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**Casting Aside Bent Bodies: Embodied Violence as an Everyday Experience
for Filipino Migrant Seafarers**

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**Casting Aside Bent Bodies: Embodied Violence as an Everyday Experience
for Filipino Migrant Seafarers**

by

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Dedication

“In the book there will be no dedication (for I can’t give you what has been yours from the beginning) but instead: From the property of...”

–Rainer Marie Rilke, Duino Elegies

From the property of:

The men and women who live and work at sea

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Casting Aside Bent Bodies: Embodied Violence as an Everyday Experience for Filipino Migrant Seafarers

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Abstract

This research traces the intersections of migrant citizenship and political economic practices in regards to the health worlds of Filipino migrant seafarers as one potential way to understand how structural and symbolic violence is embodied. Through structural violence, seafarers are held responsible for their health and well-being and through symbolic violence, they become complicit in the systems that oppress them. Using a critical medical humanities approach, I question the historical, social, economic, and political production of injury, illness, and death to understand why seafarers do not have *de facto* access to their *de jure* health rights. The work comes out of a one-year photo-ethnography with Filipino migrant seafarers who live and work on a vessel that docks between a Gulf of Honduras port and Gulf of Mexico port. My site of study was the vessel, which flies a flag of convenience, travels in international waters, and has an all-Filipino crew. I focused my research on the history of colonialism, political economic shifts in the recognition and regulation of international and national policy, and the everyday practices of seafarers. Health prevention was analyzed through the discourse of power distribution instead of risk and disease. I posit that the health inequities that follow precarious employment for seafarers are produced through the discourse of economic and social policies that are inscribed onto the body and conclude with new paths for this research within nonacademic and academic settings.

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Able Bodied Seaman
AJPH	American Journal of Public Health
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMS	Automated Manifest System
APHA	American Public Health Association
BSP	Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
CBP	Customs and Border Protection
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CPBR	Community Based Participatory Research
EVP	Exchange Visitor Program
FOC	Flags of Convenience
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IHA	International Health Regulations
ILA	International Longshoreman Association
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILWU	International Longshore and Warehouse Union
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMHA	International Maritime Health Association
IMO	International Maritime Organization

ISPS	International Ship and Port Facility Security
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
MLC	Maritime Labour Convention
OFW	Overseas Filipino Workers
OS	Ordinary Seaman
POEC	Philippine Overseas Employment Agency
SDH	Social Determinants of Health
SEC	Standard Employment Contract
TWIC	Transportation Worker Identification Credential
UFW	United Farm Workers
US	United States
UTMB	University of Texas Medical Branch
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter 1*

INTRODUCTION

I find it storied of Anacharsis, that when one asked him, whether the living or the dead were more? He returned this answer, 'You must first tell me (saith he) in which number I must place Seamen:' Intimating thereby, that seamen are, as it were, a third sort of persons, to be numbered neither with the living nor the dead: their lives hanging continually in suspense before them.

-John Flavel, seventeenth-century minister, *Navigation Spiritualized*

LABOR AND HEALTH

On September 8, 1965, Filipino farmworkers in Delano, California, led by Larry Itliong, went on strike to demand fair wages and better working conditions. At the heart of their strike was a demand for contractual rights that guaranteed them wage protections. Alex Fabros, a former farmworker from Delano and professor of Asian American Studies, talked about their struggle for long-term, contractual recognition in the documentary *Delano Manongs: The Forgotten Heroes of the UFW*: "It didn't matter how much you struck. We could always get more money, but we never get a contract. How many hours we are gonna work in one day, overtime pay, maybe a work rule where after 100 degrees you can slow down a little bit. That's what you get in a contract."¹ After two weeks of striking, the Filipino workers approached Cesar Chavez to join forces. Eventually, Itliong, Chavez, and the others who had been organizing Filipino and Mexican migrant workers joined under United Farm Workers (UFW). After five years of striking and an international boycott of table grapes, the growers finally recognized and signed contracts with the UFW union.²

*An earlier version of this chapter appeared in Shannon Guillot-Wright, "The Changing Economic Structure of the Maritime Industry and its Adverse Effects on Seafarers' Health Care Rights," *International Maritime Health Journal* 68, no. 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.5603/IMH.2017.0015>.

¹Marissa Aroy, "Delano Manongs: Forgotten Heroes of the United Farm Workers," (Media Factory, 2014), Vimeo.

² Aroy, "Delano Manongs: Forgotten Heroes of the United Farm Workers."; Lisa Morehouse, "Grapes Of Wrath: The Forgotten Filipinos Who Led A Farmworker Revolution," September, 16 2015,

Unfortunately, when the Filipino migrant workers returned to Delano for the new season they learned that they were not senior enough in the new union administration and many lost their jobs in the fields and their homes in the labor camps. Fabros described it as being on “the bad end of the contract.”³

The Filipino migrant workers of the mid-twentieth century tell different stories than the Filipino migrant workers I spent a year with at a port in the Gulf of Mexico, but the themes of backbreaking labor and ill-suited contracts have continued, albeit in different forms. After spending months with Filipino migrant seafarers – men and women who live and work at sea – it became apparent that their labor narratives are microcosms of the long history and current reality of political economic practices that value individual production over and above social benefit. However, what also became apparent is that the covert violence of capitalism that has been a hallmark of United States national and global relations is not the only narrative. Through months of interviews and participant observation, I also learned that there are narratives of agency and resistance against unfair labor practices as well as cultural practices and disciplining norms that factor into work and life at sea.⁴

A critical medical humanities perspective has much to offer the research lacunae in our understanding of seafarers, especially when considering their risk of injury and illness. Seafarers are considered a “high-contrast folk group” by anthropologists because of their shared danger, alongside firefighters, loggers, and miners.⁵ Illness and death findings include: high incidences of

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/09/16/440861458/grapes-of-wrath-the-forgotten-filipinos-who-led-a-farmworker-revolution>.

³ Aroy, "Delano Manongs: Forgotten Heroes of the United Farm Workers."

⁴ Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 16.

⁵ Rose George, *Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry that Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate*, Kindle edition ed. (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2013), 46.

drowning fatalities, slips, trips, falls, fractures, heart attacks, malaria, dental pain, and mental health problems.⁶ Researchers at Turku University of Applied Sciences report that seafarers have ten times the fatalities as land-based occupations⁷ and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that offshore workers have seven times the fatality rates than the U.S. average, making it among the top ten worst jobs in the U.S.⁸ Occupational Health scholars have identified seafarers as a known risk group, but an under-researched population group, writing: “Given the importance of illness and injury at sea, in operational, financial, and crew welfare terms . . . it is curious that there has not been far more work on this facet of maritime health.”⁹ The critical medical humanities allowed me to ask new and different questions, exploring the lived health worlds of seafarers currently working and living at sea coupled with a critical historical analysis of the sociopolitical structures that come to facilitate or impede their health experiences.

Filipino seafarers conform to, are disciplined by, and experience the exploitation of political economic practices as well as resist the demands of capitalism, but the way conformity, discipline, exploitation, and resistance is embodied through capitalism is not a continuous story and has had different manifestations. For example, from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries, slaves’ humanness was questioned through laws like *limpieza de sangre*, which produced a certain racial order based on the purity of one’s blood.¹⁰ In the twentieth century, migrant farmworkers had their citizenship and legality debated through laws like the Immigration

⁶ Tim Carter, "Mapping the knowledge base for maritime health: Illness and injury in seafarers," *International Maritime Health* 62, no. 4 (2011): 226.

⁷ Pekka Raisanen, *Some Uses of Accident Data in Maritime Occupational Safety*, (Turku: Turku University of Applied Sciences, 2012), 8.

⁸ "Offshore Worker Fatality Rates Seven Times Higher Than U.S. Average, CDC Study Says," Huffington Post, updated 2013-04-30, April 30, 2013, accessed October 12, 2016, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/30/offshore-workers-fatalities-cdc-study_n_3180566.html.

⁹ Carter, "Mapping the knowledge base for maritime health: Illness and injury in seafarers," 227.

¹⁰ Maria Elena Martinez, "The Black Blood of New Spain: Limpieza de Sangre, Racial Violence, and Gendered Power in Early Colonial Mexico," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2004): 480, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3491806>.

and Nationality Act of 1952 that created immigration quota systems based on nationality, race, and ideology. Today, migrant seafarers and other laborers who work in legal yet precarious employment arrangements experience the violence of capitalism through less explicit discriminatory policies (though, to be sure, explicit discrimination does still exist). Migrant seafarers have legal protections guaranteed in their contracts, but their contracts are also a source of exploitation because of policies that Filipino seafarers must agree to in order to work, like mandatory arbitration and non-protected sick leave. Mandatory arbitration and non-protected sick leave, as part of the migrant Filipino seafarer's contracts, are possible because of the Philippine's labor export program, which are enforceable under Philippine law. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 explore these policies in more detail.

The practice of seeking healthcare compared to the right to seek healthcare, and how migrant seafarers learn to manage and circumvent written laws compared to unwritten policies, is what I trace throughout this dissertation. I tell the story of migrant seafarers by taking precarious employment as my subject, uncovering how labor contracts are a symbol of twentieth century labor union movements *and* of neoliberal ideologies and how these historical and current policies inscribe illness, injury, and death onto the bodies of seafarers. Health, in this context, is not only limited to biomedical models of healthcare, but also includes social and mental wellbeing. The right to health not only includes the more formal 'right to healthcare,' which focuses on healthcare services and access, but also includes sanitation, food, housing, working conditions, and education. These factors comprise the health worlds of migrant seafarers, which are the physical, mental, social, environmental, and structural factors that affect the health of populations.

The intent of this project is to understand the health worlds of migrant seafarers, but it is less an exploration of what policies need stronger enforcement and more of an exploration of how

policies, history, and political economic practices are intertwined with the everyday practices of seafarers and the disciplining norms of capitalism. This rhizome, as Deleuze and Guattari termed it – the connections that are produced, modifiable, and constructed – can create access to health as well as uphold unjust medical practices; can create opportunities for social movements as well as discipline subjects and constrain choice.¹¹ As I develop further in the next section, precarious employment is a social determinant of health that is grounded in the neoliberal ideology of market principles and personal responsibility.

PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT AS A SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

My original hypothesis that seafarers needed better and stronger health policy language and protections was quickly dismantled after only a few months working with them. I quickly learned through seafarers and seafaring activists that maritime law, such as the Jones Act and maintenance and cure (discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs), have some of the oldest and strongest rights for seafarers who are injured or ill while at sea. The right for migrant seafarers to seek medical care on board a ship and while in port is almost universally guaranteed, especially among the Filipino seafarers I collaborated with. The right to seek health and medical care, however, is different from the lived practices of what seeking health and medical care means for one's long-term job prospects with a company or agency and the way seafarers negotiate these tensions cannot be overlooked or disregarded.

Heather Scott-Marshall and Emile Tompa define precarious employment experiences as “those associated with instability, lack of protection, insecurity across various dimensions of work,

¹¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 7, 21.

and social and economic vulnerability.”¹² Joan Benach, and her co-authors write that the “global increase of flexible employment relations,” “higher levels of job insecurity,” “erosion of workers’ employment and working conditions,” and “limited workplace rights and social protection” have led to precarious employment as an emerging social determinant of health.¹³ The effects of precarious employment on the health of workers and on communities is well-documented by researchers, such as psychological ill-health and increases in body mass index, blood pressure, and cholesterol as well as presenteeism (working while ill).¹⁴ The epidemiological findings of workplace health associations are consistent with the issues the Filipino migrant seafarers reported, most notably presenteeism.

For Filipino migrant seafarers, the contracts they must sign to work overseas is an explicit example of how precarious employment is accepted by employers and employees. The contracts they sign guarantees the workers protections and rights, specifically for occupational injury and medical care, but the rights only guarantee them access to health and medical care, not continued employment if the seafarers are seen as unhealthy. In one sense, the contracts are a victory for seafaring activists against companies who attempt to circumvent medical care costs. In another sense, companies can still penalize seafarers for accessing the protections guaranteed to them in spite of having contractual rights. The contracts for seafarers, which are typically between 9-12 months, must be renewed after each sea voyage. Although seafarers ideally stay with the same manning agency, the shipping contract changes frequently because seafarers are contracted to new

¹² Heather Scott-Marshall and Emile Tompa, "The health consequences of precarious employment experiences," *Work* 38, no. 4 (2011): 369, <https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-2011-1140>.

¹³ J. Benach et al., "Precarious employment: understanding an emerging social determinant of health," *Annual Review of Public Health* 35 (2014): 244, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-032013-182500>.

¹⁴ Wayne Lewchuk and Michelynn Lafleche, "Precarious Employment and Social Outcomes," *Just Labour: A Canadian Journal of Work and Society* 22 (2014): 45.; Benach et al., "Precarious employment: understanding an emerging social determinant of health," 235.

ships, even within the same agency. The constant contract renewal adds to the precarious nature of their employment as well as to the power the employer has if employees are seen as sick or unhealthy.

After I asked if seafarers are reluctant to go to the hospital because they do not want the stamp of “ill fit” on their record, the Captain of one vessel told me, “Yes, because the company, if you are always going to the doctor...the company will fire you because you are too expensive...once you have a history of sick, twice, they will not accept you anymore.” I inquired if he was saying going to seek medical care twice meant you were considered to have a bad health history by the company and he said, “Yes, twice and they won’t accept you.” “And that makes it harder to go seek care, then? Because you don’t want to be seen as sick,” I asked. “Yeah. That’s right,” he said. A Chief Officer on a vessel explained to me that his contract includes overtime work without overtime pay: “As Chief Officer it's very stressful...we are discharging and I am awake for 24 hours until we will depart. I no sleep. I only sleep two hours. Not until we depart [can I sleep]...in port, I am 24 hours on call.” I asked him, “Do you get overtime when you're 24 hours on call?” and he said, “It [working without overtime pay] is part of the contract.”

The experiences that the Captain and Chief Officer illuminated for me make clear that the health worlds of seafarers are not only about access to medical services and securing health rights via a contract, but also proper rest times, food preparation, and safe working conditions. The neoliberal practices of industry deregulation, decreased labor power, free enterprise, and notions of personal responsibility as well as the disciplining effects of cultural norms on Filipino seafarers change how seafarers can and will access health services.¹⁵ On one hand, migrant seafarers weigh access to health services against the knowledge of what their medical record may cost them;

¹⁵ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Kindle edition ed., (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2005), 1-2.

namely, the temporary or permanent loss of a contractual and precarious job. However, on the other hand and as Robyn Rodriguez makes clear in her ethnography *Migrants for Export*, Filipino migrants' overseas employment is not only steeped in structural injustices, but their employment is also understood as a personal sacrifice that makes them akin to anticolonial heroes.¹⁶ She writes that Filipino migrants understand their employment as “a sacrifice that requires some degree of suffering but ultimately advances the greater national good.”¹⁷

One seafarer makes clear the tension between political economic structures of power and situated cultural norms in his story about stitching his wound without anesthesia (it is important to note that I never collected real names, only use pseudonyms in the dissertation, do not include faces in pictures, and transcribed verbatim, which I explain in detail in Chapter 2):

- Shannon: What's that?
Jonah: It's a cut. But I can't go to a hospital, I stitch it my own.
Shannon: You stitched it yourself? Why didn't you go to the hospital?
Jonah: Hospital thinking I not ... *struggles for words*... maybe think I'm not physically fit. Maybe say go home. That's why I did the stitching myself . . . I'm not fit, maybe the company send me home.
Shannon: Can I see? *He shows me his scar*. And you stitched it yourself?
Jonah: Yeah.
Shannon: And the second officer, the medical officer couldn't do it?
Jonah: The medical officer? *Didn't understand my question*. No anesthesia.
Shannon: Is it common that companies will send you home if you go to the hospital?
Jonah: No. If the doctor says you're not fit to work, the company send you home.
Shannon: The company pays for the doctor, right?
Jonah: Yeah, the company pays for the doctor.
Shannon: And so then the doctor would say -
Jonah: You're not physically fit to work. The doctor send the paper to the company.
Shannon: The paper? Like, the bill?
Jonah: No. The findings of the doctor.
Shannon: Oh, saying you're injured?

¹⁶ Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export : How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World*, (Minneapolis, US: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2010), 85.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Jonah: Yeah
Shannon: Okay. And maybe saying that you shouldn't work anymore?
Jonah: Yeah
Shannon: And so then you would get sent home?
Jonah: Yeah

Jonah's experience of sewing his wound lays bare the difficult choices one must make when part of a labor market that calculates value based upon production power and can then terminate employees for accessing health and medical rights because of contractual precarity. It also makes clear that his acceptance of these circumstances as normal and as an everyday sacrifice necessary for his family's well-being is a testament to the disciplining techniques of the Philippine state and to the structural injustices of a neoliberal state that values industry deregulation, decreased labor power, free enterprise, and advanced notions of personal responsibility.

Precarious employment, when it is studied, has been largely understood from a Marxist-oriented perspective that posits the structural violence of capitalism against the vulnerability of the working class. For example, the effects of precarious employment on the health of individuals is "linked to the emergence of a new underclass."¹⁸ Guy Standing calls this underclass the "precariat" and argues that they comprise people who have insecure lives because of insecure jobs.¹⁹ A disposable labor supply or a "reserve army of labor"²⁰ facilitates lower wages by keeping capital costs down and workers docile, thereby initiating the conditions ripe for precarious employment.²¹ Similarly, contractual jobs or temporary jobs often have the same effect as a disposable labour supply, resulting in a lack of benefits, legal protections, safety, and job security.²² As already noted,

¹⁸ Lewchuk and Lafleche, "Precarious Employment and Social Outcomes," 45.

¹⁹ Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, Kindle ed., (London, UK ; New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2014), 127-31.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2180

²¹ Fred Magdoff and Harry Magdoff, "Disposable Workers: Today's Reserve Army of Labor," *Monthly Review* 55, no. 11 (2004), <https://monthlyreview.org/2004/04/01/disposable-workers-todays-reserve-army-of-labor/>.

²² Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, 2215.

the violence of capitalism must be taken into account when studying labor and health narratives; however, a purely Marxist perspective limits other ways of understanding how power is structured and embodied. Aihwa Ong writes that what is missing from current discussions in labor migration studies are “how the disciplining structures – of family, community, work, travel, and nation – condition, shape, divert, and transform” subjects and their practices.²³ Her analysis takes both Marxist and Foucauldian critiques of power into account, showing how “the complex relationship between capital and governments” rethinks citizenship.²⁴

Standings and Ong’s analysis taken together show how labor and citizenship operate through oppressive and productive (i.e. power as not simply repressive or coercive) forces, exploiting and disciplining migrants. Migrant seafarers are both “circulant migrants” (working contractual or temporary jobs and traveling to and from their country of origin and their country of work to send remittances home)²⁵ who have learned how to manage an exploitative government while at the same time participate in a kind of “flexible citizenship” based on “cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement.”²⁶ However, seafarers are also different from most migrant populations because they have, for the most part, documentation. The status of Filipino migrant seafarers as documented, but not citizens of the countries where their work generates gross domestic product (GDP), places them in a different category of migrants that has, as of yet, been dimly explored and researched.

Citizenship, in theory, is a defense against the erosion of civil, social, political, economic, and cultural rights within the nation-state to which one belongs, whether by birth, marriage, or naturalization, respectively. Although people within nation-states are generally categorized as

²³ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, 14.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁵ Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, 2215.

²⁶ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, 6.

‘citizen’ or ‘non-citizen,’ another jurisdictional categorization for members of a population is what Standing refers to as *denizenship*. A denizen is a foreigner who is allowed certain rights, but not full rights.²⁷ The concept has historical roots in the Middle Ages and follows the ancient Roman idea of people who have the right to live in a place but are not allowed to participate in political life.²⁸ Although the various types of migrant status (e.g. undocumented, refugee, circulant) will change who and how people can access certain civil, social, political, economic, and cultural rights, the denizen will always lack the full rights of citizens.

The concept of the denizen is similar to Giorgio Agamben’s theory of bare life, which is one who lacks political rights, but is not outside of the political system. Because of the sovereign’s capacity to make a person or population live or disallow their existence to the point of death, even abandoned subjects fall within the political jurisdiction of the sovereign.²⁹ Drawing on Hannah Arendt in his analysis of biopolitics and human rights, Agamben shows how the institutional protections that human rights declarations guarantee fails for those who are no longer part of a nation-state (refugees as the example par excellence).³⁰ All humans may be born equally theoretically, but citizenship within a nation-state is what guarantees or does not guarantee equality.³¹ Bare life is a reduced biological state where one’s political existence is directly tied to how the nation-state views the worthiness of the person. Political existence is significant because, as Agamben is arguing, one’s quality of life is based upon citizenship, not inherent humanness. In this sense, the sovereign (i.e. nation-state) can make certain humans non-existent politically

²⁷ Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, 2255.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), 56.

³⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 1405-22.

³¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 1422-27.

because of the nation-states decision to deny citizenship rights. I more fully explore Agamben in relation to Michel Foucault's theory of biopolitics in Chapter 3, but for now it is important to note how the denial of rights because of a denial of citizenship converges with Standing's analysis of denizens.

As noted above, Standing argues that precarious employment is a form of political and labor insecurity. The exclusion of denizens from political life happens through a hyper-commodified labor market, which results in certain people (the precarious) not having the time or leisure to participate in political life.³² In this sense, denizens are excluded from certain aspects of political life because of their precarity. It is not that denizens cannot or do not participate in forms of political resistance, but Standing is making a theoretical argument about the disengagement that labor insecurity for migrants can breed. The danger of disengagement for Standing is that because people no longer have the time or leisure to participate in political life, they may not actively reject policies that create precarious employment conditions, such as a lack of benefits, legal protections, and income. Standing's argument is a helpful way to understand how citizenship/non-citizenship is not a static binary. Nevertheless, his notion lacks the nuance of theories that account for the ways migrants have participated in political life and actively rejected harmful policies (e.g. Itliong and Chavez).

For Filipino seafarers, who are usually documented workers but are vulnerable to contractual and precarious employment, their denizenship (outside the Philippines) and citizenship (in the Philippines) may theoretically secure them civil, cultural, economic, and social rights, but in reality those rights can be dismantled through the jurisdictional maze of laws and policies regulating (or rather deregulating) the shipping industry. In this sense, it is not the traditional logic

³² Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, 2797.

of 'healthcare access' (e.g., payment methods like insurance or transportation methods) that requires attention, but rather that seafarers have *de jure* access to healthcare, but not *de facto* access. Questioning the historical, social, economic, and political production of disease (i.e. a critical medical humanities approach) brings us closer to understanding why seafarers do not have *de facto* access to their guaranteed health rights. Such a critique is not only a critique of corporate or government policies, but also of the violence and injustice that is within the U.S. medical system.

Agamben's bare life and Standing's denizenship, though imperfect examples, are useful theories to understand how Filipino migrant seafarers are denied certain rights that are guaranteed to them through human rights declarations. A seafarer may be theoretically protected from discrimination (civil), may be able to participate in artistic or scientific advancement (cultural), is guaranteed safe working conditions (economic), and can access healthcare (social), but through open registries (i.e. flags of convenience) and contractual loopholes, seafarers' civil, cultural, economic, and social rights can be subverted because of the exploitative and disciplining practices of neoliberalism that make precarious employment a reality. Rather, their ambiguous contractual regulations stymies how they claim the rights and protections that are guaranteed to them, such as the right to health or to seek healthcare services. In order to make sense of these competing ideologies, a brief history of the shipping industry in relation to neoliberal globalization will frame how seafarers have *de jure* rights, but how those rights can be *de facto* undermined both through oppressive and productive forces.

NEOLIBERAL GLOBALIZATION

Seafarers have been working and living on the sea throughout recorded history, but since the mid-twentieth century there have been dramatic impacts to the economic viability of

international sea transport, technological advances, worker protections, and the trajectory of globalization.³³ Although containerization was developed well before the 1970s, the shifts in mindset of the 1970s that goods should be delivered “cheaply, safely, and on time,”³⁴ in tandem with deregulation of the U.S. Interstate Commerce Commission,³⁵ helped shift the conceptualization of how U.S. trade and economics could work differently and more lucratively. Marc Levinson, an economist and author of *The Box*, writes that containerization “made shipping cheap, and by doing so changed the shape of the world economy.”³⁶ Containerization not only had impacts on the amount of goods that would be shipped across the world, but it changed the make-up of how goods were delivered and who delivered them. Levinson writes, “The competition that came with increased trade has diffused new products with remarkable speed and has held down prices so that average households can partake. The ready availability of inexpensive imported consumer goods has boosted living standards around the world. As wage earners, on the other hand, workers have every reason to be ambivalent.”³⁷

Levinson describes how the container helped bring an end to the labor improvements of the post-World War II era, bringing international shipping costs down and therefore “increasing the bargaining power of employers against their far less mobile workers”.³⁸ Containerization allows for outsourcing labor, thereby taking advantage of cheaper labor abroad. Subsequently, containerization also reduced longshoreman employment opportunities at U.S. docks because of

³³Marc Levinson, *The Box : How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008), 2-4.; Paul Stephen Dempsey, "The Rise and Fall of the Interstate Commerce Commission: The Tortuous Path from Regulation to Deregulation of America's Infrastructure," *Marquette Law Review* 95, no. 4 (2012): 1151-53.

³⁴ Marc Levinson, "The Traveling Box: Containers as Global Icon of Our Era," (University of California Television, 2008). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbzFCmsVoVM>.

³⁵ Levinson, *The Box : How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*, 259-61.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 2.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 3.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 4.

container technology.³⁹ The introduction of new equipment, technologies, and operating practices has reduced the gang size (the groups assigned to work a ship) of longshoreman, and created reductions in the labor force.⁴⁰ Containerization and intermodality further challenged the International Longshoreman Association (ILA) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), cutting port labor costs and using non-union services.⁴¹

Shipping, and the goods and people involved in shipping, were changed through containerization and its ability to shift the economics of trade, but containerization did not become a force in the U.S. without government and corporate policies that helped to create such a shift. President Gerald Ford's elimination of the Interstate Commerce Commission,⁴² the Shipping Act of 1984 that promoted "a greater reliance on the marketplace,"⁴³ and the dissolution of railroad regulation by Congress in 1995⁴⁴ were products of neoliberalism and helped propel the engines of global trade that reduced costs as well as worker protections. On paper, worker protections were not eliminated, but the economization of global goods and the movement of goods across global spaces reshaped global labor relations, creating the possibility of disposable worker protections, and subsequently, a disposable workforce.⁴⁵

Today, the transport of almost ninety-percent of goods and the employment of 1,500,000 seafarers alongside the dismantling of unions, increase in automation technology, and deregulation

³⁹ Sotiris Theofanis, Maria Boile, and William Laventhal, "Trends in Global Port Operations and Their Influence on Port Labor: Challenges and Implications for U.S. East Coast Longshoremen" (50th Annual Forum Transportation Research Forum, Portland, Oregon, 2009).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Levinson, *The Box : How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*, 259.

⁴³ Federal Maritime Commission, "The Shipping Act of 1984, 46 U.S.C.," (Washington, D.C.: Federal Maritime Commission, 1984).

⁴⁴ Levinson, *The Box : How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*, 259-62.

⁴⁵ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 169.

of shipping industries are features of the shipping industrial-complex.⁴⁶ Steven Best in *The Global Industrial Complex: Systems of Domination* explains that the military industrial-complex, first articulated by Eisenhower and then theorized by C. Wright Mills in 1956, now ranges to various institutions that “were reconceived and reconstructed according to capitalist, industrial, and bureaucratic models suited to the aim of realizing profit, growth, efficiency, mass production, and standardization imperatives.”⁴⁷ According to Best, the industrial-complex is an outgrowth of instrumental rationality, which is traced to Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers who valued order and quantification over sacred and qualitative understandings of reality.⁴⁸ The results are industrial-complexes that produce, calculate, and control everything into a commodity for private profit margins.⁴⁹

The shipping industrial-complex follows a similar logic that other institutions (e.g. military, education, medicine, prisons) have advanced; namely, upholding private interests by exploiting global markets through the use of governmental protections. The logic of a profit-generating company that can treat people as commodities with little regard for social benefit grows out of capitalism, but is more fully realized through the growing influence and consensus of neoliberal globalization. Neoliberalism, initiated most prominently in the 1980s through U.S. President Ronald Reagan and U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s policies, motivated the ideals of industry deregulation, decreased labor power, free enterprise, and advanced notions of personal responsibility. However, neoliberalism cannot be taken as a single or one-dimensional cause to precarious employment. Instead, as Best describes, the structures of power that give rise

⁴⁶ Karen M. Parsons, *Diary of a Port Chaplain: My Journey of Faith with Seafarers*, Kindle edition (New York: The North American Maritime Ministry Association, 2014), 64.

⁴⁷ Steven Best, *The Global Industrial Complex: Systems of Domination*, (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2011), xvi.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, x-xi.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, xvi, xii.

to neoliberal globalization and global industrial-complexes are, “multiple, plural, and decentralized” and the systems are “anchored in logics of control, standardization, exploitation, and profit.”⁵⁰ In other words, the political economic practices of neoliberal globalization can be disciplining and exploitative, productive and oppressive. In Chapter 4, I assess international and U.S. maritime policy from a critical perspective, exploring how neoliberal globalization and the shipping-industrial complex has helped to create a jurisdictional maze for seafarers that can at once guarantee protections while at the same time encouraging seafarers to be acquiescent about their right to seek medical care.

INTERNATIONAL AND U.S. MARITIME POLICY

Rose George reminds readers in her book *Ninety Percent of Everything* that seafaring is not an inherently bad life; in theory “seafaring can be a good life” but “it can go wrong with the speed of a wave.”⁵¹ George is not only talking about what can go wrong mechanically with a ship or naturally with a storm, but how policies and regulations can create little to no recourse for the people they are meant to protect. In other words, policies, regulations, and laws of the seas are meant to protect the seabed and seafarers, but policies, regulations, and laws are not free from economic and political pressures. Similar to George’s study of seafarers’ experiences and the policies that exist to protect seafarers, I explore how contractual policies and regulations, which are a hallmark of twentieth century union organizing, operate as protections and obstructions to health within a neoliberal state. The policies that regulate or deregulate transportation, the environment, and healthcare nationally and internationally come to affect the sociopolitical

⁵⁰ Ibid., xix

⁵¹ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry that Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate*, 8.

structures of people working in those industries, even if in indirect ways, and those sociopolitical structures facilitate or impede how health risks can be managed at sea and in port.

There are numerous policies and laws that have been established to directly protect seafarers from occupational health risks and to provide protections to them in their employment contracts, such as Conventions of the United Nations' International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). However, such regulatory frameworks can be contested in practice by shipping companies. The IMO is the global standard-setting authority for safety⁵² and the ILO was created as a direct result of industrialization and the subsequent exploitation of workers,⁵³ but the use of open registries or flags of convenience beginning in the 1920's has had dramatic effects on the protection of seafarers even in spite of IMO and ILO regulations.⁵⁴ For instance, the flag state (the state represented by the flag a ship is flying) is ultimately responsible for maintaining ship registers; the jurisdiction over the ship, the master, officers, and crew; taking measures regarding safety; ensuring the ships conform to international rules and practices; carrying out investigations; carrying out or cooperating with other State investigations; and some anti-pollution measures.⁵⁵ Today, 68% of ships are known to fly under open registries or flags of convenience.⁵⁶ Flags of convenience are indeed convenient, especially

⁵² "Brief History of the IMO," The International Maritime Organization, accessed October 11, 2016, <http://www.imo.org/en/About/HistoryOfIMO/Pages/Default.aspx>; "About the IMO," The International Maritime Organization, accessed October 11, 2016, <http://www.imo.org/en/About/Pages/Default.aspx>.

⁵³ "Origins and History," International Labour Organization, accessed October 11, 2016, <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/history/lang--en/index.htm>.

