked Cheryl what made her decide to stay in Peru, she replied that she felt more at home there than she ever did in the United States:

> I think I came down here thinking this would be a grand adventure. Something to pull me away from my life, an escape. Something to do, to experience. And I was planning on going back. That was the thing. I'll do 9 months of volunteering somewhere and then I'll go back to the States. But I live here now. I live among them. They're family now. I can never go home now because it's not home. I return to the States and it's different. And it's difficult because it's not something you can explain to people, even my family. I mean we've had our difficulties over the years but it's a very difficult thing telling my sister that I don't feel at home in the States anymore. So that's very different. From a grand adventure to this is where I want to live, where I want to set roots down. It's a very different mindset. (Interview with Cheryl, 22; 01/19/2015)

Cheryl's commitment to staying in Peru is unique to all other volunteers that I interviewed. She was very candid about the strain that her decision to move permanently to Peru caused with her family and friends at home in the United States, but she was equally resolved that this was the right decision. The bonds that she formed in the orphanage and the community at large

compelled her to stay and she expressed absolute certainty that this was the right decision for her.

The depth of these connections is touching and commendable, however Cheryl's own reflections on her assimilation within to Peruvian culture are complex and merit detailed consideration. Her own discomfort with returning home – which she later noted she finds "awful" and that she dreads it each time she goes home, about twice a year – was either a result of, or reason for her own adoption of what she feels to be a Peruvian lifestyle. She discussed this disavowal candidly and proudly:

> It's kind of ridiculous sometimes. First of all I don't feel like I'm white anymore. One of my Peruvian friends from university, she's very dark and she's from the mountains. One time we were walking to the library and she asked me, 'Does it bother you that people stare at us all day long? Stare at us, like because we're friends?' And I was like, 'People stare at us? 'And she was like, 'Yeah, all the time.' It was this revelation. I don't think I'm stared at at all anymore. I feel like I'm one of you guys. So I like definitely feel Peruvian [laughs]. I don't feel white anymore. Which is terrible. Which is really terrible because I have very white skin. (Interview with Cheryl, 22; 01/19/2015)

Cheryl's reaction to her friend's comment about the differences in their skin colours, and the subsequent unlikelihood of their friendship in a country where racism and racialization are highly prevalent, reveals the paradoxical nature of Cheryl's own relationship to power and privilege. On the one hand, her actions demonstrate an effort to show similitude, and perhaps even solidarity with her darker friend. ("I feel like I'm one of you guys" and "I don't feel white anymore.") At the same time, these comments reveal her immunity to the critical or curious

stares of her fellow college students, intrigued or challenged by the unlikelihood of an interracial friendship. Her efforts to relate to her friend are to ensure her that they are really no different fail to acknowledge the very different lives that they have lead before meeting one another. Further, they fail to account for the privilege that affords her the opportunity to immigrate to Peru and identify as a citizen because of a personal preference. Regardless of feeling like she is no longer white, she is still identified as white by others, and she benefits from this privilege accordingly. That she would not recognize the stares of others in the same way as her darker friends only demonstrates that she has not fully reflected on how she benefits from being visually identified as a white person.

Cheryl describes her assimilation into Peruvian culture in terms of habits and practices that she has adopted, stating "Peruvians have a lot of funny little customs and things they do that I actually do now. Things about washing my clothes a certain way. Or eating a certain way. Or believing things like you shouldn't drink really cold water when you have a cold. I've started doing that." In this description she establishes her understanding of what it means to be Peruvian in the terms of daily customs or habits, while simultaneously diminishing these customs as folksy and simple. This reveals that in spite of the feeling of closeness and affection she feels for the Peruvians that she knows, there is a gulf in the experience of being a native of one country and feeling a great comfort while living in it. It reduces national belonging to the practice of imitable customs or quirks and reflects a paradigm deeply embedded in the logic of individual choice. Yet while Cheryl can become Peruvian if she aspires to, my assumption is that an immigrant experience in the United States would be markedly different.

As much as she "feels" Peruvian, most of her colleagues, classmate and friends would not have the resources or the authority to open their own private clinic at the age of 22, three years

before they completed their medical degree. The advantages and the opportunities that Cheryl has at her disposal, as an affluent, white American in Peru remain unchanged, regardless of her self-described transition into a Peruvian.

From a pragmatic perspective that measures successful development outcomes in terms of deliverables, Cheryl's service may well prove exceptional and change the lives of many children who would not receive the attention that they would without her generosity. The complexity of this case is that her desire to help these people, and to commit her life to their service, occurs in tandem with a lack of self-awareness or a real recognition of privilege and power that frames her experience and impression of Peru. In one sense, committing to the construction and operation of a clinic transcends the lifestyle solidarity model that is so highly characteristic of international volunteer activity. On the other hand, Cheryl's intervention still responds to her own emotional satisfaction. As she framed it, "This is what makes me happy. At the end of my day I can go to bed like, knowing that what I did not only helped me but it helped 50 other children. It's the greatest feeling every single day." It is emotional gratification that motivates Cheryl's service to these children and not necessarily a desire to empower them. She specifically desires the pleasure in providing care for the children in the orphanage, but she also desires to prevent the negative feelings of discomfort and sadness that she experiences when she visits her family in the United States, having chosen Peru as her adopted home.

