

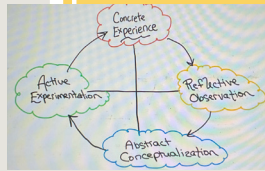


The Great Biological Exchange

maybe stinks best sugar

- Sometimes referred to as the "Columbian Exchange" (Alfred Crosby, historian)
- Movement of flora, fauna, and diseases across the Atlantic
- European impressions of wildlife in the Americas; introduction of European livestock

Small animals like live here have been and are in infinite except for laws
 no large predators in the Americas
 Diseases can clear the way for new species



CERTIFICATE IN INTERNATIONAL LEARNING (CIL) AT UALBERTA

CAPSTONE PROJECT
2019 - 2023

by Michelle Cortines



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CULTURE

Culture is “the learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviours of a community of interacting people”

– Bennett, 2014

My goal is to use this booklet as a tool to help me document and process my experiences with the CIL program. Years from now I want to look back at this booklet and see the challenges I faced, what my honest reactions were, and what I learned from them. I know that I did not overcome every barrier that I faced, but that is life. You don't win every battle, however, I hope that I have learned something from them. Therefore, honesty and vulnerability are key in this reflection and learning process.

INTRODUCTION

My name is Michelle Cortines. I am proud to say that I will be celebrating my graduation from the Bachelor of Design program at the University of Alberta (UAlberta) his coming June 2023!

At the age of 21 I moved away from Calgary, my family, friends, and community to pursue design. Because I did not come to UAlberta straight out of high school, most of my peers had already graduated from postsecondary just as I was starting. I quickly learned that culture shock can happen anywhere at any time. I struggled with class schedules, and project deadlines, and found it difficult to make friends with classmates that were years younger than me. I had no family up here and didn't know anyone that could show me around the city. I was alone. It was scary but it was also an opportunity to grow to be comfortable with the uncomfortable. To reach out and connect with new people. In that sense I was excited to live on my own, find my independence, and cultivate a new community.

I started my CIL journey in my second semester in the winter of 2019. The funny thing is I did this without knowing it. As a matter of fact, I did not know about the CIL until the winter semester of 2022. I was introduced to the program by a classmate, and soon learned that I had a big chunk of the CIL course requirements met already. Additionally, I was about to go on a Study-abroad program to Berlin for the spring and summer, meeting the Intercultural Experience portion of the certificate. In my last semester, I worked hard to meet the remaining requirements.

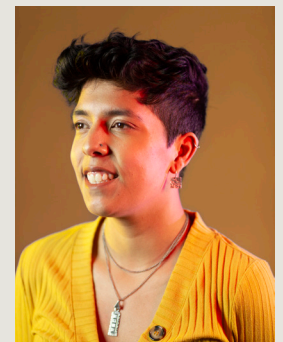
One card photo submission
2018



My first summer in Edmonton,
AB 2019
Photo: Sama Ahmed



Grad show head shot 2022
Photo: Manpreet Singh



CIL APPROVED COURSES

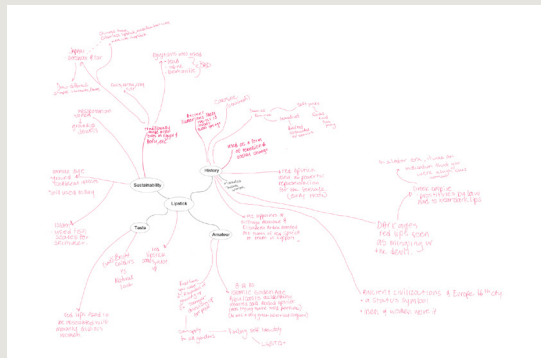
Over the 4.5 years at UAlberta I have taken 8 CIL approved course, but the following 3 really stand out from the rest! (See page 21 for list of courses).

HADVC 209 - History of Modern Design

This history course was one of the first full-time online classes I had to take. I am grateful to have had Dr. Banafsheh Mohammadi as my professor. She had been teaching this course several times before, so the content was well polished and curated, centred on Design history.

The Concept of Utopia by Fátima Vieira was one of the class readings. I recall this class discussion very well, with myself expressing my theory that there is no such thing as Utopia – a perfect place – because of the wide variety of cultures, mentalities, experiences, and people that live on this planet. I think regarding culture understanding this lesson pointed out that my perception of “perfection” or even “normality” isn’t always what is perfect or normal to others. It focuses on the reality that we are all a little different from one another and there is nothing wrong with that.

Vieira, F. (2010) “The concept of utopia,” *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, pp. 3 – 27. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ccl9780521886659.001>.