⁵⁴ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry that Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate*, 78.

⁵⁵ Nivedita M. Hosanee, "A Critical Analysis of Flag State Duties as Laid Down Under Article 94 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea," *Oceans and Law of the Sea* (2009): 22-23. http://www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/uniff_programme_home/fellows_pages/fellows_papers/hosanee_0910_mauritio.us.pdf.

⁵⁶ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry that Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate*, 79.

when a shipping company needs to bypass certain rules and regulations that are to the benefit of the companies and to the detriment of seafarers and their rights.⁵⁷

Organizations like the IMO and ILO have regulatory guidelines that explicitly outline how seafarers should be able to access medical and healthcare at sea and while in port,⁵⁸ such as the “International Medical Guide for Ships”⁵⁹ and the “Medical First Aid Guide for Use in Accidents Involving Dangerous Goods,”⁶⁰ as well as the updated World Health Organization (WHO) International Health Regulations (IHR)⁶¹ and the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006).⁶² The purpose of the updated IHR are “to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of diseases in ways that are commensurate with and restricted to public health risks, and which avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade.”⁶³ The IHR is not focused on protecting seafarers who are sick or injured, but some of the provisions can create a safer environment for seafarers. The updated IHR requires that those travelling by sea be treated “with courtesy and respect, taking into consideration their gender, sociocultural, ethnic and religious concerns”⁶⁴ as well as providing guidance on “safe water and food, on vector and rodent control, and on waste disposal.”⁶⁵ Although the updated IHR has

⁵⁷ Ibid, 78.

⁵⁸ "Health, Protection and Medical Care (Seafarers) Convention, 1987 (No. 164)," 1987, accessed October 11, http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C164.

⁵⁹ World Health Organization, *International Medical Guide for Ships* (Albany, NY: WHO Press, 2007), <http://apps.who.int/bookorders/MDIbookPDF/Book/11503078.pdf>, 3rd edition.

⁶⁰ "International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code," 2016, accessed October, 2016, <http://www.imo.org/en/Publications/IMDGCode/Pages/Default.aspx>.

⁶¹ "International Health Regulations (IHR)," World Health Organization, updated June 15, 2007, accessed October, 2016, http://www.who.int/topics/international_health_regulations/en/.

⁶² International Labour Organization, *Maritime Labour Convention, 2006* (Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2006).

⁶³ "International Health Regulations (IHR)."

⁶⁴ "Alert, Response, and Capacity Building Under the International Health Regulations (IHR)," World Health Organization, accessed October 11, 2016, <http://www.who.int/ihr/about/10things/en/#how>.

⁶⁵ "International Travel and Health," World Health Organization, accessed October 11, 2016, http://www.who.int/ith/mode_of_travel/sea_travel/en/.

potential benefits for seafarers, the main concerns that led to the IHR being updated were economic in nature: infectious disease control decreases the interruption of travel and trade.⁶⁶

The MLC, 2006, which addresses employment, environment, and health conditions, requires signatories to follow Title 4 of the Convention – “Health Protection, Medical Care and Social Security Protection” – which places responsibility for health protection and healthcare costs on nation-states, flag States, and shipping companies. According to the MLC, 2006 flag States are responsible for the health protection of seafarers while they are on board the vessel; States that have signed the MLC, 2006 must provide medical care free of charge to seafarers when they are in their territory; and shipowners are responsible for the costs of sickness, injury and/or death while the seafarers are in their employment.⁶⁷ In theory, and similar to the IMO and ILO, these protections seem adequate to cover the health and/or medical issues/costs that seafarers may experience on board a vessel or in port, but in reality this overlapping jurisdictional maze allows the shipping industry to safeguard companies through flags of convenience and contractual loopholes, which may be pernicious to seafarer’s health and well-being.

The U.S. has not ratified many of the Conventions that guide medical and healthcare for seafarers, including the MLC, 2006, which has been ratified by 81 countries, including the Philippines. Although the U.S. has not ratified the MLC, 2006, U.S. shipping companies are required to pay for certain benefits for the seafarers they hire based on maritime common law, maintenance and cure, and the Merchant Marine Act of 1920. Maintenance and cure was brought to British admiralty law in 1150 and formally enacted by the first U.S. Congress in 1790, making

⁶⁶ World Health Organization, *A Framework for Global Outbreak Alert and Response* (World Health Organization, 2001), 7.

⁶⁷ The International Transport Workers' Federation, *A Seafarers' Bill of Rights: An ITF Guide for Seafarers to the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006* (London: The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), 2006), 35, 38.

it one of the oldest laws that expresses protections for seafarers from the severity of life at sea at the cost of the shipowners.⁶⁸ The doctrine was based “on the belief that the vessel served as the seaman’s home and the seaman should be entitled to continue receiving lodging and food even when sick”⁶⁹ and U.S. courts granted maintenance and cure “regardless of the seaman’s employment contract.”⁷⁰ However, according to a letter addressed to U.S. Congressional committees from the Center for Seafarer’s Rights, maintenance and cure benefits are under the near-constant threat of being dissolved for some seafarers due to lobbying and legal challenges mounted by cruise ship companies.⁷¹

The Merchant Marine Act of 1920, also known as the Jones Act, guarantees “a seafarer’s right to a trial by jury as a remedy to recover damages in the case of injuries sustained while under contract to work aboard a ship.”⁷² In essence, workers on a U.S.-owned ship can seek legal remedy in the U.S., even if the seafarer is a foreign citizen.⁷³ The Jones Act, which provides additional protections to maintenance and cure common law, are based on where a ship owner operates (e.g. United States), not on the citizenship of the seafarer (e.g. Filipino).⁷⁴ In these instances, the legal domicile of the ship companies, not land, citizenship, international waters, or contractual agreements serves as the space of recognition for seafarers to have legal recourse for injuries, sickness, and other health-related diseases. The ship becomes an extension of the nation-state, yet

⁶⁸ Virginia A. McDaniel, "Recognizing Modern Maintenance and Cure as an Admiralty Right," *Fordham International Law Journal* 14, no. 3 (1990): 672.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 669.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 669-670.

⁷¹ Center for Seafarers' Rights, *Letter from Maritime Ministries address to the Honorable William Shuster, the Honorable Peter A. DeFazio, the Honorable Duncan Hunter, and the Honorable John Garamendi* (April 17, 2015).

⁷² William C. Terry, "Working on the Water: On Legal Space and Seafarer Protection in the Cruise Industry," *Economic Geography* 85, no. 4 (2009): 471, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-8287.2009.01045.x>.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 472.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 472.

holds special exceptions to the rights and laws that govern nation-states.⁷⁵ The Jones Act as well as maintenance and cure are under near-constant threat of being repealed, with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) introducing four legislative amendments or bills since 2010 that would dismantle or repeal the Jones Act.⁷⁶ McCain made clear that his concerns about the Jones Act are grounded in free trade and market economies and he all but ignores the benefits to seafarers in need of medical care that the Jones Act provides:

I have long advocated the repeal of the Jones Act, an archaic and burdensome law that hinders free trade, stifles the economy, and ultimately harms consumers . . . My legislation would eliminate this regulation, freeing American shippers from the requirement that they act against their own business interests. By allowing U.S. shippers to purchase affordable foreign-made carriers, this legislation would reduce shipping costs, make American farmers and businesses more competitive in the global marketplace, and bring down the cost of goods and services for American consumers.⁷⁷

Maintenance and cure and the Jones Act are still in effect legally, but recent decisions in the court cases *Bautista v. Star Cruises* and *Francisco v. STOLT ACHIEVEMENT MT* have made some of the oldest laws protecting one of the most dangerous occupations merely nominal.⁷⁸ William Terry, a critical geographer writes that, “The Bautista and Francisco cases have set a precedent that allows the defense attorneys for shipping companies to remove cases from state courts to federal courts, where judges will automatically compel arbitration because of the aforementioned jurisdictional concerns. Consequently, the merits of any individual case are never considered in the process, and Filipino seafarers no longer have ready access to legal remedy in U.S. courts.”⁷⁹ As an attorney described it, “Yeah, it’s because the cruise lines have decided to enforce the POEA [Philippine Overseas Employment Agency] arbitration provisions, nothing

⁷⁵ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything*, 78.

⁷⁶ “Senator McCain Introduces New Bill to Repeal Jones Act,” gCaptain, updated 2017-07-18, July 18, 2017, accessed October, 2016, <http://gcaptain.com/senator-mccain-introduces-new-bill-to-repeal-jones-act/>.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Terry, “Working on the Water,” 472-474.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 474.

more than that, and the *Bautista* decision [is] why those cases are getting dismissed.”⁸⁰ The precedent of the *Bautista* and *Francisco* cases affects all Filipino seafarers who have arbitration agreements in their contracts, which includes all Filipino seafarers. Filipino seafarers are required to sign POEA Standard Employment Contract (SEC) agreements to work on foreign ships, and the updated POEA SEC agreements include an arbitration clause.⁸¹ In theory, this clause guarantees Filipino seafarers the right to have a grievance heard by a legal entity, but in practice it has removed their right to have their case remedied in U.S. courts.⁸² Inevitably, Filipino seafarers find themselves in a precarious state of citizenship/slight citizenship/no citizenship simultaneously.

The POEA is based on RA8042, or otherwise known as the Migrant Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995, which was passed to guarantee “policies of overseas employment and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress, and for other purposes.”⁸³ The POEA, which I further elaborate on in Chapter 3, has important and meaningful implications for Filipinos who need to contest unfair labor practices, but as Rodriguez reveals, it is also the “employment contract that entangles a Philippine migrant, a foreign employer, the host state, and the Philippine state in a complex set of relations.”⁸⁴ Rodriguez, citing Ong, calls these complicated relations graduated sovereignty: “Citizens in zones that are differently articulated to global production and financial circuits are subjected to different kinds of surveillance and in practice enjoy different sets of civil, political, and economic rights. By thus calibrating its control over sovereignty to the challenges of global capital, the so-called tiger-state developed a system of graduated zones that also protects against

⁸⁰ Ibid, 475.

⁸¹ Ibid, 473, 475.

⁸² Ibid, 473.

⁸³ Philippine Overseas Employment Association, *Migrant Workers Act of 1995 (RA 8042)* (Philippines: Philippine Overseas Employment Association, 1995).

⁸⁴ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 119.

pockets of political unrest.”⁸⁵ The legal protections provided by the POEA set against how those protections are operationalized further illustrates the tension between seafarers *de jure* rights and their *de facto* rights. Seafarers’ legal access to health rights, but their inability to access or make use of those rights is then manifested through embodied violence, and subsequently mental and physical health problems.

HISTORY OF THE PHILIPPINE LABOR EXPORT PROGRAM

It is no accident that in one of the most globalized industries over a third of all seafarers come from the same country – the Philippines – totaling a quarter of a million people.⁸⁶ The Philippines economy was ranked 115 in the 2015 Human Development Index and 31.6 percent of the population lives near or below the poverty line, with the gross national income (GNI) per capital at \$7,915.⁸⁷ A once colonized possession of the U.S., the country’s independence in 1946 came at the cost of structural inequalities imposed on their economy by the U.S., World Bank, and International Monetary Fund (IMF).⁸⁸ The poverty of Filipino/a’s alongside their national debt makes many desperate to find work. As one Filipino seafarer put it rather bluntly, “We are cheap and speak good English.”⁸⁹

According to *The Economist*, Filipino/a’s are the country’s largest export – an eerie yet measured description.⁹⁰ Rodriguez argues that describing people as commodities (e.g. exports) is

⁸⁵ Ibid., 118.

⁸⁶ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything*, 21.

⁸⁷ United Nations, *Human Development for Everyone: Briefing note for countries on the 2016 Human Development Report, Philippines* (2016), 4, 6-7.

⁸⁸ Jr. E. San Juan, *Toward Filipino Self-Determination: Beyond Transnational Globalization*, SUNY Series in Global Modernity, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 28.

⁸⁹ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything*, 21.

⁹⁰ Banyan, "People, the Philippines' Best Export," *The Economist*, October 11, 2010, http://www.economist.com/blogs/banyan/2010/02/philippines_and_its_remittance_economy.

a technique of the Philippine state and is made knowable through the economic labor brokerage movement.⁹¹ Labor brokerage in the Philippines is described as a:

Neoliberal strategy that is comprised of institutional and discursive practices through which the Philippine state mobilizes its citizens and sends them abroad to work for employers throughout the world while generating a “profit” from the remittances that migrants send back to their families and loved ones remaining in the Philippines. The Philippine state negotiates with labor-receiving states to formalize outflows of migrant workers and thereby enables employers around the globe to avail themselves of temporary workers who can be summoned to work for finite periods of time and then returned to their homeland at the conclusion of their employment contracts.⁹²

As mentioned earlier, temporary workers who work finite periods of time on contract (precarious workers) are part of a neoliberal globalization that is restructuring how people can access rights and services guaranteed to them through current laws and policies. Neoliberal globalization and the precarious workers it produces are created through the practices and techniques of multiple actors at multiple scales, or what was earlier termed the shipping industrial complex.

Categories – like “exports” or “migrants” – come to have significant political and economic meaning as well as identity meaning-making. In other words, how people identify themselves, how others identify them, or how structures and systems identify certain groups of people (e.g. economic migrant or economic export) may influence the way seafarers can or are willing to construct or contest relationships. The liminality that seafarers experience being at sea and between national and institutional sovereignties; racial, class, and citizenship hierarchies; and insecure worker contracts are not happenstance. David Harvey writes that the globalized workforce has a direct connection to what he has called “time-space compression.”⁹³ Harvey’s thesis is that by

⁹¹ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 170.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 109-116.

⁹³ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 4.

increasing geographical ranges and shortening market contracts, conceptions of time-space are changed, and this change can be traced to the economic and political emergence of neoliberalism.⁹⁴

Space, like time, is not static, but it is imagined and produced.⁹⁵ Terry, reflecting on the legal decisions of *Bautista* and *Francisco*, writes that, “Legal interpretations actively produce space and have both material and discursive effects at multiple scales.”⁹⁶ Water is often thought of as an open and free space, but lines and maps draw and re-draw the sea, and those lines and maps are continually produced and created, both by seafarers as well as through social, economic, and political relationships. The ways that the sea is spatially contested and constructed is a fluid and iterative process that involves behavioral, interpersonal, social, cultural, and structural relationships and how these relationships interact impact the health of seafarers.

As I have been exploring through this chapter, there are numerous laws, regulations, and human rights norms established to protect seafarers, but uncertain recourse for seafarers to lay claim to such laws, regulations, and norms while at sea. George expressed it best, “The sea dissolves paper.”⁹⁷ On the other hand, as I have also been exploring, the notion that the “sea dissolves paper” is a misnomer when considering the ways that capitalist enterprises use paper, whether contracts or maps, in favor of certain policies. Lack of recourse to policies and regulations, taken together with the changed conditions of political economic practices create the conditions that are ripe for worse health inequities among seafarers. Through neoliberal globalization and the shipping industrial complex, there are complex seafaring networks that come together to affect seafarers and their health, such as government policies, corporate policies, environmental policies,

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Doreen Massey, *For Space*, (London, England: Sage Publications, 2005), 5.

⁹⁶ Terry, “Working on the Water,” 466.

⁹⁷ George, *Ninety Percent of Everything*, 9.

technological innovations, human rights norms, unions, legal sectors, and the everyday practices of people as compared to law, policies, and regulations.⁹⁸

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

In order to make sense of neoliberal globalization alongside the practices of seafarers, I focus my research on the history of Filipino migration, political and economic shifts in the recognition and regulation of international and national policy, and photo-ethnographic research with Filipino seafarers on board a vessel that docks between a Gulf of Honduras port and Gulf of Mexico port. My site of study is the vessel, which flies a foreign flag that is listed by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) as a flag of convenience, travels in international waters daily, and has a Filipino crew.⁹⁹

I am illuminating the consequences of having *de jure* rights, while in practice the exercise of those rights are denied or unavailable. The higher rates of illness, injury, and death that seafarers already endure is exasperated by their inaccessibility to their guaranteed health rights. How migrant citizenship and neoliberal labor practices become inscribed onto the body (embodied) is one potential way to understand how or in what ways seafarers become part of the practices of biopolitics.¹⁰⁰ Foucault and Agamben's frameworks/theorizations of biopolitics show that "life and death, health and sickness, the body and medicine"¹⁰¹ are part of political life, whether by making live/letting die (productive power) or making die (oppressive power). The transformation of life as the center and as the concern of the political, which happens through the development of

⁹⁸ Terry, "Working on the Water," 464.

⁹⁹ Parsons, *Diary of a Port Chaplain: My Journey of Faith with Seafarers*, 1509.; "Flags of convenience: Avoiding the rules by flying a convenient flag," International Transport Workers' Federation, accessed October 12, 2016, <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/transport-sectors/seafarers/in-focus/flags-of-convenience-campaign/>.

¹⁰⁰ Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, 9.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 63.

the modern state, through the emergence of the natural (and later social) sciences, and through capitalist production¹⁰² need to be taken into account in studying the experiences of seafarers. I study an assemblage of factors related to biopolitics and the health of seafarers, with a special interest in liberal economic forces that foster/disallow life, manage populations, and value certain lives over and above the lives of others.

Thus, this research seeks to understand the health worlds of seafarers by analyzing whether and how seafarers can exercise their right to health and the factors that facilitate or impede that exercise by focusing on the following: What is the history of colonial, post-colonial, neo-colonial, and neoliberal labor practices as they relate to Filipino migrant seafarers and their health worlds? How is health operationalized for seafarers while at sea or in port? How do seafarers resist and/or embody the practices of neoliberalism? How can history, images, and stories help to reimagine the health worlds of disposable workers for global and community health?

In Chapter 2, I discuss my methodology for the dissertation, including how I conducted the photovoice and ethnography as well as my own socially located position throughout the research and writing. I adopt Renato Rosaldo's analysis of representation,¹⁰³ analyzing both the embodiment of Filipino migrant seafarers as well as my embodiment as an ethnographer collaborating with seafarers. Chapter 3 takes up Foucault's concept of a 'history of the present'¹⁰⁴ by contextualizing the labor conditions of migrant Filipino seafarers within the history of U.S. colonial, post-colonial, neo-colonial, and neoliberal practices. I analyze the duration of capitalism and the role of the Philippine state as a backdrop to the current labor conditions of Filipino workers.

¹⁰² Ibid, 62.

¹⁰³ Renato Rosaldo, *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*, Kindle ed., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

¹⁰⁴ Michael S. Roth, "Foucault's "History of the Present", " *History and Theory* 20, no. 1 (1981).

A history of the present allows for a more complicated understanding of the current health worlds of seafarers within their myriad contexts.

I situate the current health worlds of migrant Filipino seafarers in Chapter 4 alongside the historical shifts discussed in Chapter 3. I explore migrant seafarers' health experiences while at sea and when they come into port in the U.S. through the lens of structural, symbolic, and everyday violence. By tangling, instead of untangling, multiple concepts of violence, or what Nancy Scheper-Hughes calls "the violence continuum,"¹⁰⁵ the complex 'choices' of seafarers come into view. I end this chapter by analyzing Amartya Sen's theory of justice¹⁰⁶ as capabilities in order to understand the seafarer's reality against the rights they have, in theory.

Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 both take up the practice of research-as-advocacy. In Chapter 5, I discuss the history of photo-ethnography and its potential to help society reimagine injustice. This chapter is built around the images that seafarers took as part of our photovoice project and the way images can be taken up in public policy. Chapter 6 is centered on a different public – that of the student and the medical school. Whereas Chapter 5 looks outside the University for advocacy, Chapter 6 looks inward with a discussion on the discourse of culture in medicine and a syllabus that brings this dissertation into conversation with the health professions. In Chapter 7, I conclude by synthesizing this work and finding ways to interrupt social suffering.

Finally, a note on the title of the dissertation, *Casting Aside Bent Bodies: Embodied Violence as an Everyday Experience for Filipino Migrant Seafarers*. In 1979, Robert Carson, a longshoreman in San Francisco, collected "images, depressions, explosions, reflections, the tender,

¹⁰⁵ Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Dangerous and Endangered Youth: Social Structures and Determinants of Violence," *Annual of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1036 (2004): 14, <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1330.002>.

¹⁰⁶ Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, Kindle ed., (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).

the brutal”¹⁰⁷ in his edited book *The Waterfront Writers*. In the collection, Gene Dennis wrote a poem, “Footnotes to the Glory Years,” in which he painstakingly describes life on the waterfront:

My soul
has been sucked dry
and suffocated by
the shadow of a
forty-foot container,
Restored by outrage
at the mindless technology
unleashed by cash register computers,

So logical,
so methodical,
casting aside bent bodies
with poisoned lungs
to proceed with green.
So technologically correct.
A heritage
caved in by the
ponderous pounding
of some psychopathic
robotonic
beast
clothed in the niceties
of contractual compromise.¹⁰⁸

Carson’s book – and Dennis’ poem, specifically – perfectly encapsulates the maritime industry. I began carrying the book of poems with me and one day it caught the eye of a woman who was volunteering with me at a maritime center. She and her husband worked in San Francisco with many of the authors in the book and she began recounting her days on the docks as a longhaired 20-something. Ideologically, she and I were almost as different as you can imagine. I spent two years avoiding her and two months directly confronting her and her husband because of anti-immigrant and gendered politics that were beginning to seep into the maritime center’s

¹⁰⁷ Robert Carson and Waterfront Writers., *The Waterfront Writers: The Literature of Work*, 1st ed., (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 1.

¹⁰⁸ Gene Dennis, *The Footnotes of Glory*, ed. Robert Carson, 1st ed., *The Waterfront Writers: The Literature of Work*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 7-8.

operations. On this day, though, we met on a different field. At the end of the day, we hugged and I received heartfelt and kind texts from her that evening and in the following weeks. I learned that her husband was subjected to a harsh boss and his recent actions, of which I had confronted him, were connected to his own stress and employment precarity. I learned that she has a grandson the same age as my son. I learned that I have a lot to learn about ethnographic projects.

Dennis' poem not only describes the backbreaking labor of waterfront workers, but his poem had an intermediary effect. Whatever the ideological differences or similarities I had with the many people I met during this project, it seems that we could all agree that the "casting aside of bent bodies with poisoned lungs to proceed with green" hurts us all. The *embodied violence* seafarers and the many people who work in the maritime industry experience relates to how intrapersonal, interpersonal, collective, symbolic, and structural violence manifests in and on bodies, which changes how one moves in and through the world. The longshoreman I had a disagreement with was both suffering under a system of violence, while also subjecting others to violence. The changed conditions of U.S. labor and worker protections helped to create a precarious workforce, but I pay particular attention to both the political economic dimensions of these changed conditions as well as to the everyday practices of seafarers. I am exploring health through the discourse of power distribution instead of risk and disease, although to be sure, risk and disease are part of the seafarer story. The health inequities that follow precarious employment for seafarers are produced through social policies that are inscribed onto the body (embodied). Throughout this body of work, I describe the ways that Filipino migrant seafarers are constrained by historical, racial, and political economic policies, while at the same time they are not without agency or choice. My ultimate hope is that *Casting Aside Bent Bodies: Embodied Violence as an*

Everyday Experience for Filipino Migrant Seafarers makes us all aware of our complicity in the violence against others and creates new paths for advocacy.

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY

*No massage
has ever reached
the chronic crick
chiseled in my neck
by forever looking up
from the lower hold
in fear of falling loads
and tumbling booms;
untied the stomach knot
where I carry
the sound Big Sam made
when he got pounded
into a blood-red puddle
falling four decks
from a broken ladder;
erased the sight
of Leroy's face
when he got skewered
by falling steel
at the army base,
and Baby Erik's thumb
tacked forever
to a redwood log
by a careless crowbar.*

Gene Dennis, "Footnotes to the Glory Years," *The Waterfront Writers*, 1979

EMBODIMENT IN ETHNOGRAPHY

In *Righteous Dopefiend*, Philippe Bourgois and Jeff Schonberg write that "ethnographers and photographers are conduits for power because they carry messages through different worlds and across class and cultural divides,"¹⁰⁹ and messages that can cross boundaries are only possible because of the relationships and trust developed between individuals over time.¹¹⁰ These relationships are not neutral, though, and there is inherent power in being the person writing about or taking pictures of someone else's experiences.¹¹¹ My photo-ethnography was grounded in

¹⁰⁹ Philippe I. Bourgois and Jeff Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend*, California series in public anthropology, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 13.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

critical theory and medical humanities scholarship, which meant that I examined health, well-being, and medicine through the lens of history, law and policy, politics, and economics. Power and representation were taken into account in the interviews and the photography as well as in my analysis of the political economy, history, and policy. As such, I experienced the many conflicting emotions that come with examining the private and public lives of individuals against the backdrop of structural violence and systematic injustice.

It would be easy for me to paint a romanticized version of participating in this ethnographic project: coffee on board ships, Filipino meals, trips to the mall, watching music videos, and gaining the nickname Katy Perry. However, for every funny or positive interaction there were interactions that made me question my role as observer or photographer in these intimate and private spaces. Like when one man, we will call him Martin, broke down crying during our interview and I found out it was his first week as a seafarer; when we were delivering Christmas presents and I saw an ambulance transporting a dockworker whose leg was crushed by a windmill blade; or when I sat awkwardly in the mess hall waiting on seafarers because of issues with the crane – these moments were just as significant as the coffee breaks and laughter. Every day that I drove to the port, I had to prepare myself for the stories I might hear or the tragedy I might witness. The following is from my notes after one such incident:

I delivered Christmas presents to seafarers today. We left around 10:15 am and returned at 11:45 am. While delivering gifts (shoeboxes wrapped in Christmas paper with toiletries inside), an ambulance and fire truck drove by. We tried to find where they went, but couldn't see any of the lights from where we were. The chaplain went back to the docks after lunch and found out that a dockworker was crushed under a windmill blade. Her text to me read, "I went back to the docks. A dockworker was crushed under windmill blade on [location retracted]. I heard it's bad. The ambulance took him to [location retracted]. I don't have a name."

When I got back to the office I wanted to talk to someone about it, but I didn't even know how to begin processing it. A co-worker made a joke to me about a picture I had posted on Facebook and I almost said something to her. I wanted to. But how do you process

that kind of tragedy in this type of setting? “Yeah. And by the way, I think someone may have just died while I was delivering presents.” It was easier to fake a smile and laugh.

Instead, I texted my advisors, wrote down my feelings, and then closed my office door and cried.

The culmination of these moments was why I contemplated not entering the port or boarding the vessel on some days, yet even these thoughts were reminders of my privilege – the option to stay home. This paradox of not wanting to board the vessel because of how my privilege made me feel and wanting to board the vessel because of my feelings of privilege constantly drew me into their stories because of how uncomfortable their stories made me feel. In short, my resistance to witnessing their lives was a constant reminder of my own complicity in a system that hurts and damages so many. At the same time, and what this project shows, is that the migrant seafarers I collaborated with cannot be reduced to passive victims who are caught in systems of oppression, as migrants are often portrayed. When I asked migrant seafarers to photograph their lives, there were pictures of storms as well as celebrations; pictures of men working with backs bent as well as pig roasts and hot tub parties.

I started this project wanting to understand how political economic policies are embodied and ways to change policies that are harmful to the health of people or populations, and I left this project with the realization that although some occupations pose more dangers with less social benefits (e.g. seafaring), we are all already actors in these systems, for better or worse. We have choice and our choice is constrained. My unique view as an outsider granted me permission to ask seemingly obvious questions about health and well-being without being laughed out of the room, but my outsider perspective also made it clear that I was part of the problem. My complicity was on display as I drove in and out of the port every week in a car transported by ships, ate cheap food

and bought cheap products because of their sacrifice, and benefitted off their backbreaking labor through my research.

The conflicting emotions that I felt between wanting to reveal the structures of violence that create a disposable workforce and subsequent worse health outcomes against a backdrop of men who find joy and laughter within these systems has never gone away. During the interviews and writing, the conflict was always present. It is my hope that the migrant seafarers' stories and pictures are a starting place, not an ending place, to understand how we concurrently accept and oppose multiple levels of violence in our lives and the lives of others. These conflicting emotions and the times that the research did not go as planned or as wanted made Nancy Scheper-Hughes' call for a "good enough" ethnography even more real and poignant. Scheper-Hughes wrote, "We struggle to do the best we can with the limited resources we have at hand" and this calls for a "good enough" ethnography.¹¹²

Before beginning this project, I thought of Scheper-Hughes' "limited resources" as material goods (will I have enough cameras? will I be able to get a scholarship to visit the Philippines?), but at the end, I understand "limited resources" as something more abstract and intangible. Renato Rosaldo writes in *Culture & Truth*, "At what point can people say that they have completed their learning or their life experience?"¹¹³ This question does not ask for an answer, but an action. My official interviews ended seven months after I began, but my project continues. I still see some of the seafarers when they are in port or communicate with them via social media, and I am still learning something new and different from them. A "good enough" ethnography recognizes that some inherent tensions cannot be resolved, but a "good enough" ethnography still

¹¹² Nancy Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 28.

¹¹³ Rosaldo, *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*, 295.

holds the ethnographer – me – responsible for mitigating these tensions to the extent possible. My limited resources are neither an excuse to be lazy nor an excuse to stop acting.

Although there were many tensions to be resolved, like private meeting spaces and cameras, others were unresolvable. For instance, I could not resolve the fact that I am a young female boarding a vessel that is home to a crew of twenty-one male seafarers. As one longshoreman who regularly boarded the vessel told me, “We get girls around here, just not girls like you.” However, I worked to mitigate the gender differences by rarely wearing skirts/dresses (and when I did, they were long skirts/dresses), always mentioned my son in interviews, and made it clear that I was married and uninterested in flirtatious banter. At the same time, I did not want to paint myself as a neutral fly that only observed their lives without participating in their jokes, downtime, and other activities. Case in point, in my first interview on board the vessel a group of men walked in the mess hall while I was conducting the interview and began speaking Tagalog. The mess hall is a jovial atmosphere where people are constantly gathered for meals or downtime. They walked in, not knowing I was in the middle of the interview, and I could instantly tell I was being talked about, even though I did not know what they were saying. I asked them, “What? What are you saying? . . . [We all laughed]. You have to speak in English! [Laughter from all of us].” They left the mess hall and a few minutes later the interviewee asked:

DJ: After you interview me, can I interview you?
Shannon: Yeah, I think that’s only fair.
DJ: Interview you about your [I did not understand what he said].
Shannon: My life?
DJ: Yeah.
Shannon: Yeah.
DJ: Love life.
Shannon: Oh! Love life! [Laughter] I’m married.
DJ: Yeah. [Laughter]. Sorry!
Shannon: Nope! Strictly business.

This interaction had to be handled in the moment, but I was also prepared for these interactions because of a female port chaplain who shared her life and stories with me over the years we worked together. I knew not to wear skirts/dresses because she told me a story about a longshoreman who came up to her as she was leaving a ship. “Ma’am,” he called out. “Yes?,” she said. He told her: “I need to confess a sin to you. While you were walking up the gangway, I tried to look up your skirt. You had shorts on underneath, which made me realize you knew what I was doing.” She laughed a lot when she told me this story and added, “I grew up in Catholic school. I learned to always wear shorts under my skirts.” Although the story was funny, she was also imparting advice to a young female in a male dominant community. Needless to say, I never wore skirts or dresses when climbing the gangway unless they were an ‘appropriate’ length. At the same time, there was a strong feeling of injustice that I had to swallow every Monday morning when I was deciding what to wear: “Why can’t they keep their eyes off my underwear?” went through my head more than once.