It would be inaccurate to pronounce her actions as selfish or self-motivated when she demonstrates benevolence and a clear vision of how she sees her work positively impacting others. Yet a description of Cheryl's experience in Peru would also be incomplete without including the enormous privilege that she maintains, and the opportunities that she is afforded professionally and personally, thanks to her race and class. In describing her decision where to

open the clinic, she demonstrated the desire for customization that exemplifies international volunteer trips, noting that she selected the community where she planned to live because "it has the perfect climate. It's not sticky hot like Iquitos. It's hot but it's nice. The land is close to the river, it's close to a school. It's close to the *posta*, which is like the government-run, medical clinic. So I borrowed money from my sister and just bought it." Cheryl demonstrates a contribution that is multiply valuable; to the community where she will break ground and open a clinic, and to herself, for allowing her to lead the kind of lifestyle that she wishes for.

Raising Critical Consciousness

In the final section of this chapter, I conclude with a positive recollection of experiences where volunteers seemed to form important connections with Peruvian community members. Although they were the exception to the norm, these volunteers demonstrated a heightened awareness of issues pertaining to colonialism and imperialism. They articulated their experiences in terms of the lasting effect they wanted to leave behind when they returned for home and they discussed specific steps they wanted to take to continue working through their own transformation in order to provide continued support to the communities. Above all, these volunteers connected their own transformation to the relationships that they formed with others in the community, for whom they worked. They understood that by first providing support and empowering these community members, they too would come to feel the benefits.

The Aboriginal Leaders group was particularly adept at approaching interactions from an anti-oppressive framework. I visited them in Ancash after they had spent the previous six months together, so, in spite of the lack of interest from community members who the volunteers hoped to engage, exceptionally strong relationships had formed between the volunteers and their Peruvian counterparts. Several of the participants from Canada had previously worked as

organizers and activists within their communities. During a five day immersion pre-departure orientation there was explicit emphasis on collaboration. Facilitators taught intensive workshops that guided the volunteers to recognize power and privilege, create safe spaces and to communicate with respect across intercultural boundaries. According to the program coordinator, the volunteers were guided to think of their work in Peru as an equal partnership; that they were there to create allies, not rescue helpless victims. The approach sought to promote equality and agency of all parties.

In this sense, volunteers approached the program as though all were participants. Rehana framed it in this way:

> We are participating in a community and growing together in a reality that makes sense to us. Like just being open minded to everything. Not having a closed mind. Especially being in [the community], learning that money isn't everything. The families are closer. We just get to bond in a different way. It's definitely different than home. I have friends who only care about make up and clothes and whatever. Being successful to them is having money and being able to buy these materialistic things. Here, people have so little but they're so happy with what they have. I feel like I don't know what will happen when I go home because I don't have friends in that same mindset as I am. (Interview with Rehana, 23; 02/05/2015)

Rehana's politics have shifted or intensified through the experience of community building with her peers and their Peruvian "twins". She recognizes the political potential in building intentional communities around shared values, and collective commitment toward social change. Although their projects did not necessarily yield the results that they had intended, the practice of world-making nevertheless imparted a valuable lesson that made her question her previous values, that

centred around "having money" and "materialist things". In some senses this change reflects the "poor-but-happy" projections that volunteer tourists tend to have on the impoverished communities they visit. But Rehana's reflections suggest that she has recognized a change in her own values because of this contact with other cultures. Her active concern about how to relate to her community back home in Canada demonstrates the strength of the connections that she made on her travels; a paradigm shift that she will have to reconcile with the way she once conducted herself at home, and in the way that she believes she is seen in the eyes of others back home. This is indeed a risk of international volunteerism, although it is rarely acknowledge by volunteer coordination agencies; how can volunteers guarantee that the transformations that they perceive they have experienced will in fact remain upon their return home?

Although this study stops short of following up with volunteers who have returned to their everyday lives, I nevertheless interpreted a correlation between the concern about the lasting effects of this transformation and a particularly deep series of reflections undertaken by the volunteer about the nature of solidarity work and the formation of alliances. Nicole, a 22 year old nursing student who was originally from Michigan phrased her concern about how her life would look after volunteering at the orphanage in this way:

> I'm worried about going back and forgetting this experience. I'm worried about going
> back and living in a nice place and … I also want to go back to the States because it's
> my home, kind of. I'm going back to the States and I still feel guilty about it. It's a
> work in progress, thinking about my friends, family, and getting my education. And
> how to not forget about this place. (Nicole)

Nicole was deeply concerned with how she conducted herself in the field and she frequently mentioned her struggle to process guilt that she experienced about her own privilege. She

became acutely aware of her own privilege when she would take periodic vacations throughout

her 8 month placement to visit sites like Machu Picchu and Arequipa:

> I feel guilty about being able to go to Machu Picchu when only two people out of all
>
> the personnel and all the kids that will come through this house, have ever been or
>
> will ever get to go to Machu Picchu for financial and physical ability reasons. So the
>
> guilt is interesting. What am I going to do about that guilt? I want to see Machu
>
> Picchu. I want to travel and see Arequipa and stuff. But how do I justify that when I
>
> live in a house where most of the kids who live in this house will live in shacks when
>
> they leave. Um, and so kind of that has been the biggest lesson for me. Okay, Nicole,
>
> you feel guilty but what are you going to do about it? (Interview with Nicole, 22;
>
> 01/19/2015)

Nicole's guilt did not make her an apathetic ally by disenabling her with cynicism or self-

consciousness. It motivated her to engage in a process of earnest, and at times painful inquiry,

into her own power and privilege with an end goal of determining how she could make a

difference or impact in her role as a volunteer. While the experience could be uncomfortable and

challenging for her because of the negative emotions that it demanded, this demonstrated

ongoing, continual efforts to process and absorb the experience, in order to make use of the

lessons that she learned about how to support others who lack her agency and mobility.