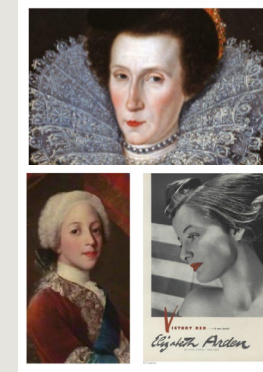


HADVC 209 midterm team project: exploring TASTE Mid Map and Title page



Slides from midterm project

Theoretical Angle Taste



On the same note of coexisting with differences, my mid-term group project explored how Taste – in fashion, aesthetics, live style, quality standard, entertainment, and more – can vary from person to person. We focused on the idea of how society has influenced the use of lipstick. The origins of this beauty product can be traced to the Islamic Golden Age (8-12 BD), the Greek Empire, the Dark Ages, and 16th century in Europe. Used by elite members of society, both male and female, as a symbol of power and wealth. In more current times within Western countries lipstick has been sexualized and associated with femininity. However, in other parts of the world, like in South Korea, pop stars embrace lipstick no matter their gender. This culture difference is interesting and gives me hope that Western culture will continue to develop and embrace this tool that is used for self expression.

Taste in Correlation with Identity

- Lipstick through the centuries has come to define one's identity for both men and women
- Through the lens of taste it challenges the concept of self identity.
 - Lipstick is a means of presenting oneself and embodying our perceived identity



Taste in Correlation with Gender

"From the past to the present, the little tube of colour, oil and wax has been scorned, shunned and embraced." (Ogilvie).

Although this may be true for women, we challenge the extent of this idea, as it is reverted for men.

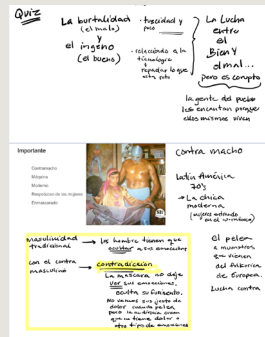
"Anybody who can step out of the house with a pair of heels and some lipstick on their lips is my hero." (Rupaul).



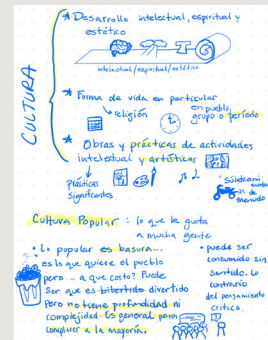
SPAN 333 - Reading Popular Culture

Spanish 333 with Professor Laura Velazquez was one of the most rewarding language courses I have taken. As a Mexican Canadian I grew up learning about Mexican history and culture through the lens of my parents' eyes. On top of strengthening my Spanish vocabulary, grammatical structure, and communication skills my knowledge I learned about cultures of Spanish speaking countries. This class helped me expand my understand of Latin culture, beyond the basic knowledge I gain through my formal education.*

We explored a familiar topic, the toxic masculinity that is projected onto Mexican boys and men and how it affects communities, Machismo. A mentality that clashes with thriving modern women and members of queer communities. What I didn't know was that in the Golden Age of Cinema in Mexico a contra-macho was being introduced with the character of El Santo el Enmascarado de Plata (El Santo the mask man of silver). This idea of a modern man in the 1960's promoted a man who respected women, used technology, science, and their intellect to their advantage, and has progressive mentality. The biggest downfall, however, is the mask this hero wears. The mask is meant to hide his emotions and suffering. Making it harder for him to reach out for help and



SPAN 333 notes: Definition of Pop Culture



*Referring to "formal education" as described by the Intercultural Relations Training, what was taught to us as normal by our parents/role models.

**Machismo can be found beyond Mexican borders.

Movie seen during SPAN 333 poster: *El Santo Vs the Vampire Women*
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0055408/>

SPAN 333 notes: The pros and cons of the contra-macho

Final creative essay Drag King Workshop poster



be vulnerable. Suggesting that emotions, seen as a feminine trade, actively threatens the masculinity of a man. This is a social concept that men all over the world are challenged with. I don't believe this is true. Vulnerability is a strength!

In my final essay, I introduced a character that I believe can help progress the development of an anti-machismo man. The Drag King. As a drag king myself, I merge my intersectionalities of being a queer Latin female performer to my advantage to challenge the mentalities of more conservative members of the Latin community. Drag kings are respectful, confident, beautiful, comedic, serious, artistic, ingenious, and modern. But most importantly, they are expressive. Their emotions are not hidden but used to connect with an audience.

HIST 241 - Colonial Latin America

This is the only history course I took that wasn't aligned with my design program. Therefore, I am grateful to the CIL program for pushing me to take this course in my last semester of my degree. Before the class took place, I had a strong interest in Latin history, but the knowledge that I gained from Professor Kristen Burton was beyond my expectations.