Flirtatious interactions like the one above turned out to be rare for most of the seafarers I interacted with (and most were more excited to show me pictures of their families), but it was my first entry into the tensions that exist in ethnography. DJ continued to ask me flirtatious questions during the many months I spent on board the vessel and I continued redirecting his questions, yet he was also respectful of my role and the most helpful when I needed people to interview. He gave me a tour of the vessel, explained activities like their basketball league (and let me play basketball on the vessel), and gave me the mess hall to use for interviews – the most private place on the ship other than their bedrooms. What became clear in all of these multiple interactions is that ethnographic projects, specifically critical ethnographic projects, are not dispassionate and

unbiased, but understanding and recognizing our entangled embodiment was an important element throughout the work.

Rosaldo further illuminates this shift in ethnographic embodiment when describing the way culture was traditionally studied in modern anthropological projects of the early to mid-twentieth century.¹¹⁴ He discusses how the former forms of ethnography with the ‘objective observer’ at the helm, one who can understand another culture by spending a few months/years with natives, is at best laughable and at worst an academic form of imperialism. Moreover, the ethnographer who assumes a neutral position of study, as though he or she is not also a socially located individual with gendered and racial histories, is naïve. Taking this seriously, I had to study my own embodiment in their spaces just as much as I wanted to study their embodiment on the ship as well as come to terms with (and admit) that I was not an expert on their lives or health worlds after one year with them. What I can do is translate their stories and try to make sense of their health worlds the best I can in relation to historical policies and labor movements. As described in Chapter 1, I took seriously Rosaldo and Ong’s methods of a situated ethnographic approach that balances structure and power with agency and culture.¹¹⁵ Ethnography is a means of representing humans and social lives, and a critical ethnography is a means of ethically representing people within their larger contexts, namely political and economic contexts, but also gendered and cultural contexts.

INFORMATION GATHERING PROCESS: A PHOTO-ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

This ethnographic project was, without a doubt, situated in political and economic contexts. Historically, the shift in liberal economic policies of the 1970s and 1980s combined with the shift in port and border security after September 11, 2001 not only changed my accessibility to seafarers,

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 845-862.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.,140; Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, 11.

but also – more importantly – changed their accessibility to land-based services. For this reason, I rarely spent time with the seafarer’s I collaborated with outside of the port or their vessel. Although some seafarers, especially those who work on cruise ships, are able to access land-based services if they have an escort and are in port for a longer period, the seafarers I collaborated with had such a quick route between ports that it was difficult for them to take time off during the 24 hours they were land-based. It was rare for me to take seafarer’s out of the port, but I did obtain an escort pass from the Port Police Department and transported a few seafarers on shopping excursions. My favorite of all these trips was when I took DJ to the mall. I was able to get a better sense of his political views once he was away from other seafarers and hear about his family in more detail. While we were at the mall, I sat outside reading and drinking coffee while he shopped for a few hours. Upon his return, he had bags of shoes and electronics, which were cheaper to buy in the U.S. than in the Philippines. More than likely, the same consumer goods he sought are those that he has transported on a ship. The supposed benefit of neoliberalism that offers cheaper consumer pricing due to robust trade and markets still did not ‘trickle down’ to the Filipinos whose labor facilitates it.

Other than these rare shopping trips, I generally had a difficult time working with seafarers outside of the port, which meant that I needed to find a private place to conduct interviews on board the vessel. As mentioned earlier, DJ, the Chief Cook, was irreplaceable as someone who helped me navigate these various systems. As Chief Cook, he was in charge of the kitchen, which also meant he was unofficially in charge of the mess hall. The mess hall is on the second level of the ship and is where seafarers eat, watch television, or hang out with friends. The long table in the middle of the room, covered with a thick turquoise and flower-patterned plastic tablecloth, was where I conducted all of my interviews. Throughout the room, there were orange illustrated posters

that encouraged seafarers to be safe on the job (I go into more detail about the work these posters are doing in Chapter 4). The television was usually on when I arrived and seafarers would be sitting on the couch smoking or sitting at the table eating. DJ loved American music videos and he was usually laughing and singing along. At the beginning, I felt timid and left the television on during the interviews, but as I felt more comfortable with the seafarers, I would ask them to turn the television off or to turn it down and to leave the room. Inside the mess hall, I could hear the clanking of the crane and the containers being moved off one-by-one. There was a small window in the room that was covered by a curtain. I loved to draw the curtain back and look out of it when I was waiting for an interview to start because I could see a different perspective of the ship and see some of the workers off-loading cargo.

Over the course of nearly a year, I would drive to the port, make nice with port security (I was told to bring the security home-baked goods every now and then, but I never did – not out of a moral ethical code, but laziness. I do even not cook for my own family), wind my way to the back of the port, put on my badge, and take a deep breath. Sometimes, I would sit in my SUV for a few minutes, wondering if I had ‘it’ in me today – ‘it’ being the tenacity or kindness I needed to offer that day. Finally, I would walk from my SUV to the gangway, climb up the roughly 25 steps, and sign in – “Shannon Guillot-Wright, Interviews.” I would be given a Visitors Pass (they stopped giving me the pass after a couple months and simply motioned me on), climb up to the next level – another roughly 25 steps – open the heavy door, and make my way to the mess hall. Once in the mess hall, DJ would greet me with a smile and make me the best cup of instant coffee I have ever had. Sometimes I would get cookies, too, even though I always said no thanks.

After I had my coffee, DJ would call someone on the phone and tell him to talk to me, or tell someone hanging out in the mess hall to talk to me. A few times, I left without getting any

interviews because they were too busy or there was an emergency with the ship's container crane, which is used to load and unload containers. Later, when I interviewed the Captain, I found out that the crane emergencies were, unfortunately, all too common when they were in our particular port. According to the Captain, the crane always worked fine in the Gulf of Honduras port, but in the Gulf of Mexico port, the longshoreman almost always found something wrong with it and would make the seafarers use a rented one from a local stevedore company – escalating their fees and worktime.

Shannon: You said this route is pretty hectic, you may have used the word stressful. What makes this route even more hectic than other routes you've taken?

Captain: Sometimes you can't sleep. You arrive at midnight and then have some work – some paperwork to complete – and then you can't sleep, the three of us. So after that, after one day or two days you have to arrive again. You don't have time to take the rest or make a relax, that's why. And besides, there is some issue when we come here regarding the crane. They find small things saying the crane is not working well, but in [location retracted], they never complain about the crane. But every time we come here, little things, they complain. That's why when we're coming here we're already expecting that they have complaints and it will be charged to the owners. And that can reflect my work. The owners will think it is me, so I explain to the owners the situation. The stevedores is very strict in spite of the very small things. In [location retracted], they never complain about the crane. That's why every time we're coming here we're thinking that it's very stressful. But anyway, we cannot do nothing about the problem because it is their choice. So it's okay. I told him okay. I don't protest. And then I tell the owners what's happening with the vessels so that the owners believe what I am to report . . . Sometimes they bring their own crane. Because of complaints they don't want to operate the ship's crane and then they are using their own shore crane, and that takes time, and then charge it to the owners.

The container crane shows how complicated the maritime industry is for all workers at multiple levels. For migrant seafarers, using a rented crane costs more money and takes more time, which they must report to companies and it puts them at risk for company repercussions (e.g., lost wages or jobs) as well as increases their stress and decreases their sleeping/rest time. On the other side, longshoreman who work the cranes put themselves at incredible risk. During my research, two crane operators died and another was injured at a nearby port when a crane collapsed on them.

The competing risk and injury makes it difficult to advocate for one process over another and instead shows the layers of danger that can create illness, injury, and death for the many people involved in the maritime industry when economic productivity is valued over the lives and health of the workers.

Other differences between ports and companies that I found in my research were related to movement. In the Gulf of Honduras port, the seafarers could leave the port with few restrictions. The Second Officer/Medical Officer took pictures of a pig roast that they had on their vessel in the Gulf of Honduras port and the crew looked more relaxed compared to when I saw them in the Gulf of Mexico port (i.e., more downtime and less stressed). They often discussed the differences between the ports, especially shore leave and crane difficulties. Many of the crewmembers associated their stress to stricter regulations in the U.S., for instance, a new policy (or newly enforced policy) that restricts shore leave pass waivers.

Recently, seafarers have been having a difficult time obtaining a waiver from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) if their shore leave pass expires. The shore leave pass can expire when a ship is at anchor for more than 29 days, but CBP has been denying migrant seafarers a waiver when this occurs. This is significant because migrant seafarers need a shore leave pass not only to leave the port for errands like buying toiletries, but also to get to a U.S.-based airport in order to fly home. In April 2018, at least three migrant seafarers from the port I did my research in were unable to get a waiver from CBP to go to the airport, even though their U.S. visas were valid, after their ship was at anchor for more than 29 days. Their seafaring contracts were also expired so they could not work on the ship. The seafarers were forced to sail with the vessel to Singapore on a route that was not going through the Panama Canal and would take them two months longer. During those two months that they were away from their families longer than

expected, they could not work and their families were not getting remittances. According to people who work with the Center for Seafarers Rights, these incidences seem to be occurring more frequently in the U.S. since 2017 and a survey is currently being conducted with migrant seafarers to document all such cases.

The regulatory apparatuses in the U.S. that migrant seafarers (and those who work with them) must tolerate happen at varying levels and degrees. As a U.S. citizen without a criminal record, my access to ships could be tedious, but not difficult. My initial introduction to the crew was in early 2017 when a local port chaplain introduced me to the Captain. We met with the Captain to obtain permission for me to board the vessel and to conduct interviews with the seafarers. After I had the Captain's blessing, U.S. government blessing via my Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), and UTMB Institutional Review Board (IRB) blessing, I spent almost every Monday with seafarers for seven months - interviewing them, conducting participant observation, and doing photovoice.

The interviews with seafarers and those in the seafaring industry were, generally speaking, successful. The interviews helped me gain a more in-depth understanding of their lives, while also playing a dual role of helping the seafarers understand the reason I was on board the vessel. The photovoice project, although successful in some important ways, was also a deviation to what the initial project set out to do. Photovoice is a method that allows participants to show me what is important in their lives, gives them control over which photos are taken representing their lives, and can reach policy advocates.¹¹⁶ However, as a method that enables seafarers to reflect on their community and promote critical dialogue, my particular project did not live up to its ideal.¹¹⁷ This

¹¹⁶ Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris, "Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment," *Health Education & Behavior* 24, no. 3 (1997): 370, <https://doi.org/10.1177/109019819702400309>.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

was due in large part to how the seafaring industry operates, but it was also because I felt uncomfortable asking them to give me even more of their time or their day. Scheduling issues made it difficult for me to have a focus group because it was nearly impossible to have multiple seafarers in the same room at the same time; either it was their break, they were sleeping, they were running errands, or they were in the middle of working. When I eliminated the focus groups and chose to interview the photographers one-on-one, there were emergencies that derailed the conversation or the conversation went in a different direction. The seafarers who participated in the photovoice project often brushed away or ignored my questions about the importance of a particular picture and were more interested in telling me stories about their families or hearing stories about mine. In the end, most of the discussion about the photos, if any, happened through messaging on social media sites.

The use of photos for this study was also complicated because I cannot show faces, even if a seafarer consented to have his face shown. My final photovoice consent form read, in part:

Under no circumstances can photographs have identifying information (people or property) and the final research will not disclose the port name, port city, or any identifying information related to the vessel. If you inadvertently take an identifying picture, every attempt will be made to deidentify the image(s). If deidentification is not possible, the image(s) will be destroyed.

Because of these restrictions, I could not show two compelling images without obscuring faces. In these cases, I was able to obscure their identity by placing fake sunglasses over their eyes, which mimicked a black box.

Although obscuring faces sometimes bothered me and I wanted to find ways to push against it, I also understood the reason within the history of medical research ethics, traced to the Declaration of Helsinki after the atrocities of World War II. I am situated within a medical research university that has few qualitative researchers, much less photo-ethnographers, and their concerns

(though bureaucratic at times) were at least valid to the extent that I also wanted to protect the people I have come to work with, respect, and care for deeply. Moreover, as Bourgois and Schonberg analyzed, photographs are not neutral just as written texts or tape recorders are not neutral.¹¹⁸ Photography and ethnography have a history of misuses and abuses and they are both “torn between objectifying and humanizing; exploiting and giving voice; propagandizing and documenting injustice; stigmatizing and revealing; fomenting voyeurism and promoting empathy; stereotyping and analyzing.”¹¹⁹ Similar to Bourgois and Schonberg’s preference to show photos alongside textual explanations to reduce the likelihood of photos being taken out of context or misrepresented, I also use the photos as a source of data to be explained and analyzed. The photos – though at times funny, endearing, scary, or saddening – are reflections of their lives. I want to ensure that the images are used to show our shared humanness, not to create a cultural other.

Issues like how to use photos or how to work with ethics committees were examples of how power and representation had to be dealt with, both institutionally through a review board, but also within the interviews, the photovoice project, and in the dissertation. For the photovoice project, I asked seafarers to take images that represented their health worlds, and even though they were given instructions not to take pictures of people’s faces, it inevitably happened. I gave them a broad definition for the images (“pictures that are about your health and well-being”) so that there would be few restrictions. It was important to have them take pictures with as little restrictions as possible because of their different perspectives compared to mine. Jerome Crowder explains the importance of a photovoice or photo-elicitation approach that elicits different perspectives in *The Photography Handbook*: “Even though I live with Aymara migrants for long periods of time (up to two years) and speak their language (Spanish and Aymara) I am still a

¹¹⁸ Bourgois and Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend*, 13.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 14.

foreigner. And because I am not a native, I cannot see the world as they do. For example, sometimes residents ask me, ‘why don’t you take a photo of that?’ and they point to something that did not immediately catch my attention.”¹²⁰

Additionally, not only was their perspective of what is or is not important to them more interesting, but they also had access to spaces and activities I could not gain access to, such as their port in the Gulf of Honduras, their celebrations while at sea, and their work activities. One seafarer was particularly interested in photographing their journey to and from the ports in the Gulf of Honduras and the Gulf of Mexico so that I could see the difference between government restrictions. For almost a month, I drove through the port (not delivering home baked goods to security guards), climbed the gangway, and asked about the photos; and for close to a month he smiled and said, “I’m sorry, *mano*,¹²¹ but the weather is too rainy, and so the pictures won’t work yet.” Finally, after the rain cleared, he took his photos and I developed them. The images gave me a completely different perspective of their life on board the vessel, one that no one had told me about or explained in much detail in interviews. The two images that were the most compelling because of the stories they revealed, which appear in Chapter 5, are photos of the crew having a pig roast and relaxing in a hot tub on board the vessel. The seafarers did not discuss these activities, even when I would ask what they do for downtime, so seeing them laughing and having a good time while at sea or in the Gulf of Honduras port was revealing. Most of the photos that migrant seafarers took were related to their work – painting the ship, unloading cargo, or fixing a leak. However, these two images, as well as images of food and celebrations, shows the dual nature of seafaring. I define seafarers as “people who live and work at sea,” and the photographs the

¹²⁰ Terence Wright, *The Photography Handbook*, Media practice, (New York: Routledge, 1999), 165.

¹²¹ *Mano* is a Filipino term of respect used for elders.

seafarers took embody this definition. The ship is not only their office, but also their home. Needless to say, it was worth the drives and worth the wait to have his images.

In the end, three seafarers and one person in the seafaring industry took pictures using a film camera and three seafarers used their cell phones. Seafarers were instructed on how to use the film cameras and had the cameras between two to four weeks, depending on their preference. Only one seafarer's film was unable to be developed. After collecting and reviewing the photos, I ensured each photographer who used a film camera had a copy of their photos for personal records. Outside of photovoice, all the interviews with seafarers took place on board the vessel, but I also participated in their lives outside the port when I took them on shopping trips, as time allowed, and followed their seafaring journeys via social media sites. After spending seven months doing in-depth interviews with seafarers, I made infrequent trips to the port and took seafarers on shopping excursions over the course of three more months. Additionally, some seafarers continued to take photos and send them to me even though I was no longer boarding the vessel. Most of my visits happened in the morning around breakfast or in the afternoon during lunch. I conducted fourteen in-depth interviews with seafarers. Simultaneously, I conducted seven photovoice projects and interviewed two people in the seafaring industry who had experience or knowledge in maritime policy and law or maritime human rights.

In addition to the interviews, I conducted a historical analysis of the history of Philippine and U.S. relations and the labor export program as well as a policy analysis of seafaring health and labor rights. The historical and policy analysis provided the backbone for the photo-ethnographic data collected by laying the ideological and theoretical foundations within the global political economy. I studied nineteenth and twentieth century policies and explored the ways that colonialism became thinkable to Americans. I then framed how colonial, post-colonial, neo-

colonial, and neoliberal ideologies and policies affect Filipino migrant seafarers today. I reviewed written materials in maritime health, global health, and public health journals, maritime websites and blogs, and materials provided at academic conferences, such as the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA) conference and the American Public Health Association (APHA) conference.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS: INDIVIDUAL, STRUCTURAL, AND SYSTEMATIC

Throughout my research, I wanted to be intentional about how I approached seafarers and how my analysis spoke to or against violence and injustice. An ethical representation of the everyday lived experiences of people must be accountable both to the people one has built a relationship with, but also to revealing structures of violence and systems of injustice. An ethical representation of seafarers' lived experiences was a core component to conducting my photo-ethnographic work, which I believe should be one of the core tenets of the critical medical humanities. As a field, the medical humanities has not always been willing to critique the structural violence and systematic injustices within the medical system.¹²²

The medical humanities, which started in the 1960s as a way to humanize doctors, often left critical voices outside their walls. My dissertation does not set aside structural violence or systematic injustice, and I am under the persuasion that it is an ethical imperative to incorporate structural violence and systematic injustices into our work if we want to have humane physicians and healthcare professionals. Physicians, nurses, and others who work directly with patients and patient care can learn much from the critical medical humanities, which questions, theorizes, and critiques the social and structural production of ill health.¹²³ Research within the medical

¹²² W. Viney, F. Callard, and A. Woods, "Critical medical humanities: Embracing entanglement, Taking risks," *MEDICAL HUMANITIES* 41, no. 1 (2015): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1136/medhum-2015-010692>.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

humanities must engage in the politics that shape policy and practice and go beyond the study of clinical encounters by studying the effectiveness of those policies and practices. It is no longer enough to point towards an existing law or policy to determine whether someone has protections. I chose a photo-ethnographic project in the critical medical humanities because it creates both an academic space to challenge social and political structures, while also providing a space to study the production of ill health and death.

I approached my commitment to revealing violence and injustice through traditional research methods, like consent forms that clearly explained my purpose for being there and their confidentiality, as well as through my research methods, like participant observation. Consent forms have the potential to distract from relationship building, especially when they are part of initial conversations and contain technical language enforced by IRBs. The culture within U.S. bureaucratic systems that includes paper trails and signatures has posed special challenges to researchers working with migrants, most notably when migrants are undocumented and their precarity is often mediated by paper documents.¹²⁴

However, in the case of working with migrant seafarers, I had two somewhat positive experiences when using my consent forms. First, my University did not require seafarers to sign the consent form. This was the most fortunate development out of a frustratingly long five-month approval process. In the end, it was decided that migrant seafarers, although not technically a vulnerable population group within research ethics (that term is solely used for prisoners, minors, and pregnant women), they were a population group that required special protections. Given this

¹²⁴ David S. Wald, "Bureaucracy of ethics applications," *BMJ* 329, no. 7460 (2004).; Dina Birman, *Ethical Issues in Research With Immigrants and Refugees*, ed. Celia B. Fisher Joseph E. Trimble, *The Handbook of Ethical Research with Ethnocultural Populations & Communities*, (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 155-56.

precarity, as already mentioned, I never collected real names, only use pseudonyms in the dissertation, and conceal faces in pictures.

The second somewhat positive experience (if not unfortunate for the migrant seafarers) is that they exist within a bureaucratic system, not outside it. Migrant seafarers work contractual labor and deal with multiple agencies and companies as well as maritime and international regulations, which requires reading and signing numerous contracts and forms. For this reason, the consent form was not anything out of the ordinary for the seafarers. However, this is another example of how on and through paper seafarers' rights and protections can be guaranteed or dismantled, yet in practice seafarers' learn how to manage unwritten rules and policies. On my first day on board the vessel, I talked to the Captain and left him approximately twenty copies of consent forms, my business card, and photovoice procedure forms. The next week, when I conducted my first interview, I had more copies of consent forms, business cards, and photovoice procedures with me. Almost every seafarer, week after week, smiled and said, "I already have one" or "I already read it." I had one instance when a seafarer read the entire form in front of me before beginning the interview, but most tucked the forms away and explained my project to me better than I could have.

My ethnographic methodology included semi-structured interviews, photovoice, and participant observation. I specifically chose an ethnography because it breaks down the typical boundaries of academia and gives me the opportunity to build longer relationships with the people I interviewed.¹²⁵ Although most ethnographies include living with the people one is observing for a long period, I was unable to live with the migrant seafarers I collaborated with for differing reasons. The main reason I could not take a seafaring trip with my participants was that the vessel

¹²⁵ Bourgois and Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend*, 14.

was not set up as a passenger vessel. Some cargo vessels operate as passenger vessels, and towards the beginning of my research I contemplated taking a journey on one of these ships; but in the end, I decided being a passenger on a cargo vessel that did not involve my research participants would not give me an entry into their particular lives. For instance, not only would it be a different crew than I was working alongside, but I would have been on a ship with a route that took a few months, not the stressful one-week route, and the ship's crew would not be entirely Filipino.

Before September 11, 2001, it would have been more likely for someone to ride on this vessel – even though it was not set up as a passenger vessel – so long as you are willing to pay for your spot and food. After September 11, heightened port security has created new systems like the “Automated Manifest System” (AMS) that requires ships to submit electronic cargo manifests within twenty-four hours of arrival and the “International Ship and Port Facility Security” (ISPS) Code that defines stricter security measures for operators and vessels (to name only two).¹²⁶ The increased measures do not explicitly note that a vessel like the one I was boarding cannot take a passenger, but the procedures create systems and layers of regulatory apparatuses whose function is to surveil the movement of people. As mentioned earlier, seafarers have learned to tolerate or circumvent these apparatuses, but the regulations also have the effect of disciplining both seafarers and those of us who work with seafarers' by limiting otherwise innocuous activities. For example, there are signs in U.S. ports that say it is unlawful to take photographs in the port. I am certain that people still take photographs (I witnessed it), but how people take photographs and how the photographs are used changes based on these regulatory signs. Whether or not I followed every rule every day, I was still personally aware of when I was not following a regulation (even when

¹²⁶ "How the Events of 9/11 Affected the US Freight and Logistics Industry - Latest industry shipping news from the Handy Shipping Guide," Handy Shipping Guide, September 12, 2011, 2018, http://www.handyshippingguide.com/shipping-news/how-the-events-of-911-affected-the-us-freight-and-logistics-industry_3065.

no one was around). In this way, all of us have embodied the surveillance systems that the seemingly innocent regulations create.

This surveillance, including self-surveillance, follows Foucault's analysis of power in the *History of Sexuality* when he analyzed that at the turn of the century controlling life was less about killing and more about letting people die¹²⁷ and his analysis of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon in *Discipline and Punish* as the internalization of institutionalized apparatuses of surveillance.¹²⁸ Power is coercive and disciplining instead of repressive and punitive. Foucault's analysis needs to be updated for the contemporary context in some important ways; namely, the reemergence of a militarized and police state globally, a boom in the prison industrial complex in the U.S., and how surveillance can be turned upon the powerful (sousveillance), but in other important ways his analysis has proven correct. The surveillance that we practice on others and ourselves is a productive power instead of an oppressive one. The quest to know, understand, and improve humanity through the scientific methods of measuring, counting, and ordering make bodies intelligible through security and monitoring technologies. For seafarers, the "disciplining of the individual body and the regulatory control of the population"¹²⁹ happens through an overlay of regulations and policies that constrains their movement at sea and in port (and constrains the movement of visitors). The regulatory mechanisms made it easier to have consent forms signed and to explain the project through the typical bureaucratic means, but these regulations also put me on the same level with the systems that have had damaging consequences for the health and well-being of seafarers.

¹²⁷ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley, 1st Vintage Books ed., (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).

¹²⁸ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (New York: Random House, 1977).

¹²⁹ Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, 35.

Although the regulating mechanism put an abrupt end to the conversations about riding on the vessel with the seafarers, gender also played a role. Before learning that it was out of the question, I asked the port chaplain about my odds of riding with these particular seafarers. She explained that years ago (and prior to September 11), she tried to take the same journey (this route has been in operation since 1929). The shipping company approved her travel and funding was in place until the company found out she was a female chaplain. Approval was removed and she has never been able to go.

Riding on the vessel turned out to be logistically impossible, but my desire to participate in their life by living with them on the vessel prompted completely different conversations from the seafarers than I was expecting. For instance, I recorded this conversation in my notes early on:

The Chief Cook and I talked about music (there were music videos playing in the background). I told them I wanted to ride with them to [location retracted] and they laughed at me and said it was only possible if they smuggled me. That led to a conversation about smuggling on another vessel . . . He got up, turned on the TV, lit a cigarette, and I thought he was done talking. All of a sudden he queued up a listing (it looked like a cable TV guide) and started going through videos. I'm still not sure why they had that video on the TV, but he played the entire video of guards busting a vessel. It never showed how many drugs were found, but I saw the guards going through the boxes and pulling out the drugs. And then they found a person being smuggled.

Months later, when I was interviewing the Captain of the vessel, I found out he was also the Captain of the previous vessel carrying the drugs and stowaway that the Chief Cook talked about in the mess hall.

Shannon: Can you tell me the difference in the different positions you've worked over the years and some of the different stressors or dangers that you've experienced?

Captain: Yes, I can tell you the story of my previous vessel because when we were assigned in [location retracted], I have a lot of experience with a stowaway carrying drugs inside the pallets. As you can see . . . we have to remove the inside of this box and let them stay [he realized there was a stowaway during the voyage, but they could not do anything about it]... We stayed on board the ship and they take a search dog and there was some

stowaway, so we have to call the police, “There is a stowaway on board,” and they make some interview, “Where did he come from,” and “What is he carrying?” and that was very stressful.

Shannon: And were you the Captain?

Captain: Yes, and I was the Captain then. The port authorities asked me everything, what happened, so I told them that this was out of our control already because he stayed inside the [retracted] pallets and we could not see him. So that it is the responsibility of the port facility. Okay, we have to accept that we are the carrier, but we could not see the man inside the pallet. That was beyond our control. So after that he picked up the stowaway and brought him to the jail and make some interviews and I don't know exactly what happened.

This stowaway story – though not what I meant when I asked, “Can I travel with you all?” – helped me understand the ways that seafarers must exist within a complex and precarious environment. In an ideal world, I could have travelled with them on a voyage, but the non-idealized world *is* their reality, which is what a critical medical humanities approach teaches us to look for – the lived practice of people rather than their formal storyline. Similarly, four months into my interviews the crew went into dry dock, which interrupted interviews and changed the crew that was in port. Dry docks are used for the maintenance and repair of ships and the length of time that ships are in dry dock depends on the work that is being done. The vessel I followed was in dry dock for three weeks and the Captain and crew were unsure if they would be returned to their normal route once the work was completed. This created a potential problem for the research, since I was not guaranteed that a new Captain or crew would be as amenable to me being on their ship every week while they were in port. I had a few different options that I considered, which were 1) fly to the port where they were in dry dock, 2) begin interviewing the new crew on the new vessel, or 3) wait-and-see if the original crew would be reinstated on their previous route. After consultation, I decided to wait-and-see if the crew would be reinstated and make my final decision after the three week dry dock. After three weeks, the crew and the vessel returned to the Gulf of

Honduras and Gulf of Mexico routes and I was able to continue my research, though some of the crewmembers' contracts ended and I did not see them again after dry dock.

My initial annoyance that the dry dock and route change might affect my research with the ship and crew quickly turned to empathy when I had to grapple with the fact that this was a disruption in their lives much more than it was in my life. One of the participants, DJ, was one week away from going home when the dry dock was scheduled, keeping him from his wife and son a month longer than expected. I wrote these notes the last day I saw him:

The last time the seafarers will be in port until after dry dock. It was strange waving goodbye to [name retracted]. He'll leave from [location retracted] and won't be back – he's hoping to take a year off before working again. He says he needs to get back in shape because he's gained 16 kilos since starting as a seafarer. "I need to get healthy again!" When I drove off he was bent over one of the bars on the upper deck, watching the product get unloaded. If I didn't know any better, I would have thought he was enjoying himself.

DJ sent me images six months later of him on a new vessel, the steps covered in ice and the deck covered in snow.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The photo-ethnography of seafarers is interdisciplinary in nature and I used a combination of anthropological methods alongside historical and policy analysis. My field of study is the critical medical humanities, and I paid particular attention to how politics and economics influence maritime health, public health, and global health. In this vein, structural violence and systematic injustice were studied as a way to reimagine the health worlds of seafarers and to explore health prevention through the historical discourse of the distribution of power and resources instead of risk and disease. Traditionally, studies within the field of medical humanities have focused on bioethics, clinical ethics, and literature and medicine with only a tangential focus on social justice, structural violence, and the social determinants of health. Without discounting these important

fields of inquiry, this research shifted the focal point away from the doctor/patient encounter and instead focused on why certain bodies have more disease, illness, injury, and death. This shift in focus forced me to reckon with the history of U.S. policies and the current political economy (Chapter 3 and 4) and find new ways to influence health and healthcare outside of and within medical education (Chapter 5 and 6).

The critical medical humanities field is considered a second-wave project that adds to first-wave medical humanities questions and inquiries. Anne Whitehead and Angela Woods, who edited *The Edinburgh Companion to the Critical Medical Humanities*, show how race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, political economic, and historical studies of health and medicine can disrupt, change, analyze, and oppose structures and knowledges.¹³⁰ The ‘critical’ within medical humanities at once opposes certain ways of knowing while also implicating oneself in the many ways that knowledge is generative, collaborative, and emergent.¹³¹ Important to my work, scholars such as Hannah Bradby, Rosemary Jolly, Rebecca Hester, Sarah Atkinson, and Stuart Murray explore the relationship between health, care, and citizens in the *Companion*. Their work in the critical medical humanities interrogates how health is imagined and produced for people of different nationalities and citizenship status’. Similarly, Bronwyn Parry, in her article *Narratives of Neoliberalism*, provides an ethnographic account of the outsourcing and contractualization of reproductive labor and its exploitative and subjugating practices alongside the lived experiences of those performing the clinical labor.¹³²

¹³⁰ Anne Whitehead and Angela Woods, ed., *The Edinburgh Companion to the Critical Medical Humanities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016).

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹³² Bronwyn Parry, "Narratives of Neoliberalism: 'Clinical Labour' in Context," *Medical Humanities* 41 (2015).

Other thinkers who have been influential to the mobilization of a critical medical humanities lens include Jonathan Metzl, Anna Kirkland, and Paul Farmer. Metzl and Kirkland's edited book *Against Health* shows how the ideologies of health can be hidden because medicine is assumed as a universal good without critiquing underlying assumptions and meanings.¹³³ Paul Farmer's work has focused on the suffering inflicted through structural violence within and outside healthcare systems, with a focus on how historical political and economic violence creates and continues poverty.¹³⁴

However, even within these important and relevant studies, the experiences of Filipino migrant seafarers have continued to be marginalized, at best, or left entirely off the agenda, at worst. Seafarers are an understudied population group, yet they contribute to the majority of U.S. global trade. Their transient lives make them easy to be ignored or forgotten, yet they are not an inaccessible population group; most Filipino seafarers speak English and spend at least a few hours at their ports of call. By studying the everyday lives of a little known and little understood population, my insights – which are both written and visual – lend context, critique, and provocation to national and international policy that has upheld systems and structures that produce various forms of violence (i.e., individual, interpersonal, community, and structural) and injustice. Additionally, this project offers an important intervention to the fields of occupational health, labor migration, maritime studies, and health policy, to name a few. The social production of disease, which has traditionally been a marginalized area of study within the medical field, has been more

¹³³ Jonathan M. Metzl and Anna Kirkland, ed., *Against Health: How Health Became the New Morality on JSTOR* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2010).