Through this process of reflection, she came to recognize the limitations of her role as an

ally:

> There is definitely a white savior complex kind of thing. These kids see us come and
>
> go, and get to go out and buy the kind of food that we want, like the education that we
>
> have and the phones and laptops that we have… They're seeing us, because obviously

everyone who can afford a ticket down here has some sort of privilege. And we're the

only sample that they see from the States… so [we're not] giving them a realistic

impression of what the States is like. And that escaping your country doesn't escape

your problems. And that life for an immigrant isn't easy either. But trying to explain

that to them, that these houses you're seeing in the movies aren't what you walk into.

That's been the hardest thing for me. (Interview with Nicole, 22; 01/19/2015)

But in spite of these deep criticisms, she also expressed gratitude; not for her own privilege or

affluence, which she viewed negatively. Rather, she acknowledged that she has gained personal

skills that help her in her role, as a care provider, friend and support system to the children in her

charge. Nicole said that her main takeaway from the experience was working with other

volunteers, and with the nursing staff in the orphanage and learning how they resolved stressful

situations, as well as how they showed compassion and care for the children under their care in

spite of the challenges of the work environment. Nicole shows the willingness to become an ally

is one that requires a personal transformation, certainly, but also a willingness to act in concert

with others, to learn from them and to offer an openness to experience, in order to determine how

to best care for others.

Nicole demonstrated a uniquely strong understanding of solidarity among her peers in the

orphanage. In Cusco, I met with volunteers in one organization where this learning outcome was

considered a specific goal and programmatic outcome among volunteers and community

members alike. This NGO offered what it calls an "Andean Youth Program," wherein up to 20

exceptional high school students from remote communities in and around the Sacred Valley,

were granted full scholarships to live in Cusco and attend one of the three universities there. All

of these students lived in one house in San Jeronimo, a suburb outside Cusco. Four international

volunteers also lived in the same house, where they each took on different roles within the NGO that funds the scholarship program, either doing administrative work, community or donorship outreach, etc. But they also effectively served as resident advisors to the students who lived in the house as well. The volunteers were all 22-23, year old young women, from the UK, Canada and the United States at the time of my visit. Given that the scholarship participants were also youth, ranging in ages 17-25, the volunteers served as peer mentors and friends, while also ensuring that they enforced house and program policy, such as not drinking or doing drugs, attending all classes and performing house chores. All house residents were required to cook dinner for one another on a rotating basis, and unless they had class on a particular evening, all house residents were expected to have dinner together. Ensuring that this socialization took place promoted interaction and integration among the scholarship holders and the volunteers working with them. It also aimed to promote an atmosphere of comfort and closeness, where everyone felt safe and welcome to freely share stories, talk about their studies, ask for help with any difficulties they were experiencing, and share resources with one another.

Coral, working as program manager for about one year, described how a key success of the program came from developing relationships between all program participants; the youth sponsored by the program and the volunteers who worked there. This, however, was in spite of the organization's head office in Canada's mandate for quantifiable deliverables, like students' academic achievements:

Ultimately, the most important thing about this kind of work is developing positive relationships with the peoples that you're working with. But successes like that are intangible. So, for me, an example of an intangible success would be, like, really solid relationships with the students. So, them respecting me and trusting me and seeing me

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as someone who can support them, and who cares about their communities. I think ultimately if I can accomplish that, that would be a huge accomplishment. But that's something that the Canada office can't be like, "Great job, Coral!" They're not here, so they can't see that. And it's not like that's a document I can turn in and get kudos on. That's not the reality.

Coral was forthcoming in the difficulties of achieving these results, which end up taking up much of her time to structure and reinforce through active engagement with the youth. An essential component is creating a comfortable, familiar – even familial – environment for the students:

As far as the students in the house, I have been conducting individual student interviews, which I love, because I got to come up with all the questions on my own. The first part of the interview is just for me to get to know them better. You know, tell me about your family, tell me what you like to do in your freetime, if you could travel anywhere in the world where would you go, what's your favourite food. I just love random stuff like that! [laughs] It's just a good way to break the ice, kind of open up. … and then I also ask them what they like about [the program] and what things they don't like as much. What workshops worked really great and what would they like to see this year? I find that having one on one time is a really important way to make these kinds of relationships. Checking in, on a one on one basis. Like, hey how are you? I know you had a really hard test today. How did that go? Or just asking them what they want. I sort of get the impression that they haven't been asked a lot about what they want from the program…I think they really appreciate being asked their opinion. (Interview with Coral, 23; 03/04/2015)

There is an essential duty to be open and willing to hear the perspectives of all participants, to ensure that they feel heard and recognized. As Coral pointed out, most of these students were unaccustomed to being asked their opinions or to feel like they were able to take control over decision-making in their own lives. She identified that it was her role as their mentor and ally to facilitate this empowerment; to make them feel like they are able to participate actively in shaping their own lives.