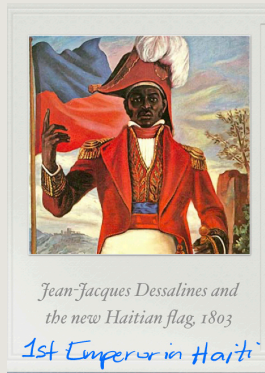
The course starts off with a brief introduction to the indigenous communities that lived in the central and south part of the Americas, before colonization. This included the Olmecs, the Maya, the Aztec, and the Inca people, among others. I was thrilled to know more about Latin indigenous cultures. The course took an emotional turn when we started studying the late 14th century – 1492 was the year the conquistadors landed.

Some of the most impactful information I took away was the history of the Caribbean islands. The forced migration of Black enslaved people

Inca Quipu
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quipu#/media/File:Inca_Quipu.jpg



HIST 241 Dr. Burton's slides:
Jean-Jacques Dessalines



that merged with the indigenous communities and catholic colonizers resulted in a mixture of religious beliefs and cultures. There is no doubt that racism lives and breathes in Latin America and the Caribbean, but I feel more aware of points in history that highlight how this came to be. On that same note, there are moments of bravery and determination that must be admired. Learning about Haiti's independence battles against the French, the British, and the Spanish were eye opening. The strategic decision to literally burn out the enemy led to victory, but at a significant cost. The island's resources were destroyed along with any possible trade relations with European influencers. A part of history, that I believe, effects Haiti's economic growth to this day.

This critical knowledge is important to know in the current battle against racism. That is why I value this course so much and it encourages me to continue learning more about devastating but essential history.

MY TAKE AWAYS

- Society tends to pigeon hold people, not allowing them to grow into the person they are meant to be. The "other" must continue to be authentically themselves until the rest of the world catches up. Just like lipstick.
- I have a new perspective on the power my drag king performance can have. Perhaps one day the Drag King will be seen as an emotionally packed allegory.
- Racism is deeply root in history. To fight it we must educate ourselves in the unfair treatment Black people continue to face. As a brown Latina woman, I must understand my privilege and continue to learn. Beyond that implementation is key!

MY TRIP TO BERLIN, GERMANY

In May of 2022 I flew out to Germany to be part of UAlberta's Berlin E3 study abroad program. I stayed over seas until August 2022!

The Flight

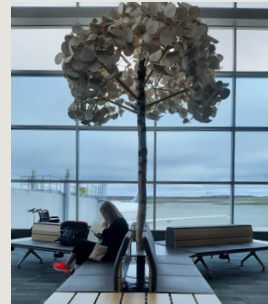
The flight itself was chaotic. I was travelling with my girlfriend, who would be accompanying me for the trip. It was devastating to find out that we were being declined boarding passes from an airline worker at 4 in the morning in the Calgary airport. Our flight to Germany had a few layovers, one of them being in Seattle, USA. At this time, the United States of America was not allowing people into the country without a negative PCR COVID test, which we did not have, thinking that our proof of vaccination was enough..

After talking to German customer services over the phone and running around the airport trying to figure out a way to make our flight, it was time to admit defeat. There was no other option but to rebook the flights to Berlin. An expensive mistake, but a live lesson about preparation.

The good thing that came out of this situation was that we ended up having a 16-hour layover in Halifax. We explored the downtown area and fell in love with all the queer representation that was instantly seen the moment we left the airport. We even ended up making a few friends along the way!

Lower-water in Halifax, NS





Highlights of moments in Halifax, NS

E3 Program

The original plan was for me to spend 4 months in Germany studying its language, participating in a design internship, and taking a design course that would contribute to my design credits for my degree. Well, 2 out of 3 isn't bad right?

My language course, German 100, was wonderful, with only 22 days for classes to try to learn the basics! Yes, I struggled with the pronunciation and the comprehension in general, but I enjoy learning this Germanic dialect. I had two teachers that would alternate throughout the week. I surprised myself by getting an A in the class. I wasn't expecting to do well, but I had an open mind and tried my best. I think my teachers saw and appreciated that.

After the course was done, I found myself trying to apply what I had learned. Mostly ordering drinks and meals in German. However, in Berlin, most people speak English. And although it was a blessing to ask for directions in English, I would start a conversation with a stranger with "Entschuldigung, kann ich Ihnen eine Frage? Sprechen Sie Englisch?" (Excuse me, can I ask you a question? Do you speak English?).