¹³⁴ Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor with a new preface by the author*, 2005 ed., California series in public anthropology, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

closely attended to because of advocates like Paul Farmer¹³⁵, but labor as a determinant of health has been attended to less so. In 2018, the *American Journal of Public Health* (AJPH) published a series of articles on work as a social determinant of health because of its absence in most health studies. Emily Quinn Ahonen and colleagues write that, “Despite its inclusion in socio-ecological models and its centrality in the lives of most adults, work remains remarkably absent from examinations of health inequities in the United States.”¹³⁶

Further, even within labor and health studies or migration and health studies in the fields of public and global health, there is an imbalance in focusing on land-based labor over sea-based labor. Building off of recent changes in public health and global health research, such as Camara Jones’ focus on racism as an indicator of ill health during her 2016 tenure as the APHA President as well as critical global health work by scholars Joao Biehl and Adriana Petryna,¹³⁷ my thesis draws on important critical lenses and furthers them by drawing attention to migrant seafarers. The current research in public and global health is promising, but migrant seafarers have so far been marginalized within these conversations or completely left off the agenda.

For instance, the 2016 APHA Annual Meeting had three sessions on maritime issues; however, only one is directly related to people who work at sea and their health and it is focused on access to clinics for fishing communities who have HIV/AIDS, not on the sociopolitical structures that make access or HIV/AIDS an issue.¹³⁸ The other two sessions were on hazardous

¹³⁵ Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor with a new preface by the author*.

¹³⁶ E. Q. Ahonen et al., "Work as an Inclusive Part of Population Health Inequities Research and Prevention," *Am J Public Health* 108, no. 3 (Mar 2018): 304, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304214>, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29345994>.

¹³⁷ João Guilherme Biehl and Adriana Petryna, *When People Come First: Critical Studies in Global Health*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

¹³⁸ American Public Health Association, "Annual Meeting & Expo Program," (American Public Health Association, October 12, 2016 2016).

material training and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.¹³⁹ A search for seafarers in the 2016 APHA agenda came back with zero results.¹⁴⁰ This is in comparison to the 2016 APHA agenda listing 58 sessions related to migration.¹⁴¹ The sessions at APHA on migration were documenting land travel, and sea travel was only thought of as a border-crossing mechanism, not a place of work and living.¹⁴²

Similarly, a search for various combinations of “seafarers, health, and employment” (e.g. seaman, labor) on OVID Medline produced only 72 results. In the *American Journal of Bioethics*, there was one peer-reviewed article on migration and zero articles published on employment. *Medical Humanities* had 27 results for migration and eight results for employment/labor, while the *Journal of the Medical Humanities* had 28 results for migration and 31 results for employment/labor. Seafarers, specifically, was not found in any of the three medical humanities/bioethics journals. These searches, and the subsequent review of the articles, show that a new wave of medical humanities is engaging in migration studies and employment studies, while traditional approaches to medical humanities (i.e. bioethics) is rarely engaging in these important and timely topics. Overall, there has been very little research in these fields. Furthermore, there is a dearth of research for seafaring populations within global health, public health, bioethics, and the medical humanities.

Public health, even in its most critical approach, has traditionally focused on the bounds of a land-based U.S. nation-state, but I argue that studying the little known aspects of transporters who are responsible for the cultivation and protection of goods to the U.S. can help one reimagine spaces of health as more than land-based. Such a reimagining can have significant effects on how

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

one comes to approach health rights. Hester Blum writes that “To date, few scholars (Marcus Rediker is a notable exception) have taken up questions of labor, citizenship, and nation in terms of seaman, whose work placed them at the center of such spheres of circulation.”¹⁴³ Historian Marcus Rediker’s analysis, like Blum’s, explores the history of seafarers and how “oceanic history is crucial to understanding historical process like the rise of capitalism and the formation of race and class,”¹⁴⁴ but their research lacks the voices and experiences of seafarers today and lacks questions concerning the health rights of seafarers.

Similar to the marginalization of labor and sea-based labor in public and global health studies, even less critical work has been done in the field of maritime health regarding seafarers’ employment arrangements and its effect on their health. Malcom MacLachlan, Bill Kavanagh, and Alison Kay’s systematic review of maritime health articles found that although “globalization of the shipping industry, increased automation and mechanization of work on ships, improvements in navigation techniques, reduction in crew numbers, increased uncertainty of and short-term contracting for seafarers in commercial fleets, multicultural crewing, and ships operat[ing] under flags of convenience” contributes to the health of seafarers, research in the maritime health field has not readily focused on these sociopolitical structures.¹⁴⁵ Further, their review found maritime health research largely focuses on healthcare access, delivery, and integration; telehealth; non-communicable diseases; communicable diseases; psychological functioning and health; and safety-related issues, but there are research gaps on the sociopolitical aspects of seafarers’ health

¹⁴³ Hester Blum, "The Prospect of Oceanic Studies," *PMLA* 125, no. 3 (2010): 671, <https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2010.125.3.670>.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Malcolm MacLachlan, Bill Kavanagh, and Alison Kay, "Maritime health: A Review with Suggestions for Research," *International Maritime Health* 63, no. 1 (2012): 1-2.

and that “greater efforts have to be made to address their [seafarers] right to health.”¹⁴⁶ They write that:

More papers should seek to address the multi-stake holder perspectives – owners, unions, port authorities, international regulatory bodies – which are salient to the challenges of addressing many maritime health problems ... [and] ... the positioning of maritime health in relation to the rapidly developing field of global health – with a stronger emphasis on health rights, social and organisational justice, health systems and policy, and innovations in access to care – might be of strategic advantage to both of these domains.¹⁴⁷

This dissertation addresses the significant gaps identified by MacLachlan, Kavanagh, and Kay and contributes to the development of more robust critical understandings of how policies, laws, and regulations can facilitate and/or impede seafarer’s health. Specifically, it puts into question how and why seafarers’ *de jure* right to health can be disregarded or circumvented *de facto* and ways to address these issues through advocacy and education.

Seafaring is a fraught and complicated way of life, and any research that attempts to understand the health worlds of seafarers must undertake the messy and complicated work of studying the many pieces, and sometimes-missing pieces, that contribute to illness and injury. Seafarer’s health rights cannot be understood without considering neoliberal policies of the late twentieth century, studying the regulations that contribute to protections or the lack of protections, interrogating structures that lead to seafaring as an occupation for indigent population groups, analyzing technological mechanisms, the tension between *de jure* and *de facto* access to health services, and speaking to the very people who live day in and day out the life and work of seafaring. Health policy discussions in the U.S. and internationally must not solely focus on the illness of seafarers as an interruption to travel and trade, but policy makers should consider that their decisions may contribute to how seafarers can exercise their rights to health and thus embody their

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 6.

health. In this context, health is more than disease and access to care – governance and economic structures come to not only matter, but also to play an integral role in the facilitation or impediment of healthcare and to the health arrangements/conditions of workers.

In summary, the significance of this dissertation inheres in the critique I make about how the systems and laws that are introduced to guarantee that the most precarious will be cared for are not enough. In fact, these policies and laws may actually work against the most precarious and their health needs. The critique that is made, by using the tools of the critical medical humanities, considers political economic policies alongside the lived experiences of seafarers to understand their health worlds. This body of work moves beyond the clinical encounter (e.g., doctor and patient relationship) and instead seeks to understand how some individuals and social groups benefit to the detriment of others. This logic follows a biopolitical perspective, which examines humans and their relationships with the political. Fundamentally, this research seeks to understand how some people are made to live better, longer, and more fully because of the social and too often physical death of another; how some people are made healthy through the injury of another.

In the next chapter, I show how colonial ideologies subjugated Filipinos, which creates the possibility for the current Filipino labor export program – a program that fosters cheap labor and subsequently cheap goods. The way in which many U.S. citizens live (e.g., buying cheap goods or accessing medical technologies) is intimately tied to racist political apparatuses and social structures. This racism, however, is not at the individual level, but it happens in and through governing techniques. We are complicit not because we actively seek racist policies (though, to be sure, some do), but the complicity I am outlining is the way we all participate in and benefit from a society that is built on the foundations of biological difference (i.e., racism) and that these ways of governing have made all of us more precarious, even while making some of us healthier. I began

my research by asking whether and how Filipino migrant seafarers can exercise their human right to health and the factors that facilitate or impede that exercise. Through a review of nineteenth and twentieth century policies alongside the photos and narratives of seafarers, this dissertation adds to the voices of labor and health advocates who watch injury, illness, and death occur to the disposable workers of our century not because there are not protections in place, but because these protections cannot, in fact, be accessed without causing more rather than less precarity.

Chapter 3

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF FILIPINO COMMODIFICATION

*Send forth the best ye breed –
Go find your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered fold and wild –
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half child.
Take up the White Man's burden.*

-Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man's Burden: The United States & the Philippine Islands*, 1899

“A GLOBAL PHILIPPINE ENTERPRISE”

The historical policies that contribute to the health worlds of Filipino seafarer's are steeped in the political economic practices of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this chapter, I explore the historical context of how and why Filipinos have become one of the world's major sources of exploitable, exportable labor alongside the history of the policies eroding the rights and safe working conditions of seafarers. Not only do Filipinos make up 30% of the world's maritime industry, but also nearly one million land-based occupations (e.g., custodians, domestic servants, nannies, foodservice workers) throughout the Western hemisphere are performed by Filipino/a's.¹⁴⁸ The colonial, post-colonial, neo-colonial, and neoliberal policies that have rendered Filipinos vulnerable to global exploitation are interconnected and require analysis before exploring Filipino migrant seafarer's experiences.

The former President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, makes clear how the Philippine state rethinks citizens as exportable commodities when she stated, “Not only am I the

¹⁴⁸ Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, *Philippine Overseas Employment Administration Annual Report* (POEA, 2014), 9.

head of state responsible for a nation of 80 million people. I'm also the CEO of a global Philippine enterprise of 8 million Filipinos who live and work abroad and generate billions of dollars a year in revenue for our country.”¹⁴⁹ The former-President's statement and the policies of the Philippine government are bold redefinitions of the nation-state. Filipino citizens are clearly and without pause considered exportable commodities, and it is the Philippine state that serves as the intermediary between its citizens and hiring companies. The movement of the state serving as the labor broker is part of a larger neoliberal agenda that values profit and competition in the global marketplace.¹⁵⁰ Similarly, the narrative of heroism is a continuation of neoliberalism, which makes those who sacrifice for their families and country justify their exploitation. The Philippines, as a government entity that acts like a corporation (e.g. “I'm also the CEO of a global Philippine enterprise”), is even more complicated by the colonial history of the Philippines. As Robyn Rodriguez has argued, the history of the labor brokerage movement in the Philippines is connected to “legacies of imperialism.”¹⁵¹

Rodriguez asserts that the Philippines is a labor brokerage state and that the government practices labor brokerage as a strategy that encourages company deregulation and reduces employee social benefit all while generating the state income from remittances.¹⁵² Filipinos have little choice but to sell themselves in a global labor market that profits off their bodies and then the Philippine state profits from the remittances their bodies earn. In these instances, Filipinos are not guaranteed long-term employment, which typically includes health and social benefits as well as a form of citizenship status, but instead they work finite periods of time (migrant seafarers work 9-12 month contracts) before returning to the Philippines. It is not that profiting from human labor

¹⁴⁹ Macapagal-Arroyo cited in Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, ix.

¹⁵⁰ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 107.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 211.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 107.

or understanding humans as exportable commodities is new, but that the way the Philippine government practices it is different. To better understand these differences and what the differences mean in the everyday lived experiences of Filipinos, it is necessary to contextualize the broad history of colonialism in the Philippines and then discuss how this history overlaps and interacts with postcolonial neoliberalism.

THE IMPERIAL DREAM

President William McKinley declared in a 1900 campaign speech, “Territory sometimes comes to us when we go to war in a holy cause, and whenever it does the banner of liberty will float over it and bring, I trust, blessings and benefits to all people.”¹⁵³ He continued this expansionist and imperialist speech throughout his campaign, adding, “Shall we deny to ourselves what the rest of the world so freely and justly accords to us?”¹⁵⁴ Only three years earlier, in his 1897 inauguration address, McKinley asserted that, “We want no wars of conquest. We must avoid the temptations of territorial aggression. Peace is preferable to war in almost every contingency.”¹⁵⁵ McKinley’s change of policy can be credited to Theodore Roosevelt, who was Assistant Secretary of the Navy in McKinley’s administration before becoming Governor of New York, Vice President of the United States, and President of the United States after McKinley’s assassination. Journalist Gregg Jones wrote that, “No one had done more to persuade McKinley that a war against Spain was not only moral but necessary. And no one had done more to prepare the nation for victory. In every sense, this would be Theodore Roosevelt’s war.”¹⁵⁶ However, it

¹⁵³ Gregg R. Jones, *Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines, and the Rise and Fall of America's Imperial Dream*, (New York: New American Library, 2012), 104.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

was not Roosevelt alone that changed McKinley's position about war and conquest, but also a civilizing narrative of American exceptionalism and the benefits of economic expansion.

Although the Philippines became the first global colony that the U.S. conquered in its quest for global superiority, it was certainly not the first war of expansion that the U.S. waged. In Roosevelt's nomination acceptance speech for Vice-President in 1901, he stated,

The history of the Nation is in large part the history of the Nation's expansion . . . Kentucky, Tennessee and the great Northwest, then known as the Illinois country, were conquered from our white and Indian foes during the Revolutionary struggles and were confirmed to us by the treaty of peace in 1783 . . . In 1803, under President Jefferson, the greatest single stride in expansion that we ever took was taken by the purchase of the Louisiana territory. This so-called Louisiana . . . was acquired by treaty and purchase under President Jefferson exactly and precisely as the Philippines have been acquired by treaty and purchase under President McKinley.¹⁵⁷

Roosevelt went on to say that there was nothing imperialistic or militaristic about the policy in the Philippines. If there was, then "Jefferson's policy in Louisiana was imperialistic; only military in the sense that Jackson's policy toward the Seminoles or Custer's toward the Sioux embodied militarism."¹⁵⁸ He ended by discussing the "rights" and "duties" that the U.S. had to "support that [Philippine] government until the natives gradually grow fit to sustain it themselves."¹⁵⁹

The path that led to the Philippine-American War started in the late 1800's when Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico were fighting for independence from Spain. The Philippines, named after King Philip II, was under Spanish rule from 1571 – 1898. The Philippines' location as one of the largest archipelagos with over 7,000 islands and surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, South China Sea, and Celebes Sea made it an ideal colonial territory.¹⁶⁰ The Philippines, as a nation-state, did

¹⁵⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, *Letter of Honorable Theodore Roosevelt Accepting the Nomination of the Republican National Convention of 1900 for Vice-President of the United States*, ed. Roosevelt Memorial Association, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1943).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Donna J. Amoroso Patricio N. Abinales, *State and Society in the Philippines*, (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 10.

not exist in the tenth or possibly even sixteenth century, and the people who lived in what we now think of as the Philippines shared characteristics of many Southeast Asian societies, such as body tattooing, family ties, and the sea as a source of food.¹⁶¹ There is evidence of Chinese-Philippine relations and residence in the centuries before the Spanish conquest, but it was Spanish rule that dramatically changed the polity of the Philippines.¹⁶² The economic changes in the Philippines during this era, and especially in the early nineteenth century, from local family farms to an export economy created rural poverty through feudalism.¹⁶³ Over time, Spain's control of the Philippines weakened and the U.S.'s colonial opportunity gained strength and momentum.

With Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico as some of the last possessions of the Spanish empire in the Western Hemisphere, the independence (or control) of the colonies represented global dominance and economic prosperity to the U.S. A majority of U.S. Republicans favored going to war in the name of independence, but it was the sinking of the battleship *Maine* on February 15, 1898 that solidified the Spanish-American War of 1898. The McKinley administration and Congress, at Roosevelt's insistence, passed a resolution on April 19, 1898 to secure Cuban independence.¹⁶⁴ On April 25, 1898, the U.S. declared war on Spain.

Maine was officially paying a visit to the Spanish colony of Cuba, but it was clear that the three-hundred-foot-long, 6,600-ton warship was in Cuba as a reminder of U.S. interests in the islands.¹⁶⁵ Charles Hamilton, a seventeen-year-old apprentice seaman, wrote home ten days before the attack: "By the looks of things now, I think we will have some trouble before we leave . . . We are in a pretty dangerous position at the present time and we hardly know when we are safe . . .

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 19. Patricio N. Abinales, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 19.

¹⁶² Ibid., 64.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 80-81.

¹⁶⁴ Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 27.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 5.

Hoping that I may be alive to see you all again.”¹⁶⁶ Hamilton would perish, along with 262 others who were wounded or killed, when a mine blasted through the ship. *Remember the Maine!* became the battle cry of Americans and assisted with the passing of a \$50 million emergency defense measure that same year.¹⁶⁷

Although the sinking of *Maine* helped spur the patriotic spirit of some Americans towards war, Republicans in Congress had been pushing for war well before *Maine* was attacked in Cuba.¹⁶⁸ Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and Assistant Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt saw the colony’s revolts as an opportunity to establish American global dominance and began petitioning President McKinley for a war with Spain when he took office in March 1897.¹⁶⁹ In an 1897 speech at the Naval War College, Roosevelt proclaimed, “No triumph of peace is quite so great as the supreme triumphs of war.”¹⁷⁰ By the time the U.S. declared war on Spain, the majority of American citizens were in support of the decolonization campaign that would ‘free’ Cuba, the Philippines, and other Spanish colonies. Businessman John W. Dexter had to appear before a judge for violating city permit laws after he jumped onto a City Hall park bench and proclaimed in verse: “There’s only one flag in the world for me; only one flag to light for liberty; only one flag to make the Cubans free; only one flag to make the Spaniards flee; the Stars and Stripes are good enough for me.”¹⁷¹ The magistrate exonerated him of charges.¹⁷² However, not all Americans felt war was the appropriate path. A Kansas City shoemaker, Thomas Collins, was held in protective custody from

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 9.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰“TR,” ed. David Grubin (American Experience, PBS, 1996).

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/tr/>.

¹⁷¹ Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 12.

¹⁷² Ibid.

an angry mob after he posted on his business door, “Closed in memory of a Christian Nation that descends to the barbarity of war.”¹⁷³

The Spanish-American War ended on December 10, 1898 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, but for the Philippines, the war had really just begun. The signing of the treaty gave Cuba independence and ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines (at the price of \$20 million) to the United States.¹⁷⁴ Early in the war in April 1898, Emilio Aguinaldo agreed to fight with the U.S. against Spain, so long as the U.S. gave Filipinos independence as they promised Cubans. Aguinaldo was the leader of the Filipino revolutionary movement after José Rizal – activist, journalist, poet, and doctor – was executed for masterminding an 1896 uprising in the Philippines.¹⁷⁵ U.S. Consul General Spencer Pratt, meeting with Aguinaldo, would not sign a document covering the terms of their agreement, but proclaimed, “As in Cuba, so in the Philippines.”¹⁷⁶ It was not to be so.

Early in the war, the U.S. saw the Philippines as a base on China’s doorstep and a window towards global economic expansion.¹⁷⁷ Global and economic dominance, alongside a civilizing mission to ‘save’ Filipinos were mainstream ideologies that led the U.S. into war with the Philippines. On September 16, 1898, Albert Jeremiah Beveridge addressed the Indiana Republican Meeting in what would be one of his most famous oratories, the “March of the Flag,” in which he compared Filipinos to babies and savages:

And the burning question of this campaign is, whether the American people will accept the gifts of events; whether they will rise as lifts their soaring destiny; whether they will proceed upon the lines of national development surveyed by the statesmen of our past; or

¹⁷³ Ibid., 13.

¹⁷⁴ "The World of 1898: The Spanish-American War," Library of Congress, accessed 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/intro.html>.; "The Spanish-American War of 1898," United States Department of State, 2018, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/spanish-american-war>.

¹⁷⁵ Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 43.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 45.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 93.

whether for the first American people doubt their mission, question fate, prove apostate to the spirit of their race, and halt the ceaseless march of free institutions. The Opposition tells us that we ought not to govern a people without their consent. I answer, The rule of liberty that all just government derives its authority from the consent of the governed, applies only to those who are capable of self-government. We govern the Indians without their consent, we govern our territories without their consent, we govern our children without their consent. How do they know that our government would be without their consent? Would not the people of the Philippines prefer the just, humane, civilizing government of this Republic to the savage, bloody rule of pillage and extortion from which we have rescued them? Do not the blazing fires of joy and the ringing bells of gladness in Porto [sic] Rico prove the welcome of our flag? And, regardless of this formula of words made only for enlightened, self-governing people, do we owe no duty to the world? Shall we turn these peoples back to the reeking hands from which we have taken them? Shall we abandon them, with Germany, England, Japan, hungering for them? Shall we save them from those nations, to give them a self-rule of tragedy? It would be like giving a razor to a babe and telling it to shave itself. It would be like giving a typewriter to an Eskimo and telling him to publish one of the great dailies of the world. This proposition of the Opposition makes the Declaration of Independence preposterous, like the reading of Job's lamentations would be at a wedding or an Altgeld speech on the Fourth of July.¹⁷⁸

For Beveridge, sovereignty over the Philippines was both a civilizing mission and an economic one, but Filipinos (rightfully so) did not see rapes, burned villages, and torture as civilizing. On December 12, 1898, President McKinley proclaimed U.S. sovereignty over the Philippines and directed the military towards "benevolent assimilation."¹⁷⁹ Americans in the Philippines created schools, churches, and hospitals, but even these 'benevolent' efforts discounted the existing programs and indigenous history of Filipinos. Although a majority of Americans supported the colonization of the Philippines, there were outspoken critics of it. The Anti-Imperialist League wrote and spoke against the eventual war in the Philippines and included members such as Jane Addams, Mark Twain, former President Grover Cleveland, and Andrew Carnegie. The Anti-Imperialist League published Mark Twain's "To the Person Sitting in

¹⁷⁸ National Humanities Center, *Albert J. Beveridge, March of the Flag: Address to an Indiana Republican Meeting Indianapolis, Indiana, 16 September 1898 Excerpts* (Research Triangle Park, NC: National Humanities Center, 2005).

¹⁷⁹ Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 106.

Darkness” shortly before his death in 1901. Already well-known for his satiric writing, Twain wrote that the “Blessings-of-Civilization” were an adulterated export for economic prosperity: “It is yet another Civilized Power, with its banner of the Prince of Peace in one hand and its loot-basket and its butcher-knife in the other. Is there no salvation for us but to adopt Civilization and lift ourselves down to its level?”¹⁸⁰

Despite opposition to the Philippine-American War, the Senate approved the Treaty of Paris on February 6, 1899 with a vote of 57-27 (two votes over the needed two-thirds majority), giving America sovereignty over the Philippines.¹⁸¹ The American and Filipino opposition had failed to stop the treaty, and subsequently failed to stop the war. Over the next three years, Filipinos would be tortured and treated with brutality by American soldiers. Eventually, some of the American soldiers would be charged with war crimes against Filipinos, but few were convicted. Most Americans watched in horror and then swiftly went on with their business. The *New York World* encapsulated the American indifference poignantly in their “American Public” piece, which also has haunting similarities to essays written about the torturing of prisoners by American soldiers at Guantanamo Bay:

It sips its coffee and reads of its soldiers administering the “water cure” to rebels; of how water with handfuls of salt thrown in to make it more efficacious, is forced down the throats of the patients until their bodies become distended to the point of bursting; of how our soldiers then jump on the distended bodies to force the water out quickly so that the “treatment” can begin all over again. The American Public takes another sip of its coffee and remarks, “How very unpleasant!” But where is that vast national outburst of astounded horror which an old-fashioned America would have predicted at the reading of such news? Is it lost somewhere in the 8,000 miles that divide us from the scenes of these abominations? Is it led astray by the darker skins of the alien race among which these abominations are perpetrated? Or is it rotted away by that inevitable demoralization which the wrong-doing of a great nation must inflict on the consciences of the least of its citizens?¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Mark Twain, *To the Person Sitting in Darkness*, (New York: Anti-Imperialist League of New York, 1901), 3.

¹⁸¹ Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 108.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 347.

During the inquiries that led to the war trials for the atrocities in the Philippines, Roosevelt wrote with indignation about the trials, “Squaws, children, unarmed Indians, and armed Indians who had surrendered [at Wounded Knee] were killed, sometimes cold-bloodedly and with circumstances of marked brutality” without investigation or punishment. He added that in the Philippines, “nothing had occurred as bad as this massacre.”¹⁸³ In the end, over 4,200 Americans and 20,000 Filipinos died from violence, famine, and disease.¹⁸⁴

THE ENLIGHTENMENT CONCEPTION OF HUMAN

The ways that race, colonialization, and the global economy were constructed during the Philippine-American War created a ‘global expansion logic’ because it framed Americans as benevolent and Filipinos as savage and child-like, in need of American intervention. In the Philippines, the reality of colonization did not feel honorable or benevolent between thefts, assaults, rapes, and burning entire villages.¹⁸⁵ Jones explores in *Honor in the Dust* that the “benevolent assimilation” of Filipinos rarely occurred, and instead they were seen as “savages, unworthy of civilized treatment” and the Army’s tactics were modeled after the “unsparing campaign against the Indian tribes of the American West.”¹⁸⁶ However, not only were the Army’s tactics unsparing, but the manner in which the U.S. colonized the Philippines through a ‘civilizing discourse’ of education and public health further marginalized Filipinos and helped to create the myth that they were “savages” and in need of U.S. high culture.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 274.; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Letters Of Theodore Roosevelt, Volume III: The Square Deal, 1901-1903*, ed. Elting E. Morrison, Theodore Roosevelt to Elihu Root, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, February 18, 1902), 231-32.

¹⁸⁴ Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Philippine-American War: Filipino History," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ed. Encyclopaedia Britannica (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018).
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Philippine-American-War>.

¹⁸⁵ Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 97.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 115.

In June 1900, William Howard Taft was named the first U.S. civilian governor in the Philippines and his attitude and action towards Filipinos shaped the first decade of U.S. rule.¹⁸⁷ Taft condescendingly described Filipinos as “our little brown brothers” and believed that Filipinos were unfit for self-government.¹⁸⁸ He estimated it would be a century “before they shall ever realize what Anglo-Saxon liberty is.”¹⁸⁹ Taft declared that it was the U.S.’s “sacred duty” to Americanize Filipinos, and the Americanization campaign consisted of American schools, building ports and roads, public health campaigns, and advancing the notion of statehood.¹⁹⁰ As Stanley Karnow described the Americanization campaign in *In Our Image*, “He [Taft] launched his program to instill in them the values that had made America the greatest society on earth: integrity, civic responsibility and respect for impersonal institutions. No matter that the United States at the time was itself riddled with corruption, racism and appalling economic disparities.”¹⁹¹ In this way, it was through explicit violence, like burning villages and killing Filipinos with impunity, as well as implicit violence, like “civilizing” education and public health campaigns, that created a logic of dehumanization and subjectivation.

The dehumanizing discourses found in the many letters, speeches, and laws written during the colonization of the Philippines, such as referring to Filipinos as savages and devils, are not entirely different from other historical atrocities, such as the Native American genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust. The difference, however, is that Filipinos experienced forced assimilation (e.g., education and public health campaigns), not annihilation (e.g., genocide). To be sure, Filipinos were killed with impunity during the Philippine-American War, but the logic that allowed for the

¹⁸⁷ Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines*, Kindle ed., (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990), 413.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 541.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 548.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 413, 548.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 548.

death of Filipinos was not based in bodily annihilation, but cultural annihilation. For Filipinos, the dehumanizing rhetoric worked alongside and was the precursor to subjectivation campaigns, like benevolent assimilation.

In *Accounting for Genocide*, Helen Fein describes state sanctioned dehumanization as a myth that the ruling elite uses to legitimate the dominant group, a group that the victim is excluded from because the victim does not share a certain likeness with the members of the dominate group.¹⁹² Fein described three ways that nation-states eradicate people who are considered different, namely assimilation, expulsion, and annihilation.¹⁹³ The precondition of annihilation, however, is when the victims “have been previously defined as basically of a different species, outside of the common conscience, and beyond the universe of obligation.”¹⁹⁴ Although this rationality of annihilation holds true in some particular instances during Filipino colonization (e.g., war crimes), it was not state-sanctioned annihilation. The political formula of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Philippines was assimilation and subsequent subjectivation precisely because of the colonial logic of ‘bestowing civilization’ upon a more ‘infantile race.’

Following Foucault’s analysis of biopolitics, the disciplining techniques of benevolent assimilation instills a certain type of human subject that is part of subjectivation processes. Since the late-twentieth century, subjects, subjectivities, and subjectivation studies have taken into account “cultural and gender differences, historical and situated processes of subjectivation, complex relationships with techno-scientific tools, [and] contextual capacities of resistance and creativity” in an attempt to problematize the life and social sciences that took for granted the

¹⁹² Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization During the Holocaust*, (New York: Free Press, 1979), 8.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

European, rational, white male subject as the norm.¹⁹⁵ Although the debates surrounding these concepts are plentiful, my concern, which follows Foucault's biopolitical analysis, is the way subjects "are brought to work on themselves"¹⁹⁶ through various institutions of government. If life is the center and the concern of the political, then subjectivity is always-already tied to the politics of birth, nation-states, and citizenship.

Kipling's infamous poem that began this chapter, *The White Man's Burden*, contains the perceived responsibilities and rights that Americans felt they had towards Filipinos, like bringing 'civilization' in the form of education, religion, and democracy. Others, like Roosevelt, Beveridge, and Taft, legitimated the conquest of the Philippines through their subjectifying discourses of Filipinos as child-like and in need of saving. However, these discourses are not only a nineteenth-century tactic of war and conquest, but these discourses can be traced to the Middle Ages and Enlightenment conceptualizations and rationalizations of who was and who was not considered fully human or rational, which has implications for how people are still conceptualized and governed today.

In *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization*, Richard Waswo explores the myths upheld during the Middle Ages and how those myths created a culture that allows for, and even encourages, colonialism. Waswo, following a Foucauldian biopolitical critique of modernity, writes that, "The domination and learning that had been largely military and theological in the Middle Ages became economic and 'scientific' in early modernity."¹⁹⁷ Ultimately, he is exploring how the stories we tell ourselves determine the way we act in the world.¹⁹⁸ Waswo begins his

¹⁹⁵ Paola Rebughini, "Subject, subjectivity, subjectivation," *Sociopedia.isa* (2014): 5, 9.

¹⁹⁶ Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, 120.