> Nevertheless, Coral acknowledges how problematic her role in this capacity remains: This is an internal conflict I deal with everyday. Why do I get to be here? I mean, even just in terms of the students in my program. They're age 17-25. I'm 23! Why is that a thing? Why is that okay? Why is that effective? I think a lot of it has to do with privilege. I was lucky to grow up in an area where I was educated well, and I had the chance to travel here with funding. I had the time to dedicate to it. It was something that based on what I was studying was something that was valued. I've also had the luxury of being involved in leadership programming, personal development programming. So privilege definitely plays into it. I think ideally if you're going to be in this position, you have to be hyper-aware of what's going on. I have to be aware and understand the phenomena that are going on here, and why it is that I'm able to be here and work in this position. … As much as I can hope to teach, I can also be taught so much. From the students and from the communities. As much as I'm here facilitating this program, there is still so much listening that needs to be done. I feel a lot of pressure to execute a successful, high quality, responsible program. (Interview with Coral, 23; 03/04/2015)

Coral, and the volunteers of her organization, have acknowledged the imperfections of volunteer practice; that the kind of relationships that they feel best serves the young students in their program are not necessarily empirically observable or measurable goals of the donor agency. Coral's own role in the organization was imbued with power, and participants who are her peers, or elders, deferred to her as a leader due to her class, race-based and hemispheric privilege. Rather than deny or ignore this power relation, she sought to use her role to amplify the voices of others who looked up to her, by encouraging them to speak up about their individual goals and desires.

By encouraging a platform where the youth in her program could freely express themselves on these themes, she encouraged their transformation, and not just that of the international volunteers. She recognized that there remained contradictions in her approach:

One of our big things is cultural preservation. But how can you really show [as an outsider] that that's a value of yours? Learn the language! Learn about the textiles, what the different symbols are. Like, show that as someone that's not from that culture, that you still care about that culture and you think it's important. Historically here there has been a lot of devaluing of that culture and that language. Obviously. But it's devalued in some ways and put on a pedestal in other ways. Like Machu Picchu. But I think that paradox is somewhat recent. Like just since the tourist boom. But before that I think it was more devalued and there has been a lot of discrimination here around Indigenous culture, language, way of life, Indigenous beliefs. (Interview with Coral, 23; 03/04/2015)

Upon refection on her own role in Cusco, Coral realized that as an ally, she must take an interest in all aspects of the youths' lives and lifestyles. This means, active efforts to learn the Quechua

culture, by attempting to learn the language and traditions, and celebrating these as valuable

achievements that deserve to be continued. She identified the problematic impact that tourism –

including her own – has on Quechua culture; when, for example, the visual beauty and historical

significance of Machu Picchu are commodified and sold as an attraction to eager tourists, while

the ongoing cultural practices and livelihoods of Andean Indigenous peoples are largely

repressed or ignored. By understanding that her own presence in Cusco implicates her in this

struggle, Coral remembered the historical context of colonialism that allowed her to be here. She

used her knowledge and awareness to push back against the "paradox" that glorifies

commercially viable aspects of Quechua culture and devalues the lived experiences of Quechua

speaking people.

Conclusion

Although they prove mostly exceptional, Rehana, Nicole and Coral each demonstrate the

potential virtues of international volunteerism, when the experience serves to cultivate a sense of

critical consciousness that leads to ongoing political engagement and participation in

relationships that promote the empowerment of others. These young women were able to

recognize systems of oppression and reflect critically on their own roles within these systems in

order to find ways to use their power to the benefit of the communities that they met while

volunteering. They sought to use critical dialogue as a tool to empower and amplify the voices of

others and acted as allies, or sources of support and strength, to work for collective as opposed to

individual transformations within the communities.

More often, volunteers tended to arrive in the field expecting a transformative experience

that would cater to their own particular interests. Social transformation was rather implicit,

expected to naturally occur within the community, but volunteers rarely considered themselves

as potential allies or support systems to facilitate this change by forming meaningful, trust-based relationships with community members, getting to know them, and working to amplify their voices and help facilitate their own empowerment to address issues facing their communities. Often volunteers struggled to bond with community members or over-determined polite, passing acquaintanceships for deep and meaningful friendships.

Volunteer experiences offer largely unrealized potential benefits for all parties. When personal growth stands in for, and not alongside or within social change agendas, it ultimately undermines the ambitions of volunteer-related activities. Throughout this chapter I have attempted to tread carefully; to criticize this pattern of behavior while also locating its origin. In the following conclusion, I will gesture towards possible paths towards reconciling the disjuncture between volunteer expectation and programmatic outcomes.