I truly believe that language is one of the strongest ways for an outsider to learn about a new culture. Not to mention, some jokes are funnier in this original language.

German 101 script for verbal presentation in front of the Berliner Dom (picture on the top right) Highlights of moments in Germany

Themen und Orte in Berlin: Berliner Dom

Michelle Cortines

Hallo, mein Name ist Michelle und das ist dem Berliner Dom. Der Berliner Dom ist eine evangelische Kirche und Grab von Königen auf der Museumsinsel im Lustgarten.

Er ist 117 Jahre alt. Wilhelm der II. (Zweite) hat den Dom gebaut von 1894 bis 1905. Er ist eine Begräbnisstätte der Hohenzollern-Dynastie.

Die Kuppel ist 98 Meter hoch und Sie können es von verschiedenen Orten in der Stadt aus sehen. Es ist sehr groß. Das Design mischt Barock- und Renaissance-Architektur. Die Kuppel ist grün und gold. Das Material ist meist Stein.

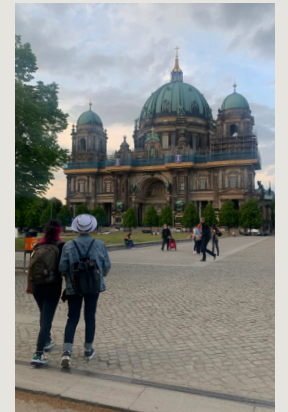
Die Menschen können hier kostenlos Gottesdienste besuchen. Aber Gebäudeführungen kosten 7 Euro. Die Kathedrale ist täglich von 9 bis 20 Uhr geöffnet.

Interessante Tatsache: Die Kathedrale war früher größer, aber der Nordflügel wurde 1975 abgerissen.

Das ende. Danke schön!

Resources:

- https://www.berlinerdom.de/translate.google?_x_v_strecke_x_v_linen&_x_fr_hin&_x_fr_globe
- https://www.berlinerdom.de/translate.google/besuchen-wissen/ueber-den-dom/architektur?_x_v_strecke_x_v_linen&_x_fr_hin&_x_fr_globe





THE BEST PART ABOUT BERLIN?

- The vegan and vegetarian options
- Thai Market – best food!
- The transits system – long rides, but efficient!
- The landscape – wind turbines in the countryside
- The People! Shout out to my Airbnb hosts Daniel, Adriana, and Milena!

Myself, Maddie, and Milena!



Myself, Maddie, the Consult of Mexico in Germany: Cecilia, and April



My DES 538 class encouraged us to explore Berlin and its people through the lens of Critical Design. We were tasked to look at the city from an outsider's perspective and point out the culture difference. Then to analyze and search for problems that could be solved with human interventions.

I focused my project on the unhoused population. Posing the question "WER IST IHR GELD WERT?" (Who is worthy of your money?). The purpose of my project was to encourage people to contemplate their behaviour when a person on the street asks them for money. To challenge that individualistic mindset. The outcome of my project was interesting. People did not engage with my intervention, but I would still categorise this project a successful-failure. An opportunity to redefine the solution and watch for results once more. It is one of the fun parts of being a designer.

Due to complications with my visa, admin support, design studios effected by COVID, and lack of action from my part, I was not able to find an internship in time for June and July. This was a huge let down, as I was looking forward to a

Highlights of moments in Prague, London, and Frome



mentorship opportunity in a country that is well known for its ingenious design reputations.

However, this interaction to my plan brought the opportunity to travel. I had never been to Europe and on this trip I got to visit Frankfurt, Prague, Venezia, Verona, Edinburgh, Frome, Bath, and London. I got to experience more places, food, and cultures than what I expected.



WHAT SURPRISED ME

What surprised me about this trip is that I would have never considered Germany as a place where I can settle in and pursue a career in design. But after visiting a film museum in Potsdam and learning about Babelsberg Film Studios I can picture myself creating a life there. A bit crazy and random, but not unobtainable.

INTERCULTURAL TRAINING

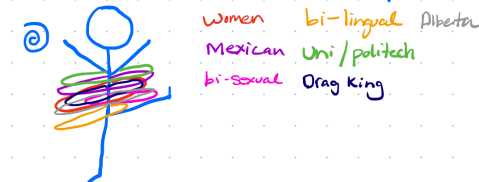
This hybrid training course was one of my favourite parts of the certificate. Personal growth is important to me, so I was excited to take the time to learn technical terms for the experiences I've had when encountering different cultures. I felt that the content equipped me with tools I can use right away. I want to share a few of my notes that I took while taking this course!

READY FOR YOUR TRAINING?

In each module, we will follow the themes of **understanding** ourselves and others, **navigating** differences, and **building relationships**.