¹⁹⁷ Richard Waswo, *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization: From Virgil to Vietnam*, (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press : University Press of New England, 1997), xii.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

analysis with the Roman story of Troy and how its narrative of high culture, agricultural surpluses of cereal grains, and cities with high walls and towers are the foundations of modern civilization.¹⁹⁹ Nomadic pastoralism is marginalized for settled agriculture, and this is possible through the founding legend of Troy.²⁰⁰

Once upon a time there was a great and prosperous city called Troy, built with the help of an unkept bargain with two gods. Since gods are not, in the long term, to be mocked, a consortium among them arranged for that city to be totally destroyed, by means of a stolen wife and a ten-year siege undertaken by an unprecedented alliance of Greek attackers. The noble Trojan, Aeneas (descended from an older ruling house than that which failed to keep the bargain), leads a band of escapees from the burning city, carrying his father and his household gods. Helped and hindered by two goddesses, after many vicissitudes, Aeneas and his band arrive in Latium, the western land foretold by Jupiter to be the seat of an empire without end. There, Aeneas takes to wife the daughter of the local king, subdues the populations in a climactic battle, builds his walls, and established his household gods. His descendants rule peaceably, founding more cities, until a prophecy foretells the birth of his great-grandson, Brutus, who will cause the death of his parents but will nonetheless after years of voyaging in exile be highly exalted. And so it occurs: his mother dies bearing him, and as a youth he accidentally kills his father while hunting. Sent into exile, Brutus liberates a band of Trojans enslaved in the Greek islands and there acquires a wife. He leads these through many adventures in France (founding Tours along the way) and finally arrives at the western land called Albion promised to him in a dream by the goddess Diana. Here he has only to drive away and exterminate a few giants before he can settle down for good, rename the country, and build the capital city of New Troy. Troynovant flourishes long ages before King Lud, having increased its walls and towers, calls it after himself, London – an act resented by his brother for eliminating the name of Troy.²⁰¹

The myth of Troy does not live in the past as a fictional imagining only, but the story of the descent from Troy still has real world and imagined implications today.²⁰² A story does not have to be true to have real effects on the way we come to view and act on the world. It is a story that presents civilization as being imposed from somewhere else to someone else, which is the story we see throughout colonialism.²⁰³ In the Philippines, this story continued the subjectifying

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 4-6.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 7.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 1.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid., 3.

process of ‘civilization’ through programs like benevolent assimilation and the *pensionado* program, which I detail further in this Chapter, by training and educating Filipinos in a certain way.²⁰⁴

In similar though different ways from the Middle Ages, the Enlightenment conception of Man (European, rational, white male) produced in the late-Renaissance lay humanist revolution created a space where dehumanization could develop a logic of possibility. The Enlightenment did not create injustice, but the Enlightenment made injustice calculable and rational. The period fostered an age centered on questions of human experience, individualism, self-knowledge, and a stronger separation between nature and God.²⁰⁵ Beginning in the early Renaissance, medieval cosmology – the earth as the center of the universe and a microcosm of heaven’s macrocosm – was disrupted by the Copernican revolution.²⁰⁶ Instead of the sun orbiting around the earth, it was discovered that the earth orbits the sun. Although for Copernicus this could still fit within a universe of Godly harmony, others saw this nonhierarchical universe as blasphemous.²⁰⁷ Man was no longer the center of God’s universe, but existed in one of many planets orbiting one of many stars.²⁰⁸ Although this began a shift in thinking about the place of humans in relation to God, the late Renaissance lay humanist revolution presented a more dramatic cognitive shift that persists today.

“Observation as knowledge” helped to produce a more anthropocentric narrative of Man from a theocentric representation. Central to this shift was the scientific revolution – a product of the enlightenment – and experiments became the *raison d’être* for objective observation.

²⁰⁴ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export : How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World*, 5.

²⁰⁵ Peter J. Bowler and Iwan Rhys Morus, *Making Modern Science: A Historical Survey*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 29-31.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Experiments were understood as objective because of controlled variables, manipulation, replicability, and technological assistance.²⁰⁹ However, in order for this shift to occur, the humanists had to shift their thinking to believe that God made the universe knowable to the layperson, not only the clergy and scholastics. The Protestant Reformation, which came out of Martin Luther's The 95 Theses, insisted that individuals did not need an intermediary to interpret scripture or secure salvation. In addition to the Protestant Revolution, Deism – the belief of a creator who does not intervene in the world – was also a crucial reworking of traditional theology. The lay-humanist revolution had implications for not only scripture, but also that the laws of nature could be studied and interpreted. The ideological shift from theocentric to anthropocentric made it thinkable that one could empirically and repetitively observe nature in order to discern the laws that govern it. Once laws of nature became thinkable, it opened the door to laws of life (i.e. biology) becoming thinkable as well, and paved the way for objective, observable sciences of life based in reason.²¹⁰ The life sciences, and later the social sciences, transformed who was both thinkable *and* unthinkable as a full rights-bearing citizen of the nation-state (as opposed to a subject of the church or crown), and this transformation has implications for how one defines and categorizes human life.²¹¹

Foucault explores how the gradual shift in the life (biology) and social sciences (linguistics, economics, history, and statistics) produces a different way to understand humanity and what it means to be human.²¹² For Foucault, the question of who is human becomes the center and the

²⁰⁹ Mirko D. Grmek, *A Plea for Freeing the History of Scientific Discoveries from Myth*, ed. Mirko Drazen Grmek, Robert S. Cohen, and Guido Cimino, vol. 34, *On Scientific Discovery: The Erice Lectures 1977*, (Dordrecht: Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Springer, 1981), 9-10.

²¹⁰ Richard Waswo, "The History that Literature Makes," *New Literary History* 19, no. 3 (1988): 541, <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.2307/469088>.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, 142-43.

concern of politics – what he terms biopolitics.²¹³ Following the shift from the Enlightenment, he is interested in how society begins to see humans as biological beings and what this shift means for political life.²¹⁴ This shift is significant because what came to motivate politics is rooted in science/the biological, but life could only be placed as the center and as the concern of politics if humans understood themselves *to be* the center and the concern of politics.²¹⁵ The ideologies of modernity and the reconceptualization of the self (individual choice, autonomy, self-sufficiency, and self-determination) alongside shifts in religious thinking made it possible for people to understand themselves to be the center and the concern of politics. The transformation of life through the development of the modern state, the emergence of the sciences, and capitalist production laid the groundwork for the subjectivation that Filipino’s experience, which happened first through the Philippine-American War, then U.S. colonial efforts, and now the labor export programs.²¹⁶

Political, scientific, and economic transformations created the possibility for humans to be reimagined in biological terms, realized most dramatically through the use of racial categories.²¹⁷ Racism facilitates “a dynamic relation between the life of one person and the death of another. It not only allows for a hierarchization of those who are worthy of living, but also situates the health of one person in a direct relationship with the disappearance of another.”²¹⁸ Foucault’s concept of “make live/let die” is not necessarily about one person dying so that one person may live, but that the death of the “inferior” races make the “superior” races healthier, in general.²¹⁹ For Filipinos,

²¹³ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, 139.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 141.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 142.

²¹⁶ Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, 62.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

who were deemed an inferior and uncivilized race through the discourse and technologies of biopolitics, colonialism facilitated Filipino subjugation and exploitation to the benefit of the conquerors and created “pauperization as a process of producing the poor.”²²⁰

Foucault’s biopolitics of “make live/let die” is juxtaposed to the sovereigns old right of “take life/let live.”²²¹ The sovereigns’ old right to take life (“the right of the sword”) is not replaced with the new right “to ‘make’ live and ‘let’ die”,²²² but it is complemented by it.²²³ The difference is ultimately about how freedom and power materialize differently. Oppressive power (e.g., the sovereigns’ sword) lets one live by making another die, but productive power (e.g., the regulation of populations and their health) fosters life by disallowing life, and it is through the science of life that this becomes knowable.²²⁴

Scientific methods of measuring, counting, and ordering became the main avenue to know, to understand, and to improve upon humans. The quest to know, understand, and improve humanity made intelligible security and monitoring techniques to track the health of entire populations and intervene upon those populations. In this way, there are competing technologies of power that are also contingent on each other: self-discipline and measures of surveillance.²²⁵ The power over life and the freedom to live is not repressive (does not directly kill, for Foucault), but can still be coercive through the “disciplining of the individual body and the regulatory control of the population.”²²⁶ Freedom, for Foucault, happens through productive power that does not

²²⁰ Couze Venn, "Neoliberal Political Economy, Biopolitics and Colonialism," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26, no. 6 (2009): 221.

²²¹ Michel Foucault et al., *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*, 1 ed., (New York: Picador, 2003), 241.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Lemke, *Biopolitics*, 35.

²²⁵ Ibid., 36-37.

²²⁶ Ibid., 35.

dominate life, but disciplines life, which “allows for the increase of the economic productivity of the body.”²²⁷ Thus, the economic productivity of Filipinos in a neoliberal state (e.g., labor export program) is directly related to the subjectivation processes of colonialism and to the accumulation of wealth for nation-states and their markets.²²⁸

Agamben, like Foucault, recognizes biopolitics as life at the center of politics, but Agamben understands biopolitics to have always already been part of the logic of sovereignty. He writes that, “It can even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power.”²²⁹ For Agamben, “bare life” is someone who lacks political rights, even as that person is still part of political life because of the sovereign’s ability to make life or make death. Bare life, then, is a naked, depoliticized space that offers no official political status or juridical rights.²³⁰ Agamben holds that people only have rights because they are born into a nation-state, which means those outside of their nation-state have no recourse to rights.²³¹ Bare life is life exposed to death and stripped of its political significance (seen most radically for refugees).²³² By being excluded from the polis, though, one is included through exclusion.²³³ Humans have life breathed into them by being part of the political and are rendered only brute animals – rendered bare life – when excluded out of the political (yet, always included by exclusion).

Biopolitics for Agamben differs from Foucault at the level of sovereignty and law.²³⁴ For Foucault, power happens at the level of the everyday practices of the population, or in other words,

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Venn, “Neoliberal Political Economy, Biopolitics and Colonialism,” 225.

²²⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 80.

²³⁰ Ibid., 88-89.

²³¹ Ibid., 96.

²³² Ibid., 350.

²³³ Ibid., 323.

²³⁴ Lemke, *Biopolitics*, 59.

through productive power.²³⁵ For Agamben, sovereignty is still a dominating force and oppression happens through laws and the suspension of rights, or in other words through oppressive power.²³⁶ Foucault's concept shows how normativity operates and how people are "let die," and Agamben's concept shows how mechanisms of power operate through the state and through law – that people are still "made to die." Foucault and Agamben's biopolitics, notwithstanding their critiques, show that "life and death, health and sickness, the body and medicine"²³⁷ are part of political life, whether by letting die or making die. Bringing Foucault and Agamben in concert, biopolitics can happen productively (subjugation) and oppressively (domination).

In this way, domination, by way of war and violence as well as law and policy, is directly connected to Filipino subjectivation through nineteenth century education, state governance, and public health campaigns. Filipino poverty was created through land accumulation and reterritorialization and then subjectivity processes created through Western, dehumanizing discourses that Filipinos were savages, devils, child-like, and uncivilized. These transformations of life through the modern state, sciences, and neoliberal capitalism are vital to understanding how Filipinos currently exist within a neoliberal state that continues producing poverty through logics of subjugation and exploitation.²³⁸

The *pensionado* program, for example, was birthed through the Pensionado Act of 1903 (or Act 854) under Governor General William Howard Taft.²³⁹ Elite Filipino students, called *pensionados*, were sent to the U.S. to obtain college degrees and facilitate American

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid., 59-60.

²³⁷ Ibid., 63.

²³⁸ Ibid., 62.

²³⁹ "The Pensionado Act of the Philippines Genealogy Project," GENi, 2018, <https://www.geni.com/projects/The-Pensionado-Act-of-the-Philippines/13372>.

assimilation.²⁴⁰ *Pensionados* were mainly educated and trained in U.S. governance and nursing through what Renato Constantino calls the “miseducation” of the Filipino.²⁴¹ The programs had many functions, but a major one was to create Filipino allies through educational programs. Filipinos who cooperated with U.S. authorities were “assured of the support, protection and appointment to lucrative posts in government.”²⁴²

Alongside the *pensionado* program and the “culture of migration”²⁴³ it created, Filipinos were also Americanized in the Philippines by way of U.S. education programs. Between 1901-1902, nearly 1000 teachers, called Thomasites because they arrived from the USS *Thomas*, taught American history, English, and other nationalist courses through free public education initiatives.²⁴⁴ The education, similar to schools created in the U.S. for Native Americans, did the work of what Dinah Roma-Sianturi termed “pedagogic invasion.”²⁴⁵ The racial component of the education, which was about teaching Filipinos how to be citizens (e.g. not savages), further subjectified Filipinos. Roma-Sianturi noted in her analysis of Thomasite personal histories that Thomasites are celebrated as benevolent and altruistic heroes, while the Filipinos are rendered as child-like and forever in-debt to these programs.²⁴⁶

For Americans during the Philippine-American War, their story of intervention to aid Filipino backwardness stems from Greek mythology about culture and conquest as well as

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 5.

²⁴² Noel V. Teodoro, "Pensionados and Workers: The Filipinos in the United States, 1903–1956," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 8, no. 1-2 (1999): 159, https://doi.org/10.1177_011719689900800109, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/011719689900800109>.

²⁴³ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 5.

²⁴⁴ Dinah Roma-Sianturi, "'Pedagogic Invasion': The Thomasites in Occupied Philippines," *Kritika Kultura* 12 (2009): 7-8, <https://doi.org/https://journals.ateneo.edu/ojs/index.php/kk/article/view/1487>, <https://journals.ateneo.edu/ojs/kk/article/view/1487>; Maria Guillen Aciergo, "American Influence in Shaping Philippine Secondary Education: An Historical Perspective, 1898-1978" (Doctor of Education Loyola University Chicago, 1980), 59, https://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2791&context=luc_diss.

²⁴⁵ Roma-Sianturi, "'Pedagogic Invasion': The Thomasites in Occupied Philippines," 16-18.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 24.

Enlightenment conceptions that create racial categories of difference. Taking these concepts together, Filipinos were understood scientifically, religiously, culturally, racially, and politically to be racially inferior; they could be murdered with impunity or looked down on as savages because they were reasoned to be inferior to Europeans and Americans. Americans were bringing ‘culture’ to the Philippines, so goes the story, but the Philippine-American War was yet another chapter in the western story of accumulation, conquest, reterritorialization, and subjectivation processes.

THE GENESIS OF FILIPINO MIGRATION

The production of ‘civilization’ still has significant consequences for how certain people are perceived and how we act towards them throughout the globalized world. For instance, the discourse of savage-Other towards Native Americans, slaves, and Filipinos in the quest for economic and global expansion continue to foster disparities for these populations today. Filipinos are one of the largest exported commodities (a telling term) in the world and make up one-third of the seafaring industry, which is one of the most dangerous jobs globally. The labor export program in the Philippines that has created generations of exportable and exploitable labor is a result of tangled and webbed histories, from Greek myths to the Enlightenment, but it is the colonial labor system that most recently birthed the Philippine’s labor brokerage movement with its neocolonial and neoliberal ideologies.²⁴⁷

In the early-twentieth century, following the Philippine-American War, Filipinos were a convenient source of cheap labor for U.S. companies because of their exemption from American immigration laws coupled with their extreme poverty (poverty that was a direct result of the processes of land accumulation and reterritorialization during Spanish and American

²⁴⁷ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 1.

colonialization).²⁴⁸ At the turn of the twentieth century, the U.S. had barred Chinese laborers entry into the U.S. based on the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The Exclusion Act was the first comprehensive immigration law to ban an entire group of people and was not repealed until after World War II. The Exclusion Act, based on economic fears and coupled with the racism of unemployed white men, came on the heels of the completion of the transcontinental railroad and the post-Civil War depression.²⁴⁹ Similarly, the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 implicitly ended Japanese immigration into the U.S. in order to reduce political tensions between the countries. During a period that was limiting the migration of poor laborers, the U.S. was controlling more territory and needed cheap agricultural labor.²⁵⁰ Filipinos became ideal candidates. Young men from the Philippines were recruited to Hawaii on sugar plantations, while the Filipinos who remained in the country mostly worked in the service industry.²⁵¹

At the same time that Filipinos were being recruited for jobs in the U.S., the U.S. was also practicing their program of benevolent assimilation that had not been very successful during the war. Benevolent assimilation was a process of Americanizing Filipinos, mainly through religion and education. As noted, the educational programs that taught Filipinos English, public health, and nursing were later significant for the labor brokerage movement.²⁵² Then, following the Immigration Act of 1924, which explicitly barred Japanese immigrants from Hawaii, approximately 45,000 Filipinos migrated to Hawaii from 1925-1929.²⁵³ This is in comparison to

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 4.

²⁴⁹ Ric Burns and Li-Shin Yu, "The Chinese Exclusion Act," (American Experience, PBS, 2018).
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/chinese-exclusion-act/>.

²⁵⁰ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 3.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 3-4.

²⁵² Ibid., 5.

²⁵³ Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart: A Personal History*, 1973 Kindle ed., (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1946), 93.

1920, when there were only 5,603 Filipinos in the U.S.²⁵⁴ Although Filipinos were able to live and work in the U.S. during a period of strong anti-Asian sentiment, Filipinos were not guarded from the xenophobic and racist ideologies that led to the Exclusion Act, Gentlemen’s Agreement, and Immigration Act.²⁵⁵

Filipinos were also caught in a form of denizenship, which I described in Chapter one as a jurisdictional category that was generated in the Middle Ages and ancient Rome. Denizenship is when people live in a place but are not allowed to participate in the political life of that place. Filipinos of this era had U.S. passports, could not be excluded from entering the U.S., and could not be deported because they were “wards” or “nationals” of the state, but they were not eligible for U.S. citizenship.²⁵⁶ Filipinos were denizens because of their liminal state of citizenship. On one hand, they could enter and exit the U.S. as they pleased, but on the other hand, they did not have a governmental authority who would advocate for them when racially targeted for being non-American.²⁵⁷ The lived reality for Filipinos, as described in the personal history of Carlos Bulosan’s *America is in the Heart*, was a life of exploitation by Americans, Chinese and Japanese immigrants, and the Filipino labor contractors who recruited, transported, trained, housed, and fed the Filipino field workers.²⁵⁸ Bulosan describes the disillusionment that he and other Filipino’s felt towards Americans when they arrived in the U.S. to find, counter to their benevolent assimilation education in the Philippines, they were regarded as inferior, not equals.²⁵⁹

I was angered at Macario’s subservience to these people. What had happened to him? What happened to the young man who had opened such a treasure house of knowledge for me? . . . I wanted to cry out to him. I could not tell him why I was running away. Not now. I could not bear to see him working for people who were less human and decent

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 100.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 113.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 119.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 132-139.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 178.

than he, and who believed, because they were in the position to command, that they could treat him as though he were a domestic animal.²⁶⁰

As expected, based on the anti-Asian rhetoric towards Chinese and Japanese citizens, the Filipino's residence in the U.S. did not last long. On the same day as the stock market crash of 1929, a drive to "kick the Filipinos out" began in California and culminated with the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934 and the Filipino Repatriation Act of 1935.²⁶¹ The Tydings-McDuffie Act enforced a fifty-a-year quota for Filipinos, while the Repatriation Act granted free transportation back to the Philippines under the terms that Filipinos not re-enter the U.S. (essentially deportation).²⁶² The Merchant Marine Act of 1936 further restricted Filipinos, requiring that 90% of crewmembers on U.S. flagged vessels be U.S. citizens.²⁶³

During the 1930s and 1940s, Filipino/a im/migration was not as prominent because of the many restrictive immigration acts, but the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 began to allow the entry of migrants into the U.S. for educational and cultural exchanges, including Filipina nurses.²⁶⁴ As noted above, through the benevolent assimilation programs and the *pensionado* program administered by the U.S. in the Philippines, Filipinas were trained in public health and nursing. The nursing education programs were originally based in the U.S. in the early twentieth century and Filipina women would move back to the Philippines with higher status and positions, but the programs later made their way to the Philippines through Americanized nursing education programs.²⁶⁵ Even with a path for Filipina nurses, im/migration was still limited for Filipino/as, but the *pensionado* program and the Exchange Act provided

²⁶⁰ Ibid.,142.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 185.

²⁶² Ibid., 185-192.

²⁶³ *Merchant Marine Act of 1936*, (Washington 1936).

²⁶⁴ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 6.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

Filipina nurses a path towards U.S. migration. The pensionado program and Exchange Act were precursors to the Philippines' Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) in 1956, which gave Filipinas temporary access to U.S. employment. Rodriguez argues that the EVP was the entry point for the current labor brokerage movement between the U.S. and Philippines.²⁶⁶

The EVP, which still exists today, aims to “increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges,”²⁶⁷ which disposes citizens of other countries to U.S. intervention, political influence, and commerce. The EVP individuals participate in “work-and-study-based” programs through a non-immigrant visa category, the J-1 Visa.²⁶⁸ Filipino President Ferdinand Marcos, who introduced the labor export program in 1976, credited the EVP “for helping Filipina women to secure jobs abroad.”²⁶⁹ Although the EVP assisted Filipino/as with the possibility of migrating during an anti-immigrant period, it was the colonial and post-colonial systems that were responsible for a majority of Filipino training and recruitment, mainly as nurses or on sugar plantations.

During the post-colonial period (following World War II and a 1946 act from the U.S. Congress declaring independence from the U.S.), Filipino/a elites in government and civil service continued to operate and profit off the migration labor system that was prominent during colonialism.²⁷⁰ As described above, the *pensionado* program, which was originally meant for elite Filipino/as in public health and governance occupations, gave certain Filipino/a's stature in the newly Americanized Philippines. This process, known as “Filipinization,” continued during post-

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ "About Exchange Visitors Program of the Philippines," Philippine Government, 2018, <http://www.evpcommittee.ph/about-us>.

²⁶⁸ United States of America Department of State, *J-1 Visa* (2018).

²⁶⁹ Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 7.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 4.

colonialism.²⁷¹ Filipino elites, who were given high-paying and highly desired positions during colonialism for their support of the American government, were guaranteed continued status and wealth by backing U.S. political, economic, and military systems in the Philippines.²⁷²

Colonialism, neocolonialism (following post-1946 “independence,” but the U.S. government still operated with a great deal of political, economic, and ideological control and power), and the colonial labor system were precursors for the labor brokerage movement and Filipino/a economic elites were crucial to the preservation of a colonial state apparatus post-independence that continues to guarantee and sustain their economic and political power.²⁷³ Taking these apparatuses together, it was through the colonial program of benevolent assimilation, the post-colonial Filipino/a elite’s recruitment and training, the EVP that allowed Filipina nurses to migrate to the U.S., and Filipino servicemen in the armed forces that helped to create a U.S./Philippine partnership that institutionalized the labor export program of today. The labor export program, what Rodriguez calls the labor brokerage movement, operationalized the training and recruitment of migrant workers by the Philippine state.²⁷⁴ The remittances from Filipino/a migrants to their families was well-established during colonialism, but the labor export program of postcolonialism and neocolonialism created a state-sanctioned system for remittances that not only assisted families of migrant workers, but also assisted the Philippine state’s GDP.²⁷⁵

In this way, the culture of migration in the Philippines is not limited to seafarers, and the Philippine State plays a vital role in shaping the migration process and perception. Bagong Bayani (new heroes) is an example of how the Philippine State shapes the migration narrative through

²⁷¹ Ibid., 5, 17.

²⁷² Ibid., 16-17.

²⁷³ Ibid., 3.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 9.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

awards and festivals by promoting the role of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).²⁷⁶ Each year, five OFWs are awarded for Outstanding Employee, Community and Social Service, Culture and the Arts, Achievement, and para sa Natanging (the Outstanding/Special award).²⁷⁷ These awards and recognitions serve the purpose of representing Filipinos as a certain worker as well as subjectifying Filipinos to be certain kinds of workers. James Tyner calls this a “process of worker socialization” that ensures “the compliance of bodies to participate in their [the government and private institutions] own circulation of variable capital.”²⁷⁸

The labor export program, the official governmental law that institutionalized migration, was adopted through the Labor Code of the Philippines (Presidential Decree No. 442) in 1974. Although the labor export programs are what officially institutionalized the labor brokerage movement in the Philippines, the labor export programs would not have been possible without diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the Philippines.²⁷⁹ The U.S. government had reason to encourage migration during colonialism because of the demand for cheap labor and the Philippines had reason to take advantage of this need in order to collect remittances.²⁸⁰ During American colonial rule, the redistribution of land, property rights, and wealth helped create special conditions that made the labor brokerage movement thinkable and practical for Filipinos.

Soon after the Labor Code of 1974, the Philippine Export Council of 1976 (Presidential Decree No. 941) defined the powers and duties of the State in relation to labor migration. Section 1 of the Declaration of Policy states:

²⁷⁶ "About Us," Bagong Bayani Foundation, Inc., 2018, accessed October 19, 2018, 2018, <http://bbfi.com.ph/about-us/>.

²⁷⁷ "Bagong Bayani Awards," Bagong Bayani Foundation, Inc., 2018, accessed October 19, 2018, <http://bbfi.com.ph/bagong-bayani-awards/>.

²⁷⁸ James A. Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, ed. Lily Kong and John Lea John Connell, RoutledgeCurzon Pacific Rim Geographies, (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 74.

²⁷⁹ "Bagong Bayani Awards," 7.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the government to encourage, promote, expand and diversify exports to existing and prospective markets in order to generate employment and income, improve the balance of payments, and hasten the economic development of the nation. It is further declared to be the policy of government to encourage and support private sector producers and traders in the promotion of Philippine commodities and products in international markets and; based on national economic policies and consistent with fiscal policy, to maximize direct private sector participation in the implementation of government export assistance.²⁸¹

The program makes explicit that Filipino laborers are commodities of the state (not the producers of commodities), to be exported for profit and development. The shift from Filipino migrants being commodity producers – which, according to Marx, is inherent to capitalism – to being commodities of the state is part of a larger neoliberal shift in twentieth century capitalism.

POSTCOLONIAL NEOLIBERALISM

In Marx's *Capital* Volume 1, he begins by analyzing use-value and exchange-value as they relate to commodities and commodity-producing labor.²⁸² Marx defines commodities as “an external object, a thing which through its qualities satisfies human needs of whatever kind.”²⁸³ Human needs are satisfied by the usefulness of the object, no matter what the nature of the needs are or how that object satisfies need, and its usefulness creates its use-value.²⁸⁴ The use-value is independent of how much labor is required to make it useful, but the use-value must be inherent in the physical properties of the commodity. Therefore, in order for a commodity to be useful, it must possess certain physical qualities, cannot be useful in theory, and must have utility.²⁸⁵

Exchange-value, then, is dependent on the use-value of a commodity. Use-values are only useful in consumption; therefore, the exchange rate will be dependent on the usefulness and

²⁸¹ Philippine State, *Presidential Decree No. 941, s. 1976* (Manila: Philippines, 1976).

²⁸² Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Penguin classics, (London; New York: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1981), 288.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 125

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 125, 131.

consumption of the commodity. A quarter of wheat exchanged for a quarter of silk, for example, only makes sense if both wheat and silk are equally useful and equally valued.²⁸⁶ Use-values are quality, while exchange-values are quantity.²⁸⁷ Within these value systems, human labor is reduced to the expense of production, thereby becoming a commodity value.²⁸⁸ The use-value of human labor (or useful labor) is dependent on the exchange-value of the commodity. Further, the exchange-value is dependent on the qualitative difference of the useful labor contained in the commodities.²⁸⁹ For example, the tailor is considered more useful than the weaver because of the qualitative difference between a coat (tailor) and linen (weaver), thereby creating a social division of labor as well as a division in the exchange-value of that labor. Marx writes that:

On the one hand, all labour is an expenditure of human labour-power, in the physiological sense, and it is in this quality of being equal, or abstract, human labour that it forms the value of commodities. On the other hand, all labour is an expenditure of human labour-power in a particular form and with a definite aim, and it is in this quality of being concrete useful labour that it produces use-values.²⁹⁰

In short, labor has a social character that is valued through the common expression of money. Money, though, “conceals the social character of private labour and the social relations between individual workers” by making the relations look objective.²⁹¹ Marx writes that “we relate to each other merely as exchange-values” and that the value of things are only realized in the social process of exchange.²⁹²

Marx’s use-value and exchange-value and their relation to commodity producing labor shows how labor is objectified, but humans themselves are not the commodity. However, migrant

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 126-127.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 127.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 128.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 131-132.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 137.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 168.

²⁹² Ibid., 176.

Filipino laborers – as commodities of the state by Presidential Decree – must enter into a special kind of relationship with their state, which changes their individual and social relations. Their labor is not only the objectified commodity value as Marx theorized, but they themselves are also the object of the exchange-value – they become the use-value. As gold, diamonds, or iron contain a physical value for being gold, diamonds, or iron (for being useful), migrant Filipino laborers are the object of the state because of their use-value and their exchange-value, realized through the state remittances that flow directly from corporations to the Philippine state. Filipino labor is still commodified, but they as people are also commodified.

Karl Polanyi described the commodification of labor, alongside land and capital, as “fictitious commodities” because they were not produced for consumption.²⁹³ His analysis is that markets directing the “fate of human beings and their natural environment . . . would result in the demolition of society.”²⁹⁴ While there have been other examples of people used as exchange-values, most notably slavery, the state – as the broker between markets and labor – is a neoliberal strategy of capitalism. African-American slaves were not exported by their country to the U.S., slaves were bought and sold after being kidnapped from their homes as exchange-values. Slavery was “a fundamental aspect of rising capitalism”²⁹⁵ and Marx described slavery as an “economic category” in an exploitative social system.²⁹⁶ However, Filipinos – as citizens and commodities of the Philippines – experience an ideological difference in their exportation and exploitation than slaves. While slavery found its justification in early liberalism, it is neoliberal globalization that makes labor and the people who embody that labor exportable by the state and accepted (generally)

²⁹³ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, 2nd Beacon Paperback ed., (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001), 76.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ken Lawrence, *Marx on American Slavery*, (Tougaloo, Mississippi: Sojourner Truth Organization, 1976), 1.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

by Filipinos. This shift is realized through the labor export program, but the shift is made thinkable because of the late-twentieth century economic ideology of neoliberalism.

The logic of a profit-generating state that can treat people as expendable commodities grows out of capitalism, but is more fully realized through the growing influence and consensus of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism of the twentieth-century is a resurgence of late nineteenth-century liberal economic policies, which were briefly interrupted after the Depression for Keynesian economic policy. As mentioned in Chapter 1, neoliberalism was initiated in the mid-twentieth century through U.S. President Ronald Reagan and U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's political economic policies of industry deregulation, decreased labor power, free enterprise, and advanced notions of personal responsibility. The practices of neoliberalism were centered on the political economy, but the way the policies became knowable and actionable happened through the discourse of individual responsibility.²⁹⁷ In this way, neoliberalism was fully realized not through macro-economic and political policies, but through the diffused discursive practices that produce subjects to a particular mode of political economy. In Chapter 4, I explore how Filipino migrant seafarers are both subjects of neoliberalism as well as producers of it, but the remainder of this chapter is focused on how the labor export program is an outgrowth of neoliberalism.

COMMODITIES OF THE STATE

According to the POEA's 2014 Annual Report, 1.8 million OFWs were deployed and nearly 1 million OFWs were rehired in 2014, with Filipino migrant seafarers accounting for 1.3 million of the 2.8 million.²⁹⁸ The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) estimates that as of December 2013 there are 10.24 million Filipinos working and living abroad, with 4.87 million

²⁹⁷ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2.

²⁹⁸ Administration, *Philippine Overseas Employment Administration Annual Report*, 7, 10.

permanent migrants, 1.16 million irregular migrants, and 4.21 temporary migrants.²⁹⁹ The U.S. makes up more than 3.5 million of those totals.³⁰⁰ In 2014, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), the central bank of the Philippines, recorded \$24.3 billion in remittances, with the bulk coming from the U.S., Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.³⁰¹ These figures make up almost 10% of the Filipino population that live abroad (making them one of the largest diaspora populations) and nearly 10% of the Filipino GDP (making it their largest source of revenue) and debt repayment, revealing the complicated nature of the labor export program.

The labor export program, rationalized initially as a temporary measure to address the country's deficits and unemployment problems, has continued in almost unaltered terms since the 1970s.³⁰² The program created both a private and public component; privately, Philippine-based agencies are licensed to recruit employees, while publically the Philippines provides the contract labor directly to foreign employers.³⁰³ The law makes migrants' recruitment and contracts enforceable under Philippine law.³⁰⁴ On one hand, there is a benefit to having the Philippine government responsible for their citizens' contractual issues through 'welfare and rights' agreements. On the other hand, the state is negotiating contracts with companies and profiting from the labor of those contracts while also being the one to hold the companies responsible for the welfare of the laborers. The conflict of interest is palpable.