Chapter 5: Conclusion: "It's Not About Me… But It Kind Of Is"

Some studies celebrate the power and potential of international volunteers who travel abroad to work in communities in the Global South during gap years, semester breaks or summer vacations. They depict these excursions as entirely, unproblematically good works that young people might undertake. It is thought to be good work, in the sense that it connotes altruistic behavior on the part of these youth, exhibiting strong ethics and morality oriented in caring for others. And it is also good work as it is thought to be an effective or useful strategy to tackle global issues like poverty. These studies declare that volunteers promote capacity development in communities and among partner organizations in the Global South and engage the public back home in issues related to international development (Universalia et al., 2005), while also instilling in volunteers the necessary perspective and skillset to participate as active citizens upon return to their own communities (Kelly & Case, 2007). Volunteers themselves report dramatic changes in their own lives that they attribute to their volunteer experiences. In the WYSE Work and Volunteer Abroad's survey of 569 international youth volunteers, a staggering 99.46% of respondents answered "Yes" to the question "On the whole would you say that your volunteering experience was positive for yourself? (2015)" 80.72% of these same volunteers also answered "yes" to the question "Do you feel your host family, host organization, or friends in the host country also benefitted from your contribution as a volunteer?"

This dissertation takes great issue with these commonplace claims of international volunteerism, arguing that the motivations and experiences of these volunteers require a sober second look. With Peru as a case study, it demonstrates that international volunteerism exemplifies the extractive ontology through which the Global North views the South; primarily, as a site that is rich in resources but poor in finances, and as such, as a site that is rife with

potential for investment. Since its colonization in the 16th century, Peru has been subject to foreign interventions that sought to profit from its minerals and enforce a European, Christian, Enlightened, modern and/or neoliberal paradigm in its wake. These impulses remain prevalent today among nation states like Canada, whose investments in Peru's extractive industries are enormously profitable but are commonly described through a discourse of development. They are similarly popular with young citizens of these countries, who look to volunteer experiences within Peru as opportunities to enrich their lives; not through wealth, but rather through the cosmopolitical experiences of encountering different people, cultures and lifestyles that will in some way provoke a personally empowering transformation for the volunteer.

As the popularity of the practice has proliferated, volunteer recruitment strategies have grown increasingly complex and sophisticated, spanning the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Recruiters structure volunteers' expectations of their experiences through their marketing practices. They allow hyper-customizable experiences in the field to accommodate volunteers' time frames, interests and wishes. They also rely on images and discourses that posit volunteers as active, benevolent saviors and the citizens of developing countries, including Indigenous peoples in particular, as passive, infantile or otherwise incapable of taking care of themselves and their communities. These recruitment practices perpetuate differences between volunteers and their hosts, rather than structuring opportunities for meaningful cultural exchange and collaboration, and they also accommodate volunteers' needs over those of the host community. The result is a strange, often unrecognized irony, wherein volunteers become the beneficiaries of their service, rather than the disadvantaged communities that host them and aim to receive their assistance.

As a result, volunteers describe their experiences in terms of personal transformations, which are measured by volunteers' feelings and self-reflections. More often than not, the social transformation of the community is implied or inferred to have taken place as well, but the primary result is often framed as within the volunteer's life rather than the community. Volunteers' struggles to mature, grow or transform in some way are rarely connected to the broader, ongoing struggles of the communities where they work. Some volunteers complained of the difficulties that they faced in developing meaningful relationships with the communities where they were stationed, while others seemed to place undue emphasis on casual acquaintanceships. In either case, these volunteers failed to provide support or counsel to their hosts, the community members. They focused instead on how the transformative experience of traveling and working abroad affected their own lives.

This is a missed opportunity for volunteers and their hosts to practice transnational, or intercultural solidarity. In other words, volunteers rarely demonstrated an ability to critically reflect on their own privilege. The nature of their work tended to be superficial in impact, and did not address issues or broader social struggle or even meaningful learning outcomes. A more desirable approach would have been for volunteers to support community members in expressing their own needs and desires, and finding ways to address social issues through collective action.

This project joins an emerging backlash against the presumed benefits of international volunteerism among concerned activists and academics in the Global North. Online communities have mocked volunteers without mercy for their decision to volunteer abroad. I find it important to conclude by pointing out that while the industry continues to expand annually, and more and more young people are participating in these kinds of projects, their actions are also met with increasing resistance and frustration from other critical young people.

As is often the case among youth-lead protest, many responses to the practice can be found in online communities and social media platforms. One Tumblr account, Humanitarians of Tinder (2017) aggregates screen captures of images from the popular dating app, Tinder, where users have posted photos of themselves taken while presumably on volunteer tourism trips (see Figure 16). These staged photo ops tend to replicate the images that volunteers encounter in recruitment media; the volunteer/prospective date on Humanitarians of Tinder postures for the camera, while embracing a young, racialized child. Or perhaps, the volunteer stands before a classroom full of these children, who look to them eagerly and hopefully as they teach a lesson, smile and laugh, or somehow otherwise engage with the class.

The accumulation of these images illustrates a powerful counter-argument to the benefits of international volunteerism that aligns with many of the points that I have made throughout this dissertation; that ultimately, the volunteer performs acts of solidarity or humanitarian aid that may or may not have positive impacts upon the community, but will almost certainly be referenced or deployed in some way to elevate the status of the volunteer. That these images are consciously and conspicuously repurposed by volunteers on a dating app, presumably to signify their desirability as a partner, indicates the potentially superficial desires of volunteers; to be recognized as a humanitarian by a Tinder user is of equal or perhaps even more importance than actually engaging in meaningful humanitarian activity itself.