– CIL Intercultural Training

Elements of Identity - Identity hoops



Women bi-lingual Alberta
 Mexican Uni/politech
 bi-sexual Drag King

- Work w/ music & ideas for dance numbers
 - Don't work when I'm scared to tell my parents
 - Don't work when I want to do word-play dance numbers or partnered numbers
- ask non-speakers to dance with me anyways

Because I am ...

Because I question/about I am seen a someone who likes to argue
 Because I am Mexican I am able to tell my parents about my drag
 Because I am lonely I want to include anyone
 Because I am not satisfied with my friend-steps I seek new ones
 Because I am constantly in new places I seek to make relationships
 Because I am me it is hard to make friends
 Because I saw the "All that we share" video I am happy & excited that change is here and we can be better

Conditions for Positive Relationships

happened. But I hope that one day I will have the courage to ask if I ever meet with them again.

My trip aboard had a lot of back falls, let downs, and challenges. It is probably one of the hardest things I've done in my life so far. That trip took a toll on my body, my mental health, and my social anxiety. However, I would do the trip again.

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

What I learned from that experience was that even though all these people come from a similar background—in this case UAlberta students—there can still be major tension and friction. This does not mean that I am doing anything wrong. I must surround myself with people that appreciate me. I need people who understand me. Understand and accept my culture and my identity.

CONCLUSION

I believe that through the course in the Certificate in International Learning I have expanded my knowledge on multiculturalism and grown as a global citizen. I truly did enjoy the course content, experiences, and people that I interacted with because of this certificate. I know I will look back on this booklet for guidance in navigating new adventures to build meaningful relationships based on respect, attentive listening, open mindedness, and empathy. I look forward to continuing my growth as I encounter new challenges, dive deeper into the cultures I know, and embrace new cultures I will be introduced to.

APPENDIX - CIL APPROVED COURSES COMPLETED

HADVC 203 (Catalogue)	Winter Term 2019
HADVC 209 (Catalogue)	Fall Term 2020
HADVC 309 (Catalogue)	Spring Term 2021
HADVC 216 (Catalogue)	Winter Term 2022
HIST 241 (Catalogue)	Fall Term 2022
HADVC 206 (Catalogue)	Fall Term 2022
SPAN 300 (Catalogue)	Winter Term 2022
SPAN 333 (Catalogue)	Fall Term 2022

Designed by Michelle Cortines on Treaty 7 Territory.

EL MUNDO DE DRAG KINGS EN EDMONTON

¿Dónde están los latinos?

Michelle Cortines • Dec 2022



No oyes ladrar los perros

Juan Rulfo

1 ➡ Tú que vas allá arriba, **Ignacio**, dime si no oyes alguna señal de algo o si ves alguna luz en alguna parte.

2 —No se ve nada.

3 ➡ Ya debemos estar cerca.

4 —Sí, pero no se oye nada.

5 ➡ Mira bien.

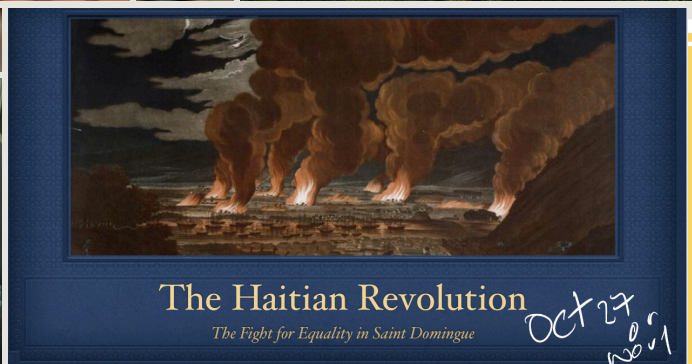
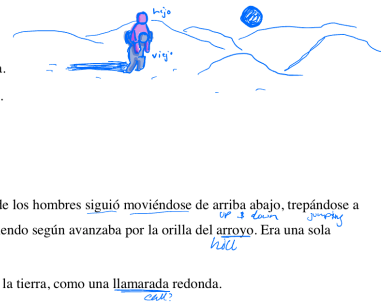
6 —No se ve nada.

7 ➡ Pobre de ti, Ignacio.

8 La **sombra** larga y negra de los hombres siguió **moviéndose** de arriba abajo, trepándose a las piedras, disminuyendo y creciendo según avanzaba por la orilla del arroyo. Era una sola

9 sombra, **tambalante**.

10 La luna venía saliendo de la tierra, como una **llamarada** redonda.



The Haitian Revolution

The Fight for Equality in Saint Domingue

OCT 27
NOV 1