²⁹⁹ Office of the President of the Philippines, *CFO Annual Report* (Manila 2014-2015), 11.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁰¹ Administration, *Philippine Overseas Employment Administration Annual Report*, 11.

³⁰² "Human Capital: The Philippines' Labor Export Model," *World Politics Review*, June 16, 2015, 2018, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/15998/human-capital-the-philippines-labor-export-model.>; Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 14.

³⁰³ "Labor Export as Government Policy: The Case of the Philippines," *Migration Policy Institute*, updated 2004-01-01, January 1, 2004, 2018, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/labor-export-government-policy-case-philippines.>

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

The remittances that are generated through the labor export program are a formalized exchange between the OFWs, their families in the Philippines, the Philippine government, and the BSP. Former President Marcos passed Executive Order No. 857 in 1982, which governed remittances of contractual OFWs.³⁰⁵ If migrant workers failed to send the required remittances home, their passports and labor contracts were nonrenewable the following year. For migrant seafarers, 70% of their basic salary was required, either through a payroll deduction or individually through the worker. Although the Marcos decree was revised after Filipino protests, a new bill was proposed in 2014 with similar forced remittance codes.³⁰⁶ One interviewee told me that seafarers are currently required to remit 80% of their salary, although I could not find that in current government documentation. The 80/20 split did match what another seafarer told me, though, which was that he makes approximately \$1600/month and keeps around \$300/month for his onboard pay – the rest is directly transferred from his paycheck to his family.

The Philippines as a profit-generating state and its Filipino citizens as commodities is a realization of “the commodification of everything,” as Harvey termed it.³⁰⁷ There is a price – a commodification – on things like drugs, sex, religion, art, or pornography that were not necessarily produced as commodities.³⁰⁸ Such a commodification of rituals or social life is not new to capitalism, but neoliberalism has extended its reach. Harvey explains that short-term contracts most clearly illustrates the neoliberal shift.³⁰⁹ It is the pervasive pursuit of profit, with short-term

³⁰⁵ Ferdinand E. Marcos, *Executive Order No. 857: Governing the Remittance to the Philippines of Foreign Exchange Earnings of Filipino Workers Abroad and for Other Purposes* (Manila 1982).

³⁰⁶ Nana Oishi, *Women in Motion: Globalization, State Policies, and Labor Migration in Asia*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2005), 88.; "OFWs Slam Solon for Resurrecting Marcos Decree on “Forced Remittance”," *Migrante International*, updated 2014-03-04, 2014, accessed August 22, 2018, <https://migranteinternational.org/2014/03/04/ofws-slam-solon-for-resurrecting-marcos-decree-on-forced-remittance/>.

³⁰⁷ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 165.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 165-166.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 166.

contracts being an outgrowth of profit-generating pursuits that will result in the “demolition of society.”³¹⁰ Harvey is less concerned about what these profit-pursuits mean for the traditions of rituals or a preferred social life and more concerned about what these endless pursuits for profit mean to the construction of “land, labour, and money” as commodities.³¹¹ The demolition of society is not sexual freedom or religious pluralism, as popularly framed by neoconservatives, but it is “to allow the market mechanism to be sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment.”³¹² Labor as a commodity, not labor as commodity producing, has the effect of social dislocation and the destruction of nature.³¹³ The individual is a factor of production, which has certain skills that are needed one day and not the next. These skills can be disregarded under short-term labor contracts, with the effect of maximizing employer benefit and employee risk. As Harvey analyzed, “Under neoliberalization, the figure of ‘the disposable worker’ emerges as prototypical upon the world stage.”³¹⁴ The health hazards and death that workers experience is largely unregulated under neoliberalism, which is responsible for not only lower wages, job insecurity, and a loss of benefits, but also a loss of social protections.³¹⁵

CONCLUSION

On October 18, 2003, then-President George W. Bush visited the Philippines and addressed the Philippine Congress. President Bush was the first American President to address the Philippine Congress since President Dwight Eisenhower in 1960. Early in his address, he invoked patriotic nationalism and U.S. exceptionalism when he said, “America is proud of its part in the great story

³¹⁰ Ibid., 166-167.

³¹¹ Ibid., 166.

³¹² Ibid., 167

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 169.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 76, 170.

of the Filipino people. Together our soldiers liberated the Philippines from colonial rule. Together we rescued the islands from invasion and occupation.”³¹⁶ President Bush was speaking about the Japanese invasion of the Philippines during World War II and the battles of Bataan, Corregidor, Leyte, and Luzon, but his address failed to mention the U.S. occupation of the Philippines beginning in 1898 and the ensuing brutality nor did he mention the U.S.’s role in the Philippines’ debt and subsequent labor export program. Nation-states are not born rich or poor; nation-states are created as are the constructions of its people.

The colonial, post-colonial, neo-colonial, and neoliberal policies that I explored in this chapter frame the ways that geography and capital are used to commodify Filipino migrant seafarers, while also restricting their citizenship. However, there are not only historical, legal, and institutional apparatuses that make migration thinkable, but also, as Tyner describes, discursive practices between the Philippine state and Filipinos that socializes workers to migration.³¹⁷ In the next chapter, I untangle these apparatuses in more detail and explore how they are inscribed onto the bodies of Filipino migrant seafarers through injury, illness, and death.

³¹⁶ President George W. Bush, *Remarks by the President to the Philippine Congress* (U.S. Department of State, October 18, 2003).

³¹⁷ Tyner, *Made in the Philippines*, 75.

Chapter 4

CHEAP LABOR

Let me put it this way, that from a very literal point of view, the harbors and the ports, and the railroads of the country—the economy, especially of the Southern states—could not conceivably be what it has become, if they had not had, and do not still have, indeed for so long, for many generations, cheap labor.

-James Baldwin, "James Baldwin Debates William F. Buckley," Cambridge University, 1965

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

When I boarded the reefer vessel in the Gulf of Mexico port, the first sounds I always noticed were the pelicans squeaking and the water crashing on the side of the ship. I recorded the sounds one morning because I knew how much I would miss them when I was not traveling to the ports every week. In the background of the recording, there are honks, beeps, cranes, wind, and men yelling at each other. If I close my eyes when I am listening to it, I can almost smell the salt water. I was enamored by the size and power of the ships against the tranquility of the water. I often found myself asking seafarers about their lives onboard – like the size of ship, the expanse of the ocean, and their daily routines – and their stories quickly reminded me that my perspective of the ocean as beautiful and romantic was a privileged perspective.

Diego, the Captain, told me about the time he was held hostage by pirates and Jay told me about his experience drifting at sea for 21 days: "When you sleep, there is water. When you wake up, there is still water." The sea was far from tranquil for Jay and his colleagues when provisions began to decrease, and although they had money, they had nowhere to buy food. They had been sailing for 55 days and drifting for 21 days 150 miles from shore, waiting for port orders, with

only rice and fish that they caught. Joseph Conrad was not too far off when he wrote, “There is nothing more enticing, disenchanting, and enslaving than the life at sea.”³¹⁸

Although many of the stories in this chapter disenchant life at sea, it would be insincere of me to focus only on the dramatic moments without also thinking through the intellectual, mundane, or funny stories. Perry, a shorter man with broad shoulders, was one of the happiest people I have ever been around, as well as one of the smartest. He loved calling me Katy Perry and talking about his family. He also schooled me on the human rights of seafarers and explained in perfect legal terms why he will see a doctor if he is sick, whether or not it puts him at odds with the company: “It is my right, mano.” However, his right – in practice – was more complicated than his stance. Other seafarer’s, such as the Captain and the Oiler, told me that it is better to avoid expensive doctor visits because the company may fire you. “The company, if you are always going to the doctor, the company will fire you,” the Captain told me, “because you are too expensive. That’s why they are looking for seafarer’s with good health. And now they are looking for the younger seafarers . . . with more strength, more power. That’s why they hire the younger seafarers as much as possible.”

The seemingly contradictory statements about accessing healthcare were less about a difference of opinion and more about experience. The Oiler was injured and the Captain has seen people fired for being “too expensive,” while Perry has experienced neither. These tensions between the ideal and the practice were present in almost all the interviews and during my time on board the vessel. Even my experience of seeing the sea as tranquil soon dissolved the more time I spent listening to migrant seafarers and researching their experiences. There were beautiful moments that involved intellectual conversations or deep laughter, but those moments were also

³¹⁸ Joseph Conrad, *Typhoon and Other Stories*, Everyman's Library, (London: Everyman's Library, 1991).

mixed with the difficult stories of migrant seafarer's, like sewing their own wounds without anesthesia or working with one hand for two weeks because of an injury. However, the beautiful moments mixed with difficult stories never felt like a contradiction. The beautiful and difficult were perfect examples of how we all find ways to live. When I close my eyes and listen to the recording I made of the port sounds, I can picture a longshoreman who always went out of his way to say hi as I was walking to the gangway. I can also see the two longshoremen who were crushed and killed by a crane. Both of the experiences exist at the same time; both are part of the tapestry.

The migrant seafarers' stories – beautiful and difficult alike – were mainly centered on the sacrifices they make for their families. Every migrant seafarer I spoke to told me at least one story about sacrifice. Roberto told me that he missed his son's birth, first words, and first steps. He knows from experience that being away from his family is creating a distance between him and his kids, but he has to make the sacrifice to provide for them:

My father was a seafarer and there was something that came between us that I cannot explain because he was not there for me when I was little, but when I came to college I realized his sacrifices to give us a better life, to educate us. And so that's my problem right now with my children. That they will grow up and not know me.

Jude also talked about being away from his family as a sacrifice and DJ told me that his mom died while he was away from home on a ship. Martin told me he was on the ship for his family: "I want to work for my family. I want to help my parents. They are old. That's why I am working hard here so that – I want to help." It was his first week on a ship as a seafarer and I asked him if he missed his family. Through tears he said, "I want to sacrifice my life for them." Perry told me that seafarers sacrifice everything for family, but also for all of the people who use the goods they deliver. He clearly articulated trade deals that create their sacrifices so that our country can have specialty foods. "If you have a ship with no seafarers – the crew and the work they do," he paused before continuing, "It's hard sometimes because they [consumers] don't realize the seaman."

Realizing the seafarer is not easy. Seafarers are often times hidden in plain sight and the sacrifices they make are concealed by their transient lives. Following a Marxist critique of capitalism, not only do seafarers have little control over their means of production, but they are essentially erased from any trace of existence in the final product. Xavier, a seafarer who regularly docks in the Gulf of Mexico port, made a similar observation that Perry did about the suffering of seafarers being connected to the global economy: “The people on land have no idea the sufferings that the people who make their living at sea endure. The world’s consumers often do not care how the products get to their countries; only that they are there . . . Sacrifice is a word that is the mainstay of a seafarers’ life. The world economy would not survive without the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of people who work at sea.”³¹⁹ The seafaring industry is hidden in plain sight. Seafarer’s lives are entangled in the lives of non-seafaring citizens, yet the two rarely meet. Seafarers travel in spaces many will never go and they interact with systems and people that many will never encounter, yet the spaces, systems, and seafarers are what keep the global economy moving and functioning.

In order to understand – or in Perry’s words, to realize – how the everyday sacrifices of seafarers contribute to our global economy, I critically assess the historical policies that I traced in Chapter 3 alongside seafarer’s stories of injury, illness, and death. I am exploring the ways that the political economy is internalized and embodied. My disciplinary lens is medical, but I am not tracing how science or medicine can cure diseases or prevent epidemics on board ships; instead, I am studying the ways that people and systems contribute to as well as disrupt violence, and what that violence means to the health of seafarers. This chapter follows the critique of João Biehl and Adriana Petryna who argue that global health studies should emphasize “how health risks are

³¹⁹ Parsons, *Diary of a Port Chaplain: My Journey of Faith with Seafarers*, 212-18.

shaped by law, politics, and practices ranging from industrial and agricultural policies to discrimination, violence, and lack of access to justice.”³²⁰ I am interested in how labor policies and political economic practices discipline and exploit seafarers in particular ways, and how those disciplining and exploitative practices influence the health worlds of seafarers.

Bourdieu’s analysis of symbolic violence is a useful concept to show how discipline and exploitation work in productive and oppressive ways for seafarers. Symbolic violence refers to the way people internalize cultural, economic, or political systems of injustice and then accept them as not only natural, but as beneficial to them. Seafarers who have little choice but to work away from their families and homes to make a livable income speak about seafaring as a ‘blessing’ of sorts without always recognizing the unnatural and produced injustice that creates overseas labor as one of the only viable options for Filipinos.

The systems that appear to be natural, but are produced, comes from Bourdieu’s studies of habitus, which refers to cultural dispositions that are masked as natural dispositions.³²¹ Loïc Wacquant describes habitus as a practice that is “against structuralism” because

agents actively make the social world by engaging embodied instruments of cognitive construction; but it also insists, against constructivism, that these instruments are themselves made by the social world through the somatization of social relations. The situated individual “determines herself insofar as she constructs the situation that determines her,” but “she has not chosen the principle of her choice,” such that “habitus contributes to transforming that which transforms it.”³²²

Habitus denotes how individuals cognitively construct their world, but at the same time, individuals physically & psychologically experience the created systems of society. In this way, we make the social world and then experience as real what we created. People who are in poverty

³²⁰ Biehl and Petryna, *When People Come First: Critical Studies in Global Health*, 3.

³²¹ Philippe Bourgois, "Neoliberal Lumpen Abuse in the 2000s: A 25 Year Ethnographic Retrospective on Violence in the Americas" (Princeton, 2007).

³²² Loïc Wacquant, "A Concise Genealogy and Anatomy of Habitus," *The Sociological Review* 64, no. 1 (2016): 67, https://doi.org/10.1111_1467-954X.12356.

are not naturally deviant, but if the social world has been constructed in a way that makes poverty immoral, then people in poverty *become* deviants through these socially constructed systems (i.e. individual responsibility). Habitus allows us to complicate individuals without being deterministic about the structures that foster inequality. It is useful because it does not posture agency against structure or structure against agency, but instead illustrates confined choice based upon our families, cultures, political environment, individual differences, genetics, ethnicity, national identity, and more.

Alongside habitus, Louis Althusser's concept of interpellation is useful to understand how migrant seafarers have been idealized among employers, and thus come to embody certain attributes that make them a 'perfect worker'.³²³ Terry analyzed how the stereotypical making of Filipino migrant seafarers through state-sanctioned marketing campaigns as "resilient, adaptable, English-proficient, [and] loyal"³²⁴ produce certain workers culturally and in practice. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Bagong Bayani* (new heroes) is an example of how migrants are made to recognize their sacrifices as both familial and nationalist endeavors. Steven McKay similarly analyzed how "the construction of 'Filipino-ness'" forges definitions of masculinity and national identity among Filipino migrant seafarers.³²⁵ Taking Bourdieu and Althusser together, seafarers are subsumed in an ideology of masculinity or nationalist identities of heroism, which makes them sought-after workers, while also being socially constructed not to question their actions in relation to their social positions. Ultimately, however, seafarers' agency is caught up in structural violence, which

³²³ William Terry, "The Perfect Worker: Discursive Makings of Filipinos in the Workplace Hierarchy of the Globalized Cruise Industry," *Social and Cultural Geography* 15, no. 1 (2014): 77.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 81.

³²⁵ Steven C. McKay, "Filipino Sea Men: Constructing Masculinities in an Ethnic Labour Niche," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 4 (2007): 618.

disciplines them into a self-denial of care (e.g. not seeking healthcare services) so that they can provide for their families.

Working with Filipino migrant seafarers, the concept of habitus helps one see how their choice to be a seafarer, their position on the ship, and the ways that they think of and act on their sacrifices have social similarities as well as individual differences. Their actions and opinions are not reduced to idiosyncrasies or structural determinants.³²⁶ Habitus shows how Marx's preference for economic capital, although an important framework for understanding structural violence, is limited and that symbolic capital, like where one goes to school and lives or the type of food and art someone buys, may also produce violence (i.e., symbolic violence).³²⁷ The exercise of symbolic violence requires the complicity of not only the person benefitting, but from all the social agents involved, even those who do not benefit.

For the migrant seafarers I collaborated with, there were multiple levels and degrees of symbolic violence, like the officer quarters compared to the mess hall. I was impressed with the way the seafarers on this ship worked together, from the Mess Man to the Captain, and from reports and my own observation, the officers acted respectfully towards the seafarers, but the officer quarters were markedly different from the mess hall. The officer quarters and mess hall were separated by the kitchen, so anyone could easily peer into the two worlds. Noticeably, the two people who had the most access to the officer quarters (other than the officers) were the two people who ranked lowest on the maritime hierarchy – the Mess Man and the Chief Cook.

The officer quarters were not degrees better than the mess hall – the same turquoise laminate tablecloth and brown curtains covered the same long table and small windows. However, the safety posters that lined the walls in the mess hall, which I detail in the next section, were

³²⁶ Wacquant, "A Concise Genealogy and Anatomy of Habitus," 67.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 68.

absent from the officer quarters and the chairs were noticeably nicer. There were placemats on the officer quarter tables and it contained an air of importance. It was less these material differences that mattered, though, and it was more of the symbolic differences. The symbolism being that there *is* a different place to sit and eat, and when talking to the migrant seafarers, the difference seemed natural to them. Multiple seafarers talked about how one works their way up the hierarchy, but more nuanced discussions about how some people are able to make these shifts or the education required to make such a shift were not as apparent.

For migrant seafarers, internalized symbolic violence happens at all levels and to everyone involved in the industry. I met three different Captain's during my tenure on the ship (the first Captain's contract was ending the day I met him), and they all experienced the stress of having to answer to the economic productivity of the ship versus the safety of the seafarers. Their rank did not mean that they were immune to the dangers or sacrifices of seafaring, but that their decisions had an overall greater effect on the entirety of the vessel. In the end, their contracts also ended and they went home to a country with little to no employment options.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus, taken together with the analysis in Chapter 3 of Marx's economic philosophy, as well as Foucault's theory of biopolitics, shows how political economic practices and everyday lived experiences are internalized and embodied for seafarers. Migrant seafarers internalize the blame, responsibility, and sacrifice that comes with their *de facto* health status as people who cannot access healthcare because of what it means for their long-term job prospects. The creation of disposable people in modern society – people whose lives are disallowed, managed, and made unintelligible for the benefit of others – mirrors how the sacrifices of seafarers are not only allowed, but seem natural. Correspondingly, structural violence, which comes out of Latin America's liberation theology, is the “invisible ‘social machinery’ of social

inequality and oppression that reproduces pathogenic social relations of exclusion and marginalization via ideologies and stigmas attendant on race, class, caste, sex, and other invidious distinctions.”³²⁸

As Nancy Scheper-Hughes describes, structural violence holds the poor accountable for their poverty instead of the social origins of their poverty. This definition holds true for Filipino migrant seafarers who work contractual jobs that pose a high risk of injury, illness, and death in order to provide for families in the Philippines when they end up being held accountable for their injury, illness, and death in order to circumvent the loss of a job. The internalization of violence is related to the fact that seafarers have *de jure* rights, like seeking medical care, that in practice they cannot fulfill. The lived reality between *de jure* and *de facto* rights leads to a double negation because they are denied their rights (i.e. medical care), while they also deny themselves medical care as rights-bearing citizens. In this way, their habitus is shaped by a spectrum of violence wherein those who experience bare life are also agents in those experiences. In other words, their exclusion is both done to them through the law, but it is also done by them as internalized violence.

For example, the chaplain I worked closely with during my time with the seafarers told me the following story, which involved the same company and route that my seafarers worked with, though it happened a few years before I met any of them:

[This route] is a tight schedule, and anytime weather or they had a strike of dockworkers where it delayed it, then the stress levels just go through the roof because they’re supposed to be here every single Monday. When the Russians had [the same route], a Captain had a heart attack from the stress. I visited him in the hospital and he was trying to get them to release him to get back to the ship because the ship had to leave at such and such time. He wasn’t concerned about what was going on in his heart and he was adamant, adamant, adamant that: “I have to sail with the ship.” And, it was like, “Captain, calm down,” and you know when you say calm down, it’s like telling them that you’re not going to be there [on the ship] and he just hit the ceiling. He said, “Don’t tell me calm down!” That was a rough case because he saw the writing on the wall. If he didn’t sail with that ship at 5 o’clock

14. ³²⁸ Scheper-Hughes, "Dangerous and Endangered Youth: Social Structures and Determinants of Violence,"

he lost his job. And he didn't sail with the ship at 5 o'clock. The Chief Officer took command of the ship, you know, it had to stay on that route, and when it came back the next week, they had a new Captain who replaced him and he had been sent home. And now it's on his record: 'Being relieved of command.' I lost contact with him and so I have no idea if he ever got another job. I think about him a lot.

The Captain, though not Filipino, embodied the structural violence that held him accountable for a heart attack that was created through stressful company requirements. Paul Farmer, quoting Eduardo Galeano, describes the “terrorism of money” as a form of violence that does not directly kill, but creates death through social and economic policy, like taxes and interest rates. The violence that is perpetuated is concealed through supposed neutrality (“they never dirty their hands”) and the “privilege of irresponsibility”.³²⁹ For migrant seafarers, the multiple layers of responsibility between flag states, companies, manning agencies, and ship owners further complicates their precarity because not one person, company, or government can be held fully responsible.

Structural violence, then, differs from symbolic violence because the latter derives its power “from the ability to make the oppressed complicit in their own destruction,”³³⁰ while structural violence maintains systems and social arrangements of oppression and exploitation. For Filipino migrant seafarers, the structural violence of economic exclusion, historical oppression, racial categorization, and unjust political policies are often times hidden by ideologies of individual responsibility and a “civilizing benevolence” that assumes the socially vulnerable are accountable for the effects of the oppressive systems.

Seth Holmes explores parallel experiences between migrant seafarers and migrant farmworkers in *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* when he described the five years he spent with Triqui

³²⁹ Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor with a new preface by the author*, 10.

³³⁰ Ibid.

Mexicans who cross Mexico and U.S. borders to work on U.S. berry farms. During his research, he picked berries, lived in a car, crossed international borders, and was detained by border patrol agents alongside the undocumented Mexicans he worked and lived with. Collectively, his work exposes how global labor policies intimately shape individual health. One particular phenomenon that he traces is the paradox of U.S. labor migration systems that benefit from cheap migrant labor, yet insist on creating and enforcing repressive labor migration policies.³³¹ I saw similar discrepancies in my own research between the companies who greatly benefit from cheap labor, yet do not resist strict and repressive policies on seafarers, such as the shore leave pass waivers described in Chapter 2. Through Holmes' years of participant observation, he shows how the politics of international trade, food systems, citizenship, and labor effect the choices available to migrant workers. His analysis is important for understanding how structures, like free market economies and neoliberal ideologies, shape global and public health practice.

The interplay of structural and symbolic violence, then, is what Scheper-Hughes termed "everyday violence."³³² Everyday violence comes out of her work with mothers and their infants in a Brazilian shantytown, documenting how mothers made unintelligible decisions (letting a child die) because of the oftentimes hidden structural violence (i.e., poverty) that existed in their everyday lives.³³³ Everyday violence is the "production of social indifference to outrageous suffering through institutional processes and discourses."³³⁴ The theoretical concepts of structural, symbolic, and everyday violence explain how victims of violence are betrayed by political and

³³¹ Seth M. Holmes, *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*, Kindle ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 518.

³³² Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*.

³³³ Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*.; Bourgois and Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend*, 17.

³³⁴ Bourgois, "Neoliberal Lumpen Abuse in the 2000s: A 25 Year Ethnographic Retrospective on Violence in the Americas".

personal systems.³³⁵ Symbolic, structural, and everyday violence does not happen in a vacuum, but occurs alongside and in conjunction with the other.

The researchers, advocates, and theorists outlined above are each making similar arguments about the social value of lives and the structures that impede certain lives from flourishing. Furthermore, their analysis and study shows that violence not only happens structurally and symbolically, but that violence is also still overt, or still oppressive, and structural and symbolic violence undergirds active violence. Scheper-Hughes calls this the “violence continuum,” referring to the “ease with which humans are capable of reducing the socially vulnerable (even those from their own class and position) into expendable non-persons, thus allowing the license – even the duty – to kill.”³³⁶

In my fieldwork, I was witness to the ways that productive power takes shape on and for Filipino migrant seafarers, but overt or oppressive power was still active in their lives and the lives of their families. The year I started my fieldwork, for instance, Rodrigo Duterte was elected President and enforced a policy of hunting down and killing drug dealers. In a little over a year, from June 2016 to September 2017, approximately 7,000 people had been killed in the “War on Drugs.”³³⁷ One of the seafarers I interviewed noted that Duterte is mainly fighting against *shabu* (crystal meth), which is a drug that many Filipino’s use to stay awake. I asked him if working class people took it to stay awake so that they could work longer and harder hours, as I had recently read in articles,³³⁸ and he confirmed, saying, “Yeah, that was true.” I did not ask if he or any of the

³³⁵ Bourgois and Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend*, 16.

³³⁶ Scheper-Hughes, "Dangerous and Endangered Youth: Social Structures and Determinants of Violence," 14.

³³⁷ "Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's 'War on Drugs'," Human Rights Watch, updated September 9, 2017, September 7, 2017, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/09/07/philippine-president-rodrigo-dutertes-war-drugs>.

³³⁸ "Poor use shabu, rich use cocaine": NCRPO chief explains drug war," ABS-CBN News, April 24, 2018, accessed July, 2018, <http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/24/18/poor-use-shabu-rich-use-cocaine-ncrpo-chief-explains-drug-war.>; "In the Philippines, poverty and corruption fuel the drug trade," LA Times, February 28, 2017, accessed

other seafarers I was working with took *shabu*, but based on reports from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, it is likely some of them have at one time or another.³³⁹

The oppressive violence towards Filipino drug users, although not necessarily targeted towards the Filipino migrant seafarers I collaborated with, demonstrate the ways that structural and symbolic violence not only have embodied effects for seafarers (e.g., seafarers not seeking proper medical care and being more susceptible to injury, illness, and death long-term), but also directly kill Filipino working class men and women (some of whom are seafarers). In the following section, I bring structural violence, symbolic violence, and everyday violence together to demonstrate how sacrifice and suffering is produced, internalized, and embodied for Filipino migrant seafarers. In the words of seafarers, their lives consist of constant suffering because of their everyday dangers, precarious employment, and distance from family and familiar social networks. Their suffering is then embodied through addiction, illness, injury, death, chronic pain, and emotional anguish.

IF ONLY . . .

Many of the stories I heard during my time interviewing seafarers and those familiar with the industry were about the lack of appropriate responses to medical conditions, situations, or emergencies. However, this was not true across the board. There are stories about companies that flew in family members to be with the injured or that ensured seafarers received medical care without losing their jobs. However, even the companies or Captains who tried to protect seafarers

July, 2018, <http://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-philippines-corruption-2017-story.html>.; "The Philippines: No country for poor men," BBC World News, December 3, 2016, accessed July, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-38144237>.

³³⁹ "PDEA nabs seafarer with shabu," The Seafarer Times, April 1, 2017, accessed July, 2018, <http://seafarertimes.com/2015-16/node/4042>.; "Fishing boat crew arrested for shabu use," United Filipino Seafarers, December 10, 2011, accessed July, 2018, <http://unitedfilipinoseafarers.com.ph/fishing-boat-crew-arrested-for-shabu-use/>.

still exist within a frame of reference that places the responsibility of safety or medical reporting on the seafarer. Public, corporate, or onboard policy that promotes personal responsibility without taking responsibility for their role in injury, illness, or death continue fostering an environment of self-medicating or working through injury. The chaplain who has worked with seafarers for years told me she has seen a crewmember with a broken leg act as though he had zero pain when the Officers walked by, but almost collapsed in pain when they left. He refused to tell them about his injury because he did not want to be sent home and lose his place in the hiring hierarchy. Another story involved a young Mess Man, which is the most entry-level job for seafarers, who was burned and refused medical treatment:

I've seen a young mess boy with second degree burns who didn't want medical care and didn't want to talk about it, but I was told by his shipmate that the Captain - they were in rough seas – and the Captain made him carry scolding hot buckets of water up all those stairs to his cabin. The Captain is on top. And as they were going back and forth it was splashing against his arms and legs and he was all blistered up and burned, and he didn't want to say, "I need to go to the doctor." He was only like 19. He was afraid of what would happen . . . I think the Captain was very harsh and forced him. I mean, who would not be compassionate if you say, "I need those buckets of water up on level 4" in rough seas, and he shows up all burned. Who would not say, "I'm so sorry, I didn't realize how bad it was, let me get you some help." But he wasn't even phased by the kid being burnt, so why would that kid say, "Captain, I need to go to the hospital when we get in port." And I asked him specifically, "Do you want help, because I can get you help, you have the right to get help" and he said, "No, please no."

As this example shows, work with seafaring migrants revealed discourses of personal responsibility and an individualized view of risky behaviors that have become commonplace in labor and employment. For instance, in the mess hall, where seafarers regularly gather for meals and downtime, there was a series of posters that exposed the tension between personal responsibility and corporate responsibility. Each poster began with the phrase, "If only..." and then described an unfortunate situation that resulted in the death or injury of a seafarer. In the example in Figure 4.1, the poster reads, "If only he had stood in a safe place" and shows an

illustration of a man who looks like he has either been gravely injured or killed by a rope. Not only are these posters constant visual reminders of the dangerous job of seafaring, but they also have a political and economic function. The posters do not offer actual advice about how to stay safe on the job (e.g. where could this person have stood to be safer), but rather reinforce the ideology that safety is the responsibility of the seafarer.



Figure 4.1: Mess hall safety poster

The posters, which have the look and feel of cartoon drawings, are anything but funny when analyzing them against the rates of death and injury onboard ships or in ports. Tellingly, in the seven months that I spent with the seafarers they went through one tropical storm, one hurricane, one major storm at sea (see Figure 5.9 in Chapter 5), three longshoremen died in area ports, and one seafarer and one longshoreman were severely injured. This does not include deaths or injuries at the Gulf of Honduras port and only the injuries and deaths I was made aware of through my contacts in the Gulf of Mexico port. Although data on deaths and injuries at sea is extremely hard to count or verify, the IMO Secretariat counted 1,051 lives lost in 2012.³⁴⁰ As

³⁴⁰ "Deaths and injuries at sea," Seafarers' Rights International, 2018, accessed July, 2018, <http://seafarersrights.org/seafarers-subjects/deaths-and-injuries-at-sea/>.

detailed in Chapter 1, seafarers have high incidences of injury, illness, and death compared to other occupations and seafaring is considered one of the most dangerous jobs. Given this evidence, the posters not only have a political economic function in that they place responsibility away from the company and onto the seafarers, but they are also of little practical use given the rates of injury, illness, and death. Seafarers are well aware that their occupation is dangerous.

Roberto, an Ordinary Seaman (OS) who works on the deck, specifically mentioned the ropes as a constant source of danger on the ship. When I asked about seafaring life and if it was dangerous he said, “Yes, it is dangerous [being a seafarer]. The ropes...sometimes it can hit like [demonstrated the ropes hitting him], so we must always be aware. You could be on the other side [and get hit]. You must be very aware of where you are.” However, earlier in our conversation he told me that their particular route was stressful and that “it’s tough managing our time” because they only have a few days at sea in between ports. This was important because, as he described, being at sea provided a routine schedule. He said that when they are in port, similar to what the Captain and First Officer also reported, they are on-call more often and have to troubleshoot issues with the port, vessel, and various U.S. agencies. Later in the interview, Roberto said that the lack of sleep, stress, and the environment were also part of the dangers of being a seafarer. He said, “Sometimes you get confused, scared.”