Another social media account, Barbie Savior, riffs on the same theme, by staging a series of photos depicting typical volunteer recruitment images wherein the popular children's toy, the Barbie doll, is photoshopped into the image as a plastic proxy for the volunteer (see Figure 17). In different images, Volunteer Barbie hugs groups of children (also photoshopped dolls), appropriates ritualistic tribal dances or poses with wild animals. With over 122,000 Instagram
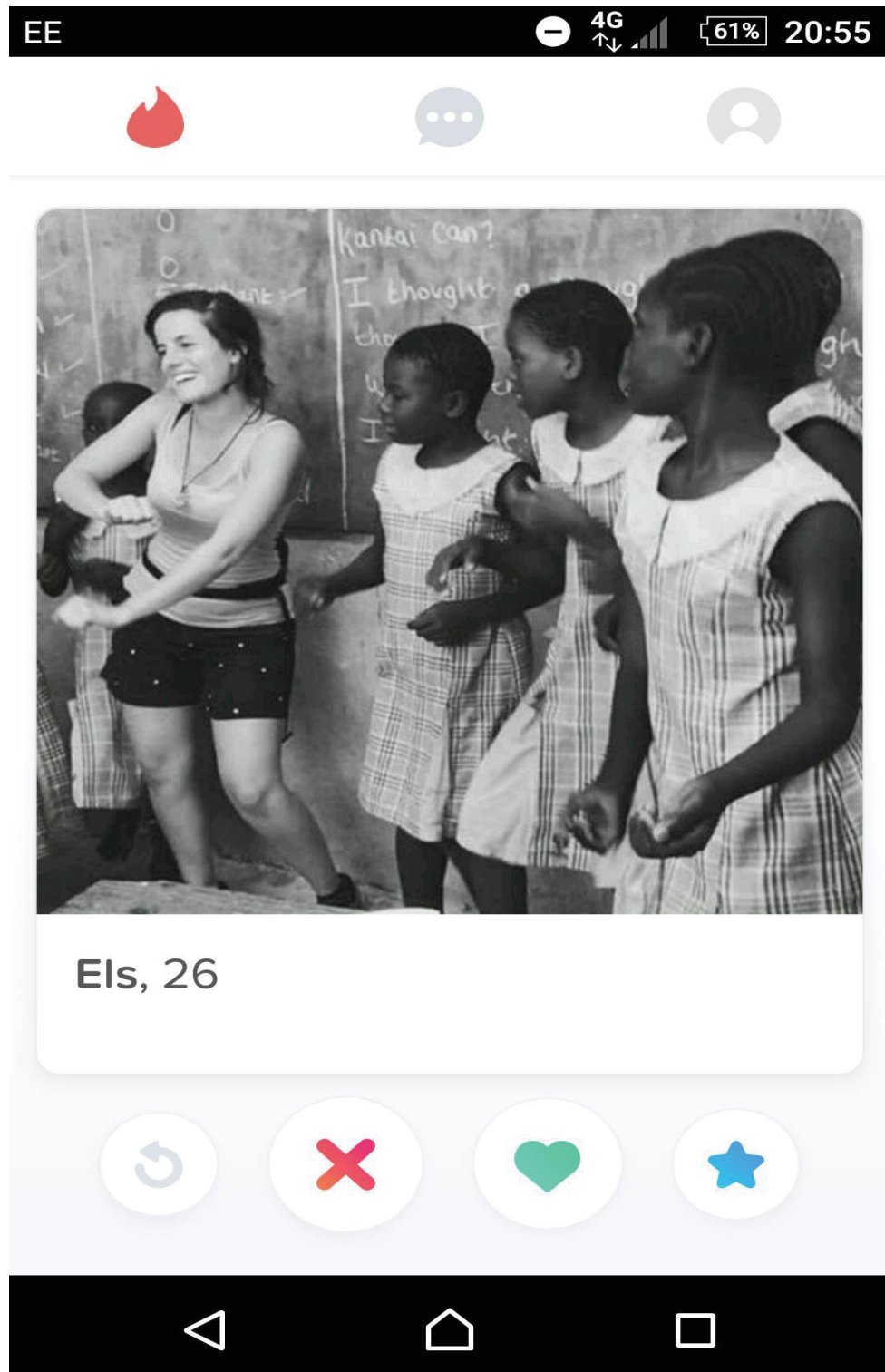
Figure 16. Screencapture taken from Humanitarians of Tinder's blog,
www.humanitariansoftinder.com. Retrieved 05/13/2017.

Figure 17. Image taken from Barbie Savior's blog, http://www.barbiesavior.com. Retrieved 05/13/2017.

followers, Barbie Savior reaches a wide audience through the use of biting sarcasm. The profile's description reads: "Barbie Savior Jesus. Adventures. Africa. Two words. One love. Babies. Beauty. Not qualified. Called. 20 years young. It's not about me… but it kind of is" (*Barbie Savior*, 2017). Using each of these words or phrases to evoke qualities or descriptions of volunteer experiences, the caption concludes by driving home its message that "It's not about me… but it kind of is"; that in the end, international volunteers' intentions might actually be narcissistic, self-involved and callous, even though they are never recognized as such by the volunteer.