The mess hall posters, which are likely a legal requirement for shipping vessels, give a veneer of corporate responsibility, while actually reinforcing the symbolic violence – the internalized and habituated practices of everyday life – that seafarers are individually responsible for their safety. Roberto, like other seafarers I spoke to, internalized his own personal responsibility for his safety (“so we must always be aware”) without recognizing the structural violence (i.e., social institutions or structures that harm people) that causes seafarers to work with little to no

sleep, through injury and illness, and in dangerous storms for the profit of companies. Although some seafarers did recognize and were frustrated by the quick and stressful route, Roberto frequently discussed the precarity of seafaring as his own responsibility. When I asked him what he does after he is injured, he said, “I just help myself. Only you can help yourself here on the ship. No one can because we are all here. Others have other jobs. You can’t call them right away to help you just like that, so you should stay and manage yourself. Stay strong.” Nico, another OS, said he does not think about the danger because “If you die, it is your time.” He also discussed the stress of the route, but put the responsibility of danger on other seafarers to do their job correctly instead of critiquing the lack of sleep the seafarers experienced because of the stressful route.

The route, as I briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, is a one-week roundtrip route between the Gulf of Honduras port and the Gulf of Mexico port. The two ports are approximately 1700 miles apart and the seafarers spend between 18-23 hours in each port city depending on circumstantial events, like crane operations or weather forecasts. This means seafarers are at sea about 2 ½ - 3 days each way. In comparison, Roberto told me the last reefer vessel he worked on had a two-week route, giving them time to rest and maintain a semi-regular schedule. The crew arrives around midnight on Sunday night/Monday morning and leaves around midnight on Monday night/Tuesday morning. The first of three Captains I met, Abraham, said it is one of the most stressful lines (another term for routes) because the company is so determined that the shipment gets to the port on time, which determines that the product gets to stores on time. I noted that Abraham looked “tired, stressed, and emotional” as he told me that recent bad weather made them push through their route even harder to keep on schedule. He said none of them had slept much because they have to go so fast to make up for the weather, and the bad weather keeps them up at

night. He lamented that the company gets mad when they go off schedule: “Money. Money. Money. That’s all that it’s about.”

Importantly, maritime researchers have been studying the changes in routes and the time that ships spend in ports to understand how it affects working conditions, and Abraham’s frustrations are in-line with studies done among other ports.³⁴¹ One British port study found that between 1970 and 1998, the average time a ship spent in port decreased by 16 hours.³⁴² Ships that left their port in less than twenty-four hours (like the Filipino migrant seafarers I collaborated with) increased from 11 percent in 1970 to over 70% in 1998.³⁴³ During this period (1970-1998), ships are now larger and carry even more cargo.³⁴⁴

Abraham’s perspective, compared to Roberto and Nico, placed the dangers of the route on the company instead of internalizing the stress or placing the burden of safety on other seafarers. Differently, the second Captain of the same vessel, Diego, who I spent the most time with, placed the burden of danger on local stevedoring companies because of their crane regulations. He also noted the quick route and the stress it caused, but seemed to have a different relationship with the company than Abraham. Abraham was near retirement (in fact, he told me that he hoped this was his final contract) and my interview with him was in month eight of his 9-month contract. Additionally, he had recently experienced harsh weather conditions and I happened to interview him the first day they were in port after the bad weather. To my knowledge, he did not have much sleep before we spoke and was not planning to rest after we spoke because of U.S. port

³⁴¹ Elizabeth R. DeSombre, *Flagging Standards: Globalization and Environmental Safety, and Labor Regulations at Sea*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: The MIT Press, 2006), 138.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

documentation that was due. These varying conditions may have played a role into his openness about his frustrations.

Strikingly, none of the migrant seafarers mentioned specific regulations (or the lack of regulations) for their burden of danger. Perry, an Able-Bodied Seaman (AB) whose duties include standing watch, performing general maintenance and upkeep, and other general duties, only noted the MLC, 2006. Perry said that, contrary to what other seafarers told me, he would go to the doctor if he were sick “because it’s my right . . . because it’s in the MLC.” Perry, along with many human rights advocates in the maritime industry, view the right to seek medical care as a fundamental right for seafarers that goes back centuries.

However, as already mentioned, the right to seek healthcare is different from the lived reality of seeking healthcare (i.e. wage loss or no future contracts). As I discussed in Chapter 1, seafarers’ physical access to healthcare services is theoretically attainable, but the day-in and day-out real practices of seeking healthcare services is a more complicated and convoluted picture. Jonah’s experience stitching his wound without anesthesia makes clear that his choice to self-medicate was not a simple one between having access and not having access to care. Access, in this sense, is not the cost of medical care or the physical availability of a hospital, but about understanding systems that may penalize you for using what is, supposedly, readily available for your use as well as the lack of staff (particularly medical staff) on the vessel.

The physical suffering that seafarers like Jonah encounter stem from structural violence and are manifest through symbolic violence. The mess hall posters are but one visible example of the ways migrant seafarers are encouraged to internalize the everyday dangers they face, either by blaming other seafarers or by blaming themselves for doing a poor job. The posters obscure the violence of poverty and free markets while making visible one’s personal responsibility for

avoiding danger in one of the most dangerous industries globally. In this light, a series of posters that said, “If only . . . the company would have made this route two weeks instead of one week, you may have been well-rested,” or “If only . . . you did not have to choose between a job that keeps you safe and close to home but pays little to nothing or a job that is dangerous and takes you away from your family but pays a rate above the local average,” or “If only . . . there were more people on board to cover shifts so you could sleep,” or “If only . . . the global economic system were not based on consumption and continual economic growth” would feel more honest.

THE DISMANTLING OF RIGHTS

The mess hall posters are an example of how neoliberalism disciplines people in everyday ways and generates symbolic violence, but open registries or flags of convenience (FOC) are neoliberalism par excellence. FOC in the shipping industry in relation to neoliberal globalization frames how seafarers have certain rights, but those rights can be undermined both through oppressive and productive forces. FOC are “characterized as ship registries that do not require citizenship of shipowners or operators, levy no or minimal taxes, allow ships to be worked on by nonnationals, and have neither the will nor the capability to impose domestic or international regulations on registered ships.”³⁴⁵ The current trend of FOC and the lack of regulations produced via FOC preceded neoliberal policies of the late-twentieth century, illustrating how neoliberal globalization and the shipping-industrial complex can decentralize power in order to increase profit.³⁴⁶

FOCs are not, by any means, new. There are records of U.S. ships flying Portuguese flags during the War of 1812 and U.S. ships flying various flags in the nineteenth century to avoid

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 4.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 11; Best, *The Global Industrial Complex*, xix.

slavery prohibition regulations.³⁴⁷ However, it was in 1920s that modern FOCs took hold to avoid costs and restrictions.³⁴⁸ One officer who used FOCs in the early twentieth explained, “The chief advantage of Panamanian registry is that the owner is relieved of the continual . . . boiler and hull inspections and the regulations as to crew’s quarters and subsistence . . . we are under absolutely no restrictions.”³⁴⁹ Moreover, U.S. shipping companies did not simply decide to follow suit in using FOCs, but they are complicit in the development and advancement of modern FOC.³⁵⁰ The Honduran FOC registry was explicitly created for the United Fruit Company so that they could cheaply transport bananas to U.S. ports.³⁵¹ Today, the company that is transporting bananas and other fruit between the Gulf of Honduras port and the Gulf of Mexico port, of which the Filipino migrant seafarers I collaborated with are employed, is an outgrowth from the United Fruit Company and continues flying a FOC.

FOCs, which began in our modern era as a way to bypass regulations and costs, are also responsible for the creation of a larger, global economic system that creates layers of exploitation in the shipping industry. Open registry states do not necessarily operate their registries and may contract the work to another offshore business.³⁵² For example, when I asked about company policy for accessing medical care, Jose told me that the company is based in one country, but is actually a Japanese company. In this instance, a ship is likely to be owned by *country A*, flagged in *country B*, the flagged state (country B) may operate out of *country C*, with a manning agency from *country D*, and a crew from *country E*. Further, the shipping company (owned by country A)

³⁴⁷ DeSombre, *Flagging Standards: Globalization and Environmental Safety, and Labor Regulations at Sea*, 71.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 71-72.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 72.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 72-73.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 78-79.

may be renting their ship to a company based in *country F*, which is delivering goods to *country G*. The company (based in country F) may be obtaining goods from *country H*, all while traveling in international waters between *countries I, J, and K*. For some migrant seafarers who have companies that take care of their medical needs or pay them on time, these complex systems are more annoying than damaging. However, these complex systems are dangerous because of the decentralization of responsibility, which makes seafarers the *de facto* responsible party when there is a breach of responsibility. Not all migrant seafarers have companies that encourage medical visits or pay them on time.

Tellingly, it is the labor standards that are most precarious on FOC ships. Elizabeth DeSombre analyzed the history and current practices of open registries and found that the “main incentives to register ships in open registries is to lower operating costs, and that labor is the most expensive aspect of international shipping.”³⁵³ Although port states and governing bodies (e.g. the U.S. Coast Guard) can assess equipment standards, labor standards are more difficult to measure. Studies suggest that crewmembers may be forced to sign false paybooks and lie about ship conditions.³⁵⁴ Diego explained to me that “the expenses of the company, what they spent [on your medical care]” will determine if you can get hired back after seeking medical care. He noted that seeking medical care “especially here in America” where the medical costs are higher creates even more risk to future employment. Labor standards, including medical care, are easier to circumvent under deregulation, which undercuts the many maritime and human rights international laws and policies that exist to increase labor and health standards.

Although historically FOCs have been used as a way to circumvent policies, DeSombre has also analyzed how state and non-states actors create a regulatory “race to the middle” through

³⁵³ Ibid., 135.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

more balanced processes that FOC ship owners must adhere to within the industry.³⁵⁵ In this way, self-interested actors hold ship owners accountable within the framing of FOCs, which leads to neither the highest nor the lowest standards.³⁵⁶ FOCs are still problematic, but creating systems that exclude particular benefits from ship owners who are not fully participating in agreements (e.g. international agreements) reduces the potential threat that globalization inheres, like reduced safety, labor, and environmental standards.³⁵⁷ These systems are referred to as “clubs” and the benefits as “club goods,” which create marketplace competition for decently trained employees instead of only the cheapest labor.³⁵⁸

DeSombre’s “race to the middle” shows how different rules and mechanisms operate in practice. The concept is essentially illustrating that because some companies in the shipping industry do pay fair wages and operate safe ships, it forces ships that use FOCs to have at least some responsibility to seafarers via the use of clubs that ships cannot access if they are not abiding by certain rules. When operationalized, companies must accept some economic risk for the health and safety of their employees, while also not allowing for *carte blanche* economic benefits to companies who use FOCs. This concept shows that direct exploitation by a single ship owner may be one form of violence, but it is not a totalizing answer to seafarer violence. Ships, for the most part, have to follow some rules (even if it is a kind of peer pressure versus government pressure), whether it is in the form of clubs that are created to increase common-pool resources or international agreements.

There are international agreements that are well-established within human rights and maritime law that guarantee seafarers’ the rights to medical care. A retired Coast Guard lawyer

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 5.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 59-60

³⁵⁸ Ibid., 60.

and now human rights advocate for seafarers explained to me in an interview that customary maritime law has provided seafarers with medical benefits well before the MLC, 2006, and if anything, the MLC, 2006 has taken away some rights. He explained that maintenance and cure:

is the most important thing about medical care for seafarers. It's been a cherished right for seafarers for hundreds and hundreds of years and it was a right that was developed out of shipowners self-interest. Medical care was not a grant of Christian charity or magnanimity or even human rights. This law was developed even before the pre-Christian era and it was developed out of the simple need for shipowners to be able to recruit and retain skilled people. If you want to recruit and retain skilled people, you have to take care of them. These laws that provided for medical care for seafarers developed out of customary business practices centuries ago. And they are there for a good reason. If you want to recruit and retain good people who are traveling far from home, you have to make sure they are confident they are taken care of.

The MLC, 2006 limits medical care to 16 weeks for ship owners, but maintenance and cure is to the point of maximum cure. I described in Chapter 1 that maintenance and cure and the Jones Act are under near-constant threat of being dismantled, which would limit the rights of seafarers to seek medical care and compensation (though some argue for its repeal because of the higher costs for shipped goods to Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico). The logic of dismantling a law that protects ones employees seems counter-intuitive if, as the lawyer above described, employers are seeking to retain employees. However, as I have described throughout this dissertation, if employers have a pool of healthy laborers in need of employment (even within a “race to the middle” club), a reserve army of labor as Marx called it, the logic of keeping employees healthy at a cost greater than hiring new healthy employees does not stand. The corpus of ‘human resource departments’ were dependent on employee retention because of the costs to obtain and train employees. Under neoliberalism, the commodification of labor and the contractual, precarious, and disposable forms it takes reformulates employer’s responsibility to their employees. A disposable workforce with broken and bent bodies can be cast aside.

CONCLUSION

In *The Idea of Justice*, Amartya Sen theorizes the various grounds by which justice can be judged, “whether freedoms, capabilities, resources, happiness, well-being or something else,”³⁵⁹ when considering “equality and liberty.”³⁶⁰ Sen is concerned less about the ideal of just institutions and instead concerned about a theory of justice based on the way people actually live.³⁶¹ He writes, “Justice is ultimately connected with the way people’s lives go, and not merely with the nature of the institutions surrounding them.”³⁶² Sen acknowledges that institutions and the policies and rules they create are also part of the actual lives of people, but he properly analyzes that if a theory of justice is only concerned with an idealized institution the theory is “indifferent to the lives that people can actually live.”³⁶³ For Sen, “a capability is the power to do something, the accountability that emanates from that ability – that power – is a part of the capability perspective, and this can make room for demands of duty – what can be broadly called deontological demands.”³⁶⁴ A just institutional demand (for instance, one may claim the Declaration of Human Rights is such an institutional demand) does little good if people cannot realize the justice it hopes for in their lives.

For seafarers, maintenance and cure, the Jones Act, and the MLC, 2006 are just institutional demands that theoretically provide medical care, compensation, and other guaranteed rights for those who live and work at sea. The policies are just, yet as shown throughout this dissertation, seafarers still do not seek medical care. In this light, one can judge the policies as failing, but not because the MLC, 2006 is a failure, but rather because advocates have focused on perfecting institutional demands without focusing on the everyday, lived experiences of seafarers. At the

³⁵⁹ Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, 67.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 103.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, 103.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

same time, advocates must work within an industry that has unwritten rules that discourage medical care seeking behavior and with seafarers who internalize failures or injuries as their responsibility or fault.

Sen's idea of justice forces us to come to terms with the ways migrant seafarers and companies actually behave (realization-focused comparison), not our idealized notion of their behavior (transcendental institutionalism).³⁶⁵ Seafarers have contracts, and there are provisions in their contracts that are just (though, to be sure, there are also unjust provisions like arbitration clauses), yet the provisions cannot actually be taken advantage of because they are idealized, not based in reality. When speaking to the retired lawyer, I asked him why seafarers do not seek medical care on board if those rights are ensured. His response follows the same logic that seafarers told me, which was that "seafarers have to have medical certificates and an examination every two years and they may not want to risk their qualifications as a seafarer, their medical qualifications, if they have some sort of injury or illness that is disqualifying. So they may not want a ship owner to know about that." Instead, and like so many of the seafarers I spoke to, "they might do it [treat] themselves or seek it [treatment] out themselves or self-medicate."

There is a consensus, then, among lawyers, advocates, deck hands, and Captains that, in order to keep their jobs, migrant seafarers for the most part do not seek medical care. It is important to keep their particular jobs because there is a population of other would-be migrant seafarers who can easily fill these positions (DJ told me that he could not get another contract for nine months the last time he was in the Philippines because of "competition . . . there's a lot of seamen in the Philippines"). Further, to lose a seafaring contract with a company means that a Filipino migrant seafarer will likely need to find work in the Philippines, which means significantly less income.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 7.

Carlos, the Second Officer (who also happens to be the Medical Officer) told me that he makes the sacrifice of being a seafarer “for the good of our family . . . if you work and you stay away from our family we have more income than if we work in the Philippines. So, I can say that if you work here you can have more income.” The sentiment of working for one’s family because it is one of the only well-paying jobs was repeated throughout my interviews with the seafarers. Filipino migrant seafarers become seafarers because their choices are limited, which means their freedoms are limited. Ideally, seafarers will seek medical treatment when needed. Realistically, they seek treatment (or are forced into treatment) only when their injury or illness is critical. In this way, their freedoms are even more circumscribed.

Importantly, many injustices create this situation. Historically, colonialism and post-colonialism created the possibility for Filipinos to be an ideal population for cheap migrant labor. Structurally, capitalism and neoliberal globalization make it possible to have a disposable workforce that is socially devalued. Symbolically, Filipinos have internalized their role in these systems and been made “complicit in their own destruction.”³⁶⁶ Seafaring is not inherently unjust, even with the dangers it poses. What makes the current structure of seafaring unjust for the Filipino migrant seafarers I collaborated with is that they are not capable, as Sen would argue, of choosing what they value most. Sen theorized that “a person’s advantage in terms of opportunities is judged to be lower than that of another if she has less capability – less real opportunity – to achieve those things that she has reason to value.”³⁶⁷ For Filipino migrant seafarers, not seeking medical care when sick or injured in order to keep a job or sacrificing social and familial networks to have a job that pays a livable wage means less capability – less freedom.

14. ³⁶⁶ Scheper-Hughes, "Dangerous and Endangered Youth: Social Structures and Determinants of Violence,"

³⁶⁷ Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, 231.

At the same time, there is a tension between Bourdieu's symbolic violence and Sen's theory of justice because what we may choose to value most is always-already colored by and is a product of our habitus and discourses. Our values are produced and our choices are contingent upon the production of the self. However, though choices are disciplined choices, Sen's approach does offer a critique to a human rights approach that is based in institutional justice. In this way, his work pushes against structural violence, while not fully exploring how symbolic violence disciplines migrant seafarers to make certain choices or to view themselves as a certain type of people. A capabilities approach allows people to choose what they subjectively value.

Saul Tobias, when analyzing Foucault's approach to freedom and Sen's capabilities approach, writes that the capabilities approach is "no less freedom-centered than traditional liberal political conceptions. But it differs in its conception of freedom by emphasizing not only the right to do or be, but also the actual capability to do or be."³⁶⁸ For Sen, there is a fundamental difference between 'agent freedom' and 'well-being freedom,' whereas the former is the right to choose one's existence no matter what external forces may exist, and the latter is the consensus that people want to "live under conditions of at least functional economic, physiological and psychological well-being" and that these conditions can be pursued for someone by others.³⁶⁹ Foucault's conception of "limit-experience" takes this idea further by suggesting that there are certain experiences that "undermines the subject . . . because it transgresses the limits of coherent subjectivity as it functions in everyday life" by threatening the possibility of the self.³⁷⁰

Subjectivity happens by constituting ourselves as subjects and "we are constituted as knowing, active subjects in the world to the extent that we relate to, and participate in, the regimes

³⁶⁸ Saul Tobias, "Foucault on Freedom and Capabilities," *Theory, Culture & Society* 22, no. 4 (2005): 71.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 71-72.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

of knowledge and praxis that orientate us as rational, sexual, cultural, biological and economic beings.”³⁷¹ In order to interrogate power and the self, though, one must have the capacity “to participate in reasonable discourse,”³⁷² which can be undermined by the practices or systems one is asked to interrogate. For migrant seafarers, structural and symbolic violence may limit their capacity for political and economic resistance through the very systems that discipline them to be subjects. For example, torture, terminal illness, or refugee status illustrate the limits of agential freedom because of the powerlessness they form for individual subjects: “Pain, illness and extreme economic and social deprivation can all erode the capacity of the subject to function as an active agent within the networks of power.”³⁷³ As discussed in Chapter 3, the entanglement of human rights norms and nation-states limits the potential of human rights campaigns and shows how powerlessness can operate for people in practice, even in spite of just institutional demands (e.g. refugees or asylum-seekers).

A capabilities approach allows us to trace policies and their effects, not as an ideal, but as a lived reality. At the same time, there is inherent tension between a capabilities approach and symbolic violence that needs to reckon with the limits of agency and how values are produced. Although there are limits to a capabilities approach, there are also strengths to rethinking how we practically intervene in political and economic issues and how we engage people who live with the consequences of political and economic policies. Warren Montag wrote, “Our dilemma is rather how to increase our power, how to diminish the forces that individuate and separate us and thus prevent us from uniting with others in order to act and to think more effectively and with

³⁷¹ Ibid., 77.

³⁷² Ibid., 78.

³⁷³ Ibid., 79-80.

greater strength for our liberation.”³⁷⁴ One way that my work diminishes what individuates and separates us was through photovoice, both as a concept that gave seafarers control over the photos that would appear in this dissertation as well as a public advocacy tool to discuss the ways in which we have commonalities. In the next two chapters, I conclude with ways we can reimagine activism when faced with injustice by exploring the storied history and potential of photo-ethnography, focusing on the images that seafarers took through our photovoice project and the subsequent gallery showing, as well as what it means to teach a social justice curriculum to health professional students.

³⁷⁴ Warren Montag, "The Soul is the Prison of the Body: Althusser and Foucault, 1970-1975," *Yale French Studies* 88 (1995): 77.

Chapter 5

THE FACE OF MIGRATION: ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AND ETHICAL RESPONSES

The approach to the face is the most basic mode of responsibility...To expose myself to the vulnerability of the face is to put my ontological right to existence into question. In ethics, the other's right to exist has primacy over my own, a primacy epitomized in the ethical edict: you shall not kill, you shall not jeopardize the life of the other.

-Emmanuel Levinas from Judith Butler's *Precarious Life*

POLITICAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PHOTOVOICE RESEARCH

In this chapter, I draw from the photographs and stories of seafarers to question assumptions about migration, capitalism, and culture as well as visually explain the complexities of seafaring. The photographs that seafarers took, from pig roasts to parties, show that joy, desire, and happiness do not disappear, even in precarious and sacrificial work environments.

The complexity of seafaring and questions about what it means to be human are reflected in the photos, but larger systems still shape the precarity, vulnerability, and sacrifice of seafarers. Migrant seafarers have found ways to celebrate life, and we should celebrate with them, but those celebrations do not mean that we can ignore the suffering and sacrifice they must evade. Migrant seafarers are not victims, and I believe they would be upset if I showed them as victims, but they (like so many of us) must learn to exist within systems, like capitalism and neoliberal globalization, that circumscribes agency to benefit itself and to continue growing profits to the detriment of the health of people. The photos that the seafarers took and the stories that they told are reflections of the structural and symbolic violence that exists around them and embodied by them.

The photos and stories that are in this body of work are also reflections of my own positionality as a researcher and advocate. I approached this project with an ethics of representation, which meant that I had to reckon with my personal politics and the politics of my position. Feminist ethics argues that the role of ethics is to account for and take responsibility for

the politics of “positions, power, and social constructions”³⁷⁵ that help to create injustice. Although I saw myself as someone who was trying to account for injustices, I also had to take responsibility for the benefit that unjust positions, power, and society affords me. One way I attempted to take responsibility, though it was imperfect in many ways, was by having seafarers show their experiences through photographs instead of only relying on my notes, camera lens, and recordings. At the same time, as the curator of the photos and stories, these are ultimately attached to my views on migration, capitalism, and culture and cannot be detached from circumstantial events or scenarios that occurred during the research.

One of the challenges and joys of photovoice is letting participants tell you their favorite photograph and why. During past photovoice projects that I worked on, we always ensured that the photographer chose the photos that were displayed in gallery showings and that they had an opportunity to create a title and short description of what the photo meant to him or her. Giving the photographers the opportunity to tell us their favorite photo and why was far more interesting and shed a different light on our community and the issues facing our community. However, for this photovoice project, photographers were not able to choose their one favorite photo, give titles, and rarely provided detailed descriptions. The reasons for this are multifaceted, but as I explained in Chapter 2, accessing the same seafarers proved to be more difficult than I originally anticipated. I was very grateful for the seafarers who gave their time to answer my interview questions, tell me stories, and share pictures with me, but continuing to ask the same seafarers to do this more than once or twice was simply an inconvenience to them and their work. I had to balance my research with their work and daily schedules.

³⁷⁵ Margaret Urban Walker, *Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics*, Kindle, 2nd ed., Studies in feminist philosophy, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 76.

Additionally, for other photovoice projects participants sign forms and provide their names and emails, which allows for further communication about the photographs. There was some concern during the initial phase of our ethics review that seafarers, although not a vulnerable population in traditional medical ethics standards, could be considered vulnerable because of their migration and contractual work status. For this reason, I did not collect names or signatures on the consent forms and did not collect contact information (they had my contact information if they wanted to get in touch, which some later did). Some seafarers began sending me images that they took on their cell phones through social media sights, while three other seafarers and one person from the seafaring industry took photographs using a film camera that I provided to them. One of the rolls of film could not be exposed, but all other images were delivered to the seafarers in print form so that they could have copies for themselves. Unfortunately, every time I returned to the ship to deliver the photographs the seafarers were unavailable to discuss the images with me.

The images that are collected in this chapter, then, are 20 photographs I chose from over 100 photos given to me throughout the course of a year. The text that accompanies the images are both my analysis as well as seafarers' descriptions, thoughts, and motivations behind the photographs. I tried to be intentional about which images were chosen by showcasing the photos that represented the most well-rounded perspective of the seafarers as well as ones that gave a completely different view of seafaring that I did not experience while on board. Images not chosen were often because the perspective was already in another photo (e.g. pictures of food or areas on board the vessel), I could not anonymize the photo, or the photo was blurry. My audience for the dissertation is academic, while my audience for the gallery showing was a non-academic public. The twelve images I chose for the gallery showing are all represented in the dissertation, but my reason for not using all twenty in the public showing was an ascetic choice. All the images used in

the public showing were enlarged to 16x24 and framed, which limited any use of low-resolution images taken using mobile phones.

I also considered the meaning behind the images and their perception among a wider audience when deciding which photos would go in the dissertation and in the public showing. The questions Soyini Madison asks about who will benefit from the research and who has the authority to make claims became an integral part of the curation process: “What are we going to do with the research, and who ultimately will benefit? Who gives us the authority to make claims about where we have been? How will our work make a difference in people’s lives?”³⁷⁶ In my case, I know that I come to this project with pre-existing ideas on capitalism, globalization, and neoliberalism. Although I could never fully untangle these pre-existing ideas and opinions, I did try to listen to seafarers and hear what they were telling me. I wanted to push against seafarers who felt they were responsible for their safety, while at the same time I had to come to terms with the fact that they *are* responsible for their safety and health, whether right or wrong. Regardless, I was not able to suspend my beliefs that there is injustice that affects seafarers and we have a collective responsibility to speak against it. I wanted to reveal the complicated experiences of seafarers, but I also understood that my perspective was not (and could not be) the same as theirs.

Madison describes the revelation of messy and complicated experiences and relationships as an “ethical representation,”³⁷⁷ which is also similar to how Bourgois and Schonberg describe their difficulty choosing photographs for their photo-ethnography.³⁷⁸ There is a temptation to show positive images of people because of the power inherent in photo-ethnographic relationships and the fine line between revealing the lived experiences of people and making a “pornography of

³⁷⁶ D. Soyini Madison, *Introduction to Critical Ethnography*, ed. D. Soyini Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance*, (Los Angeles, California: SAGE Publishing, 2012). 8.

³⁷⁷ Madison, *Introduction to Critical Ethnography*, 7.

³⁷⁸ Bourgois and Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend*, 12.

violence” from their suffering.³⁷⁹ However, I have also noticed that it can be tempting to show the more explicitly violent images in order to get a point across, without taking into account the inherent exploitation of this position and the work it is doing to frame migrants or the poor as always oppressed and without forms of resistance. There is an important line, then, between not whitewashing the ugly realities of injustice or creating pornographies of violence. I tried, and likely still failed in some ways, to have an ethical representation of the lives of migrant seafarers that was accountable to revealing multiple layers of violence, joy, suffering, and celebration.

I was not only attentive to an ethics and politics of representation, but also of the intersubjectivity between the seafarers, our global economic engines, and myself. Edward Said and Michael Jackson argue that researchers are being influenced and influencing simultaneously and that the Other and the Self are always in production.³⁸⁰ Their work is in many ways a direct critique to anthropological studies of the early- to mid- twentieth century, like Margaret Mead’s *Coming of Age in Samoa*. In my own fieldwork, I felt the pull of wanting to create a coherent image of migrant seafarers, but also knew that an uncomplex and static perspective was not only untrue, but also irresponsible. A static and unchanging perspective of Self and Other hides the complexities of people, as well as the politics that shape culture.

Jackson calls the production of Self and Other “intersubjectivity,” which is a dialectic framing that understands relationships as nothing but social and that “being” is inter- and between people: “A field of inter-experience, inter-action, and inter-locution...inter-existence.”³⁸¹ Jackson

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 13.

³⁸⁰ Michaela Wolf, *Culture as Translation - and Beyond Ethnographic Models of Representation in Translation Studies*, ed. Theo Hermans, *Crosscultural Transgressions: Research Models in Translation Studies II, Historical and Ideological Issues*, (London, New York: Routledge, 2014), 184.; Michael Jackson, *Minima Ethnographica: Intersubjectivity and the Anthropological Project*, (Chicago, London: University of California Press, 1998), 3.

³⁸¹ Jackson, *Minima Ethnographica*, 3.

asks, “How do local and global worlds intersect, how can ethnographic studies of single societies enable us to say something about the human condition, and how is the lived experience of individuals connected to the virtual realities of tradition, history, culture, and the biology of the species that outrun the life of any one person?”³⁸² People are always-already in relation to each other and our human experiences are tied to the human condition. We have a shared humanity, even if not shared experiences and we must attend to the “ambiguous and stressful”³⁸³ dimensions of life. Intersubjectivity is not a final answer on who people are or how they ought to act in any given situation, but intersubjectivity creates paradoxes that helps us see the world as more complex and interconnected than was possible when viewing cultures as disparate, static, and bounded.

Intersubjectivity was important as I grappled with the complexity of seafarers’ lives, my positionality in their lives as a participant (taking them on errands) and observer, the entanglement of political economic policies that are internalized and embodied, and the ways their photos showcase this complexity in sometimes-hilarious, sometimes-breathtaking ways. Nancy Scheper-Hughes writes that, “We cannot rid ourselves of the cultural self we bring with us into the field any more than we can disown the eyes, ears, and skin through which we take in our intuitive perceptions about the new and strange world we have entered . . . [but] there is still value in attempting to ‘speak truth to power.’”³⁸⁴ The images that I chose were selected by a ‘self’ and they represent my view as well as that of the seafarers, but the pictures are also avenues to advocacy – a way to ‘speak truth to power’ – through their visual imagery and inclusion in public gallery showings.

³⁸² Jackson, *Minima Ethnographica: Intersubjectivity and the Anthropological Project*, 3.

³⁸³ Ibid, 5.

³⁸⁴ Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*, 28.

PHOTOVOICE: A TOOL FOR SOCIETAL AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

The photographs that are part of the dissertation speak to an audience that is mostly academic, but the photographs have a life off the pages of theory-laden stories. As I briefly described earlier, as part of the larger project with migrant seafarers, I also had a gallery showing where twelve of the images were displayed in an art space during a community art gathering (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2). Nearly 1000 people came to the showing and I had the opportunity to discuss how the photos came about, what they mean, and what it means to live in a community where migrant seafarers contribute to both our local and global economy. The gallery showing also created new opportunities to present the work in other academic and public settings – thus far, two venues have been confirmed for future public showings.

Through public showings, the visual representations contribute to societal and political transformations by giving the audience the opportunity to interpret the images, ask questions, and consider how a hidden industry in the community is a vital part of our lives. The gallery showing was held during a community-wide Artwalk event, which ensured that a larger audience would view the photos, not only those who frequent art showings. Artwalk is a community event that occurs approximately every six weeks throughout the downtown district. Stores, coffee shops, bars, music venues, and art galleries stay open late, hang art in their business, serve free wine or beer, and encourage a more public engagement with community art.