Inserting Barbie into classic volunteer images acts as a kind of detournement that forces the viewer to reflect upon the artificial and superficial traits of volunteer experiences. Accompanying the Instagram account is a recently launched website, Barbiesavior.com that aims to act as a resource or tool for young people who are concerned about international volunteer behavior. The site offers the perspective of the Instagram's co-founders who describe themselves as "cynical and jaded" former volunteers, who hoped to use the platform as "a place where we can pose questions, promote conversation, and try to learn together how to best *do better*" (*Barbie Savior*, 2017). The site links to other critical blogs and international aid organizations for more information, and is in the process of developing a handbook called "Don't Be a B" to help educate the site's visitors about the problematic aspects of international volunteerism. This is in the same vein as End Humanitarian Douchery, another site formed by critical former-volunteers, who wish to challenge young people to not act like "a douche" in their overseas activity.

Each of these resources use strategies of humor where jokes are cracked at the expense of the volunteers. It is funny and cathartic to laugh at these misguided, young people for their total lack of self-awareness and for so completely failing to recognize how seemingly simple and selfish they are. The images and quips revel cleverly in exposing the behavior and attitudes of a privileged, entitled class. In spite of their educations, advantages and worldliness, they still demonstrate a misguided lack of connection with the lives of the less fortunate, which is in direct contrast to their presumed agendas of living and working among people throughout the Global South.

While I appreciate a good joke and I recognize the important agendas of these interventions, my dissertation takes a somewhat different approach. Throughout my work on this project, I have felt that my task and challenge has been to strike a balance in my treatment of

these experiences, and in how I describe the volunteers who so willingly participated in this study. On the one hand, I share with Humanitarians of Tinder and Barbie Savior several criticisms and concerns about the striking paradoxes of international volunteer practice. Most urgently, I worry that volunteers appear to consistently misrecognize their own desires to become a certain kind of person or citizen – whether they describe this as compassionate, competent or courageous – as the desire or action plan to provide support or care for communities that they identify as vulnerable. Their assumptions borrow from discourses of solidarity, grassroots organizing and community-oriented development, but ultimately reflect a neoliberal worldview that prioritizes individual empowerment, personal achievements and one's own emotional wellbeing over the needs of entire communities.

At the same time, I have struggled to avoid portraying the volunteers that I interviewed unfairly, as either simple-minded or mean-spirited. Although their actions and intentions undoubtedly reflect a troubling trend of prioritizing their own needs over those of the community hosting them, I remain somewhat sympathetic to their cause. In spite of my many critiques, these young people tended to demonstrate positive qualities. They were motivated, hard working and genuinely eager to impact the world in a positive way, even if this way was in my view, misguided. Rarely did I meet a young person who I would describe as a snob, brat or in anyway unkind. The conflation of their own agendas with those of developing communities is problematic but not indicative of any ill will to capitalize from the pain or poverty of others.

Rather, this demonstrates a failure on the part of multiple institutions like colleges and universities, the media or the international not-for-profit industrial complex to educate and inform these young people how to become responsible citizens. It is not that they do not care about engaging in solidarity with vulnerable others. More accurately, they do not know *how* to

be in solidarity with other because they have never been taught. To blame young volunteers in the process of developing their political consciousness, for the failures of the neoliberal state to provide the massive care and attention required to address the ongoing historical injustices of colonialism, misses the same point that volunteers never quite came to understand. Development has never been about "me" or "you." It has always been about the promotion of equality and justice.

I have strived to shed light on the complexity and difficulty of transnational movements, which in the iteration of international volunteerism, risk replicating colonial power structures as much as reconciling them. It is my great hope that this research will serve as a useful reflection for future scholars who are concerned with understanding the motivations and desired outcomes of international volunteers, and who aspire towards integrating practices that build transnational solidarity into their own research and teaching practices. This study stops short of fully incorporating the perspectives and desires of the Peruvian communities that hosted the volunteers that were under study. This is an unfortunate, and all too common oversight in research concerned with international volunteers, and one that should be reconciled in future scholarship. I envision that future research will adopt a collaborative approach that incorporates distinct voices from host communities as well as from institutions in the Global North that commonly send young people on these experiences.

As I argued in Chapter 4, the development of a critical consciousness requires the recognition that our work is best performed collectively, rather than on one's own. This is the case in critical scholarship as well as community development projects. Through such collaboration, perhaps a social justice oriented volunteer curriculum can be established as a template for future volunteers' experience. This tool can be used by theorists as well as

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practitioners including guidance counselors, professors and volunteer coordinators representing NGOs to recruit and support volunteers by establishing from the outset a set of expectations that structure the experience in such a way that celebrates collective empowerment rather than individual transformation.

I have argued that desires for pleasure and personal growth overwhelm the volunteer experience and deprioritize important outcomes like the development of solidarity, critical consciousness and the willingness to work collectively or empower community members. Further inquiry might attempt to understand the role of emotions and personal transformation within the volunteer context, and account for how, and in what ways, the desire for positive feelings associated with personal transformation might be mobilized towards creating a greater desire among young people for collective action, intercultural communication and transnational solidarity. In other words, how might this energy be channeled towards the collective good rather than an individual experience? This line of questioning also leads to a need for further research into the phenomenon of lifestyle solidarity in a neoliberal, post-humanitarian world. How will this mode of individually-driven relationality impact long term trends in care provision to vulnerable populations from the Global North to the Global South? Moreover, how will this impulse impact young people as they continue to mature, enter the workforce, form personal, intimate relationships and eventually, become policy leaders and decision-makers in governments of all levels? I would like to think that although they face unprecedented challenges at a global level, these young people are also unprecedentedly prepared to address them.

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Appendix 1

McGill

Research Ethics Board I
Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans

REB File #: 213-1214

Project Title: Recruitment and training practices of international volunteerism organizations based in Peru

Principal Investigator: Nathaniel Laywine   **Status:** PhD Student

Department: Art History & Communication Studies   **Supervisor:** Prof. Carrie Rentschler

Funding Agency/Title: McGill University - Doctoral Fellowship; Institute for the Study of International Development - Research to Practice Fellowship; SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship; McGill University - Arts Graduate Student Travel Fund; Media@McGill Continuing Doctoral Student Fellowship

Approval Period: December 17, 2014 – December 16, 2015

The REB-I reviewed and approved this project by delegated review in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans.

Deanna Collin
Ethics Review Administrator, REB I & II

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* All research involving human participants requires review on an annual basis. A Request for Renewal form should be submitted 2-3 weeks before the above expiry date.
* When a project has been completed or terminated a Study Closure form must be submitted.
* Should any modification or other unanticipated development occur before the next required review, the REB must be informed and any modification can't be initiated until approval is received.

Appendix 2

Interview Questions List: Volunteers

RECRUITMENT

1. When did you first decide to volunteer internationally?

2. How did you hear about the organization that you are currently working with?

3. What made you choose this organization? What did you like about it?

4. What made you choose to work in Lima/Peru?

5. Did you volunteer with any organization in your home country? What kind of volunteer activity did you participate in?

6. Do any (or many) of your friends volunteer internationally? Where were their placements and what did they do?

TRAINING

1. How did you prepare to leave? What kinds of things did you need to do to get ready?

2. Did you do any independent research? (Books, blogs, wikipedia, travel guides, etc)

3. What guidance did the organization give you to prepare for leaving? (Info packages, web sites, fund-raising tips etc) Did you find it helpful?

4. Were there any pre-departure orientation sessions?
      If yes, where/when/how many?
      What was the major takeaway from them?
      Have you applied it?

5. What happened when you arrived in Peru? How did you adjust and how did the organization help?

6. What training techniques were most affective and least affective in helping you adjust to living in Peru?

7. How did you get trained to do your assigned volunteer jobs?

ON THE JOB

1. What are your specific job duties?

2. How do you spend most of your time at work?

3. What are the hours like?

4. Who are your coworkers?

5. Who are your supervisors?

6. What have you learned from your work experience?

7. Is the work you do fulfilling?

8. On a scale of 1 to 10, how valuable would you rank your contribution to the organization/community.

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how valuable was the experience that you have gained personally from your work.

10. Name a time that you received either positive or negative feedback while on the job. How was it communicated to you? And by whom?

LEISURE

1. What do you do when you're not at work? How do you spend your time?

2. Do you have friends here? Are they new friends or people that you knew before you left?

3. Tell me what you like about your friends here.

4. What do you do for fun together?

5. How much time do you spend together in a day/week/month?

6. Tell me about a time that they made you feel welcome or included or just glad to be here?

7. Name a time that there was a miscommunication — either language or culturally based, or you actually didn't get along with someone. How did you resolve it? Were you able to resolve it?

8. Will part of your trip to Peru include recreational travel outside of your volunteer experience?

9. Are you having fun?

Appendix 3

<u>Interview Questions List: Staff & Volunteer Coordinators</u>

GENERAL

1. How is your organization structured? Are there different departments in your organization? How many employees?

2. What sort of mandate does your organization have?

3. What sorts of backgrounds do you and your staff have?

4. What are your specific job duties?

5. How many volunteers (approximately) does your organization host at once?

6. How is your organization funded?

7. What sort of networks are in place for volunteers upon their arrival in Peru? How are these developed or maintained?

8. What are your organization's goals or future plans for growth or development?

9. How much do volunteers contribute to the overall functioning of your organization? In other words – how essential are they to your operations?

10. How did you first come to be involved with your organization?

RECRUITMENT

1. Describe the various recruitment strategies that your organization uses to attract prospective volunteers.

2. What is the most effective strategy or tactic? (i.e. web-based marketing, tradeshows, word of mouth?)

3. What sort of information is most essential to communicate to prospective volunteers about their work with your organization?

4. What is the selection process like when choosing your volunteers?

5. What would an ideal candidate for a volunteer position look like? What sort of qualities do they possess? (Experience or skills)

6. How are "alumni relations"maintained – In other words, do you keep in correspondence with past volunteers and do they continue working alongside your organization in any capacity? If so, then in what ways?

7. Do you ever have return volunteers?

TRAINING

1. Describe the training process you offer your volunteers, if any. What topics are covered, how many volunteers participate in one session and what are the desired learning outcomes?

2. Who leads or facilitates volunteer training? How are they themselves trained?

3. What sort of pedagogical style is employed? What sort of exercises are used in the training program?

4. Is there any discussion of solidarity or anti-oppressive practice in training?

EVALUATION

1. What are the methods or strategies that you have in place for evaluated project outcomes?
   a. For community members
   b. For your organization
   c. For volunteers themselves

2. How often are evaluations done for:
   a. Your organization
   b. Your volunteers

3. What criteria do you use to consider a successful project outcome or volunteer placement?

4. What sort of feedback is communicated to your volunteers, communities, donors or other stakeholders? How is it disseminated?