Even with these multiple considerations of who is viewing the photographs, how, and why, there are still inherent ethical issues when working with photographs, just as in text. However, the format of the photos via a public showing increased the visibility of an often hidden population and changed who engaged in the work. The visual and textual elements are forms of advocacy to move people who may not otherwise realize the plight of migrant seafarers and to think critically

about the food and products they buy. The photographs beg the question: who is sacrificing or suffering so that I can buy cheap, delicious fruit? As with everything involved in human subjects research (with or without cameras), there are unresolved tensions. My ultimate goal is for this work to be an impetus for long-term societal and political transformation by critiquing the structures that we accept because of their convenience, the cost, and the suffering that is easily concealed.

My intention for the photovoice project was an ethical representation of lived experiences that engages in the politics of people's lives, but the project also took on more meaning when travel restrictions kept me from going with the seafarers between ports. As I described in Chapter 2, I could not travel on the ship with the seafarers, which made the photographs they took even more important when trying to understand how structural and symbolic violence is embodied in the lives of seafarers. Although I planned to do the photovoice project from the beginning, it became even more necessary to implement it in order to illustrate what they told me during my interviews since I could not see their lives at sea.

As Bourgois and Schonberg illustrate in *Righteous Dopefiend*, photography is one of the most accessible forms of public ethnography because of the ability to engage with different and unique audiences outside of academia. However, photography is not without similar critiques that traditional ethnographies have had to grapple with, such as how people are represented, what the photographer-ethnographer chooses to edit/select, and the positionality of the photographer-ethnographer. One of the ways I worked to mitigate these tensions, which is different than Bourgois and Schonberg, was that instead of taking photographs of participants or their lives, I asked participants to take the photos. This was an important difference in methodology, most notably because of the inherent power issues involved in 'pointing a camera' at someone else (i.e. "the other").

As explained in Chapter 2, photovoice is a method that offers participants the opportunity to take photographs that are representative of their lives and upon review can be used to discuss societal issues with participants as well as policymakers. As part of a community-based participatory research method (CPBR), photovoice serves the purpose of exploring social issues through the eyes of people who personally experience them. However, as explored throughout this dissertation, the photographs are not objective or static representations of all seafarer's lives nor are the photos absent of my perspective. The migrant seafarers who took the photographs were taking them for me, not for themselves or their families, and ultimately I chose which photos to include in the work (both in the dissertation and the gallery showing) or not include or was restricted by which photos to include because of identifying information (as stated by the IRB). Moreover, the seafarers were given general direction on what to take photos of (i.e., take photographs that represent health and well-being). Combined with interviews and observations, the photographs, far from objective or comprehensive, do tell a story about what it means to live as a Filipino migrant seafarer and creates a visual instrument for public advocacy.



Figure 5.1: Photovoice gallery showing



Figure 5.2: Photovoice gallery showing audience

PHOTOVOICE IMAGES

The photographs below complement the ethnographic work discussed up to this point by illustrating the type of labor they engage in, the conditions they endure, the celebrations they share, and the products they deliver for our enjoyment. I categorized the photographs based on who took them, but they could have easily been categorized by topic (e.g. “celebrations” or “labor intensive”). I chose to categorize them by photographer instead of topic because understanding one person’s perspective as compared to another’s was important to me, just as knowing who said what in an interview and their position on the ship was important. The Second Officer/Medical Officer took photos of ports, crates, and celebrations, while an Ordinary Seaman (OS) took photos of fellow seafarers working. The Mess Man sent me many pictures of food dishes, but they were only dishes from celebrations instead of their ordinary meals. The differences in who took what picture was important to my analysis and understanding life on the vessel.

Visually, the photographs follow the argument made thus far, which is that seafarers operate in a precarious environment that potentially can adversely affect their lives and health. From the OS to the Captain, seafarers recognize this danger and are acutely aware of it. However, this danger does not preclude socialization or laughter. Like most, when life’s stressors are not exigent they find ways to have fun, exercise, or celebrate.

Photographer: Perry, Able-Bodied Seaman



Figure 5.3: Ordinary Seaman painting part of deck

These series of photographs were taken by Perry, an Able-Bodied Seaman (AB), and are of Ordinary Seamen (OS) performing ship maintenance. Although every vessel can operate in slightly different ways, generally OSs report to ABs. They are considered the lowest rank of the ship's deck department and their work ranges from chipping paint, standing lookout, and assisting the carpenter in repair work. Although there are many duties an OS may be called to do, their main objective is to make sure the ship is in good condition. This photograph shows two OSs working with Simba Kitt, which is a type of glue or adhesive. Noticeably, the OSs have bent backs and are not wearing facemasks, though they are wearing gloves.



Figure 5.4: Ordinary Seaman working on deck after departing from port

An OS is working on the main deck, shortly after departing from port (as evident by the land in the background). Although the main duties of an OS are maintenance and repair of the ship, OSs may also act as helmsman (person who steers a ship), read draft markings (draft marks show the distance between the bottom of the vessel's hull to the waterline), or assist with cargo watch. In this photograph, the OS is securing containers with a twist lock. The physical work of OSs risks their backs and bodies. Back injuries are one of the most common injuries for seafarers, along with cuts, burns, slips, trips, falls, and head, eye, hand, and foot injuries.



Figure 5.5 Ordinary Seaman painting vessel walls

An OS performing ship maintenance by painting. It is unclear if he was wearing a safety facemask, but he was not wearing gloves and this physical work is also back intensive. Maintenance on board a ship is one of the main ways to keep a ship in good, working condition. Seafarers follow a maintenance plan, which ensures that shipping companies maintain maintenance and repair in the least amount of time and with minimum costs.



Figure 5.6: Seafarer looking over ledge as he works

As described in Chapter's 2 and 4, slips, trips, and falls are some of the most common work-related injuries for seafarers. This seafarer, standing over a ledge without a rope, is also wearing a t-shirt around his head and face, likely to block the sun. While working with the seafarers between the Gulf of Mexico and Gulf of Honduras ports, temperatures were often in the high 90s with 70-100% humidity.



Figure 5.7: Seafarer standing watch over gangway

An OS is standing watch in the Gulf of Honduras port. One seafarer is usually standing at the top of the gangway when in port, making sure that all visitors sign in and are given a visitor pass. During the route, seafarers also watchkeep to ensure that machinery is running properly, that the ship is being safely navigated, or to be on the lookout for pirates.



Figure 5.8: Seafarer posing for picture on deck

A seafarer posing for a photograph after he got off-duty, most evident by his apparel. When seafarers are working they wear company-standard blue coveralls, but can wear everyday clothes when they are not ‘on the clock.’ This seafarer is wearing torn jeans, casual shoes, and a nice watch, though his shirt, badge, and hardhat make it evident that he is a seafarer. This photograph also provides a nice sale to the size of the vessel. This vessel is 533 feet in length (just under four football fields) and 85 feet in breadth, yet only 16-22 seafarers operate a vessel of this size. The “No Smoking” sign also stands out. All seafarers must read and speak basic English, so it is curious that the “No Smoking” sign is in English and Spanish. Smoking (though I never saw it on deck) was a mainstay of the seafarers I interviewed. The mess hall was usually full of seafarers smoking, which they did to stay awake during shifts. However, one seafarer commented that he does not smoke because he never knows when they will be adrift or for how long. He witnessed seafarers smoking cigarette butts after being adrift for days without the opportunity to resupply in port.



Figure 5.9: Bananas loaded on the ship at Gulf of Honduras port

Fruit is being loaded into containers, which will then be loaded onto the ship, delivered to the Gulf of Mexico port, and subsequently driven and delivered to grocery stores throughout the United States and Canada. This process happens once a week and they deliver approximately 7,500 – 10,000 boxes of fruit to the Gulf of Mexico port each week. Using bananas as an example, one fruit box can hold over 50 bananas, which would equal close to half a million bananas being delivered weekly.



Figure 5.10: Ordinary Seaman working on the vessel during their route

In this photograph, another OS is doing maintenance on the vessel. It appears that he is cleaning it given the bucket nearby and his instrument. The contraption around his face is curious and makes me suspect he is using some form of harmful chemical. OSs clean, paint, repair, and maintain the vessel on a continual basis and mainly while they are at sea, since they are assisting with cargo and crane maintenance in port. This photograph also begs the question of whether seafarers typically do these tasks in isolation, especially given the size of the vessel compared to the size of the crew, which makes these activities more dangerous with the risk of falling overboard unseen.

Photographer: DJ, Chief Cook



Figure 5.11: Waves coming over top of cargo

Seafarers' are often told "smooth sailing and calm seas" before boarding vessels because of the imminent danger of storms at sea. DJ took this photograph during a Tropical Storm on his phone through a window on the vessel. He told me that the waves were coming over the top of the ship and that the ship felt like it was going to capsize. Although some seafarers said they no longer get seasick, DJ said this storm made him sick and that he gets sick from sailing about every month. Another seafarer told me that during storms he sleeps horizontally across his bed (with his feet on another piece of furniture) so that he does not roll out of the bed. Almost every seafarer will experience rough weather at sea during his or her career.



Figure 5.12: DJ sitting on frozen steps

DJ sent me this photograph after he left the vessel we met on in the Gulf of Mexico. Other images he sent showed snowball fights with other crewmembers and freezing temperatures. My initial reaction to the photos were how dangerous the ice on the stairs must be for seafarers, especially at night or in an emergency. The photo was sent six months after he left the Gulf of Honduras/Mexico vessel. One of the last things he told me before departing was that he hoped to take a year off to be with his wife and son. However, if a seafaring contract is offered, seafarers can rarely say no because of how competitive it can be to get another contract. In this case, it seems that DJ was offered a new contract and felt like he could not say no, even though he planned to take a year off to lose weight and be with his wife and son.

Photographer: Carlos, Second Officer/Medical Officer

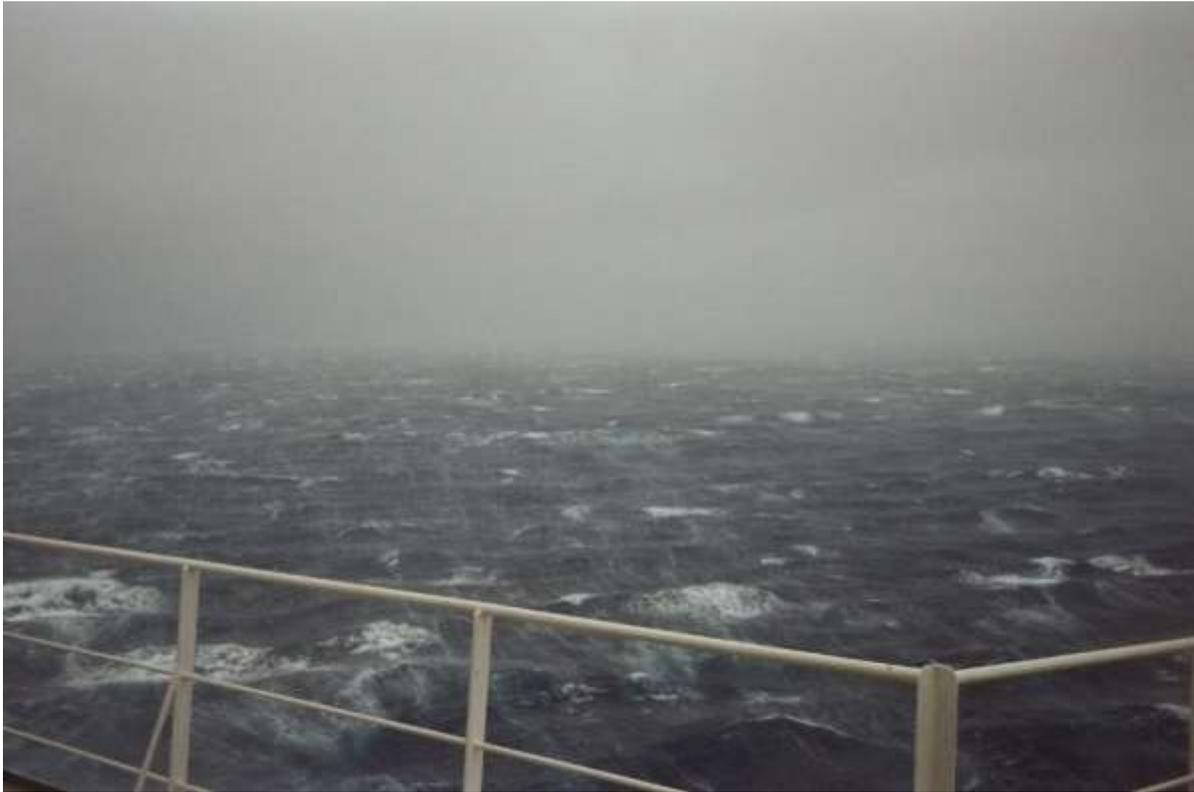


Figure 5.13: Storm from deck of ship

Carlos, the Second Officer/Chief Medical Officer, took this photograph during a storm at sea. Although not as dangerous as Tropical Storm Cindy, the photograph shows whitecaps caused by strong winds blowing across the water. Overtime, large waves are formed and they can rock a ship, like in DJ's photo, causing seasickness.



Figure 5.14: Waves coming near cargo

In this photograph, waves are coming near the cargo as it sails towards the Gulf of Mexico port. Carlos told me that they were in a rough storm, but they did not have to change course. During Tropical Storm Cindy, the seafarers had to dock in a different port in order to avoid the storm and rerouted for a few weeks. During Hurricane Harvey, they were “not under command,” which means that they went through circumstances that caused them to be unable to manoeuvre and stay out of the way of other ships. Although they could not easily manoeuvre, they were able to maintain course and their Engines continued rolling at 5.4 knots.



Figure 5.15: Pig roast on board the ship

Carlos took this photo, which has a more jovial feeling than the other photographs. This photo, as well as the next photo of the seafarers in a hot tub, illustrate the competing narratives that seafarers live within – funny, sad, sacrificial, and lively. Here, three men are roasting a pig on board the vessel in what looks like a handmade spit. This photo resonated with me because my family has a yearly pig roast ritual (a Cochon de Lait), which is a large gathering of family, friends, and neighbors. The three-five people who are in charge of the pig (which means waking up at 4 am and hand rotating a pig on the spit for hours on end) is passed down every few years depending on age (and, unfortunately, usually gender). Roasting the pig every New Year is an intergenerational event that connects our family to a larger Creole cultural heritage. I immediately felt my own connection to tradition, heritage, and community when I first saw this photograph, which is likely the intent of the pig roast for seafarers. Seafarers are known to roast pigs onboard, though it is definitely not a weekly event. It takes time and patience to rotate a pig for sometimes 6 or so hours.



Figure 5.16: Hot tub or pool party in a ship's container

This photograph, like the last photo, shows the community of seafaring. As described in Chapter 1, seafarers are understood as a “high-contrast folk group” because their shared dangers also binds them together. At the most extreme, seafarers are crushed, fall off gangways, suffocate, and drown, and in less extreme ways they accumulate injuries and illness that slowly cripples, weakens, or immobilizes them. In these extreme conditions, seafarers find ways to commune, to make friends, and to celebrate. I also find it intriguing that the seafarers are clearly posing for the photo, with hand signs or rabbit ears, knowing full well that I would see this photo and use it for research or public showings. All the sunglasses in this photo, as well as in Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.14, were added later through photo editing software to conceal their identities.

Photographer: Diego, Captain

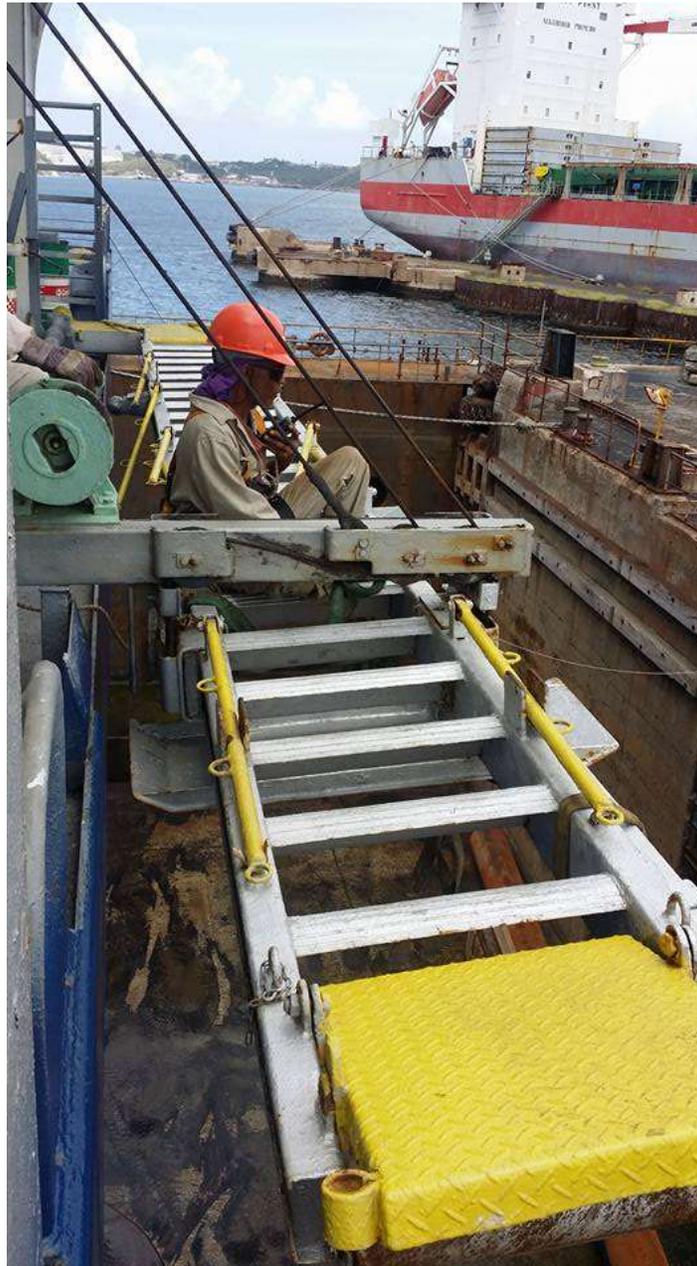


Figure 5.17: Seafarer resting on a ladder

The Captain of the ship took this photo with his phone while the crew was in dry dock. This image is particularly provocative when juxtaposed with the posters in Chapter 4 that describe seafarer's individual responsibility to stay safe. During my tenure, I did not see places for seafarers to rest while working. If this seafarer fell, he would likely be held responsible for sitting in a precarious position, yet his seating options on board the ship were quite limited. The image is a stark contrast between corporate responsibility and individual responsibility for the health of workers.

Photographer: Benjamin, Mess Man



Figure 5.18: Ordinary Seamen working below deck

The Mess Man (also known as the Steward) sent me these images via social media, which he took with his phone. He did not speak much English and I do not speak Tagalog, therefore our interview only lasted about five minutes, but he sent me photographs over the seven months we were working together. This photograph as well as Figure 5.18 were of ship repairs while they were at sea. One of the OSs in the picture told me that he was repairing the cargo hold: “Sometimes there is too much weight, the flooring collapsed, so we repair it.” The “too much weight” refers to the 10,000 boxes of fruit that are delivered to North America weekly. He told me as a lower OS he usually paints, sweeps, and fumigates, but because he had more experience with repairs he was in charge of this operation.



Figure 5.19: Ordinary Seaman measuring replacement parts

This is the second photograph in the series of OSs repairing the cargo hold, which partially collapsed during their journey due to the weight of the cargo. This seafarer told me that he took four years of college to become a seafarer (“It is a three year course, but to me I was four years because I am not a study guy. I like to have fun, so it takes me longer”). His father was also a seafarer and he felt like his dad missed out on much of his life, which he now feels he is doing to his kids.



Figure 5.20: Meal served celebrating Captain's children

The Mess Man sent photos of food that he and the Chief Cook prepared for a celebration honoring the accomplishments of the Captain's children. The Captain's son won a regional research forum competition and his daughter finished her first year of medical school. The Captain told me that he is still working to put them through college. The seafarers celebrate other crewmembers and their families often with traditional Filipino dishes.



Figure 5.21: Meal served at celebration for Captain

This is another photograph, taken by the Mess Man, of the celebration they had onboard for the Captain's children (even though the children were not onboard).

Gangway



Figure 5.22: Gangway on our reefer vessel

The port chaplain took this photograph, which was the reefer vessel's gangway. She had this to say about her image: "A ship's gangway is the link between the sea and land. Gangways have been special to me my whole career as a port chaplain. I am afraid of heights and water so every day I have to face my fears to get to the people I serve." This chaplain has been serving seafarers for nearly 30 years and constantly advocates on their behalf between Captains, other crewmembers, companies, and medical agents.

Chapter 6

THE POLITICS OF CULTURE IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

For three years the Duke had been trying to buy Lassie from Sam Carraclough, and Sam had merely stood his ground. "It's no use raising your price again, Your Lordship," he would say, "It's just – well, she's not for sale for no price." The village knew all about that. And that was why Lassie meant so much to them. She represented some sort of pride that money had not been able to take away from them. Yet, dogs are owned by men, and men are bludgeoned by fate. And sometimes there comes a time in a man's life when fate has beaten him so that he must bow his head and decide that he must eat his pride so that his family may eat bread.

-Eric Knight, Lassie Come-Home

INTRODUCTION

I had the wonderful opportunity to present portions of this research on the “Globalization of the Waves” panel in the summer of 2018. After the panel, a participant asked me why I focus so much on injustice: “Is there anything good about being a seafarer?,” she asked. “You make seafaring sound awful, but there is a culture of pride about being strong, taking care of themselves at sea. Seafaring is just a different culture and you can’t compare it to other jobs.” I reminded her that my lens was health and my questions were centered on the health worlds of seafarers, but I agreed that seafaring is not all bad nor is it inherently bad. Her questions that she posed, though, deserve more elucidation. I began questioning if I was doing the opposite of what I set out to do: representing a cultural other who is oppressed without considering their multiplicities. This final chapter, then, is a long answer to her short question.

First, I draw from the stories and images presented throughout this research to question assumptions about culture and the embodiment of culture. Next, I show how biomedical institutions, specifically U.S. medical schools, can unintentionally reinscribe violence on the most marginalized of populations by not taking into account the politics of health, disease, and culture. I take biomedical institutions as my focal point because it is where I am situated within the health field as well as where migrant seafarers must present themselves if they are in need of healthcare and are requesting the company to pay for the services. Finally, I present an *Instructors Syllabus* that is geared towards health professional students. The syllabus presents a digestible way for

introductory level students to understand the politics and economics of health inequities and ways to practice a “politics of care” in clinical settings. The course is an impetus for health professional students to ask important questions about how health laws and policies are operationalized and whether health access is enough to ensure and insure the right to health.

THE EMBODIMENT OF CULTURE

As I have detailed throughout this dissertation, there are companies who try to provide medical services and Captains, Officers, and crewmembers who look out for each other. At the same time, structural and symbolic violence constrain choice and create health inequities. Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence as the internalized and habituated practices of everyday life is a useful theory to unpack as a way to understand the stance that ‘culture’ somehow stands outside the political economy.

There *is* a certain culture to seafaring, as I discussed in Chapter 4, which inheres a responsibility and heroism to migrants who are working away from their families for their families. In the same manner, not seeking medical care is tied to company regulations as well as ideologies of masculinity. However, this culture is both lived and valued by Filipinos through an ideology of being a ‘good worker’ as well as resisted through phrases like “they like us because we are cheap and speak good English,” which reveals a more complicated role that migrant Filipino’s perform because of their known placement within a globalized industry.

I have problematized the assumption that these ‘cultural traits’ are an unquestioned good, specifically by analyzing how symbolic violence is internalized. Habitus demonstrates how individuals cognitively construct their world as well as experience created systems. Filipino migrant seafarers are both subsumed in ideologies as well as socially constructed and disciplined not to question actions related to their social positions (like not seeking medical care). Working

with Filipino migrant seafarers, the concept of habitus helps one see how their choices, positions, and actions may be cultural, but their social similarities have been produced through historical and discursive structures.

I make bare the violence in assuming physical strength, self-sacrifice, and behavioral docility are traits to be exalted. I have asked, in different ways throughout this project: Why do people take pride in sewing their wounds without anesthesia or working with a broken leg? Why do seafarers feel the need to be strong? Why is there not more protest to the lack of trained healthcare professionals on board ships? These questions have not been accusations against seafarers, but rather questions we should all consider asking ourselves: How do we embody everyday violence and accept it as natural? What are the dangers in this acceptance?

One person I interviewed followed this cultural logic, that of lionizing seafarer ‘traits’ without questioning how or why such traits came to be practiced, when talking about Filipinos as a “higher quality” seafarer. I have no doubt that this person’s observation is accurate, but my interest lies in what is underneath such an observation, such as the disciplining techniques and exploitative practices that have made this to be true:

The [extracted name] ship has been coming here for, well, longer than I've been here. And I've seen it go from a Filipino crew to all Russian and now it's back to Philippine. It all depends on the cost of the labor. At first, the Philippines was the cheapest labor so they were getting ships like crazy. But they increased their training and they increased their wages because they were really knowledgeable and well-respected on the sea and they were really good seafarers. And so their salaries started going up, so the companies were like, “We need to look for cheaper labor.” And so they would bring in Russians or they would bring in from the Eastern countries once that started falling apart.

I asked if labor prices were reduced for Filipinos globally and if that was why the company who was chartering the ship brought back the Filipino crew. She said:

No, I think it was because the quality of the seafarers were on board, and I hate to say that, but it was very stark to me. The ship was dirty; it was not maintained well when the Russians had it. They had some problems with drinking and so I think the company [the

one chartering the ship] said, “I want a quality crew or we'll go to a different [shipping] company,” and so they brought the Filipinos back.

Her observation is telling in light of the Filipinos I collaborated with who would not seek medical care because of the threat of job loss or future contractual precarity, which I detailed in Chapter 4 as internalized and embodied violence. Filipinos as self-disciplined and compliant, traced from colonialism’s benevolent assimilation programs to neocolonialism’s labor export programs, further illustrates how the docile body is produced, managed, and regulated as such. To be sure, it is not that having a strong work ethic, not being an alcoholic, or liking a tidy room is bad; rather, it is dangerous when these characteristics are moralized and internalized, which has consequences for how people perceive others (e.g., it’s his/her culture) and how people perceive themselves and their roles (e.g., not seeking medical care is my cultural ethic).

The question I received at the conference came from a place of care – wanting to defend seafarers, their pride, and their work ethic, but when not seeking medical treatment is determined to be cultural, and therefore an assumed neutral (not good or bad), we should question how the discourse of ‘cultural’ is produced and what this discourse is producing. In the next section, I specifically interrogate the entrenched idea within medical school teaching that ‘culture’ can be learned by studying the traits, habits, or foods of others without taking the politics and economics of health, disease, and culture into account. I contend that health and healthcare must be intentionally political if practitioners and scholars are serious about eliminating or reducing health inequities in the U.S. and globally. I then conclude with an *Instructors Syllabus* focused on ‘health, migration, and employment’ as one possibility among many that can open new paths for health professionals to think about and critique health and the causes of health inequities.

POLITICS OF CARE

I was presenting to physicians, who see seafarers semi-frequently in a U.S.-based hospital, about some of my findings throughout this research. They were amazed to learn that seafarers may not seek medical treatment because of job loss and told me that their team has often commented that seafarers try to circumvent medical care by saying that an injury or illness is not as bad as it is. Physicians, according to them, have seen this behavior as a cultural issue, not one that is political in nature. My analysis, however, has been pushing against an idea that seafarers freely choose not to seek medical care because of a predetermined cultural disposition to suffering and that seafarers are instead disciplined through structural violence, like racism and economic exploitation and symbolic violence, like the internalization of responsibility. Moreover, by seeing their suffering as cultural instead of political, health professionals are able to rationalize the ‘choices’ of seafarers without feeling the responsibility to interrogate why suffering exists in *this* way and in *this* form. The notion that the self-responsibilization of seafarers is culturally inflected instead of questioning the culture of neoliberalism that drives migrants’ decisions can create cultural others as well as blind us to the political economic systems (i.e. market-based healthcare) that produce people to act in certain ways.

Similar to the woman at the conference, health professionals come to their profession and their views from a place of care. My experience, for the most part, is that people who go into the health professional field do so with good intentions and with a ‘helper’ mentality. Rather, the framework of biomedical education, with its focus on biological difference and individual behavior interventions, lends itself to obscure the very factors that create, sustain, and produce disease. Hester, in her critique of cultural competence training in U.S. medical schools writes, “The focus is trained on the behaviors, habits, and practices of individual patients decontextualized from

social, economic, political and institutional environments and devoid of historical understandings of the ways that racial categories and racist practices change over time.”³⁸⁵

For healthcare professionals, understanding the social, economic, and political atmosphere that their patients exist within is essential for knowing how to care for that patient. For Filipino migrant seafarers, the neoliberal policies of precarious employment and labor brokerage have helped to create a system that discourages seafarers from seeking medical care, rewards self-medication, and encourages shorter stays in hospitals or lying about medical conditions in an attempt to keep a clean medical record. Not seeking medical care or circumventing medical systems, then, must take politics, economics, and systems into account.

The inclusion of non-clinical factors is happening in medical school teaching in some very important ways through the inclusion of social medicine, the social determinants of health (SDH), and health equity curriculum. However, the work can be furthered by interrogating not only SDH like where people live, work, grow, play, age, and pray, but also how the history of race and the political economy becomes embodied and internalized. Rajesh Gupta, a medical student, took a similar view in her piece, “Why Should Medical Students Care about Health Policy?,” writing, “Traditionally, the field of ‘health policy’ has referred to medical policies affecting the health of people. However, many have argued that political, social, and economic policies have an equal, and sometimes greater, influence on the health of populations.”³⁸⁶

Traditional SDH and health policy courses often begin with the outgrowths of poverty – food insecurity, neighborhood crime, incarceration, familial violence – without critiquing the underlying issues that create poverty or violence. Healthcare professional students need courses

³⁸⁵ Rebecca J. Hester, "The Promise and Paradox of Cultural Competence," *Healthcare Ethics Committee Forum* 24 (2012): 280.

³⁸⁶ Rajesh Gupta, "Why Should Medical Students Care about Health Policy?," *PLoS Medicine* 3, no. 10 (2006): 1696.

that focus on the history of colonialism, racism, and neoliberalism (and not only for global others, but how those histories have shaped populations in the U.S. and how the U.S. has shaped global populations) and how that history is embodied in the lives of people. Current courses in medical schools that consider societal issues often end before analyzing larger political and economic questions. SDH factors often reveal, for example, that a patient may not be compliant with a medication because the patient cannot afford the prescription, and then have students do community resource banking to help patients pay for their prescription. However, a course that focuses on the critical history of the present begs the question: what are the larger political and economic forces that create poverty and what is our role in resisting those demands?

To conclude, then, I offer alternative understandings of health rights through an *Instructor Syllabus* that focuses on disposable workers via the lens of health, migration, and employment. This syllabus offers new and different understandings of a SDH of curriculum, focusing on how health rights for precarious populations can be better integrated into public, global, and maritime health agendas as well as into existing curriculums within a medical university. It is a way to make important, critical understandings of health and disease digestible to students who may not come from a philosophical or theoretical background. In one sense, it complicates my own work, which pushes against normative biomedical interventions. In another sense, I am situated within these institutions and must therefore work to find collaborative ways to engage with the people who form them. The imagined audience for this syllabus, then, are instructors with training in the humanities or social sciences who teach within biomedical institutions and who have a basic understanding of critical social theory (e.g. medical anthropologists, health humanities instructors, physicians with non-clinical training). The syllabus is intended for medical school-level students, but can be adapted for undergraduate students interested in the health professions.

The syllabus is also intended to reach all healthcare professional students, not only those who are interested in social issues. The goal of the course is not to have all clinical healthcare professional students turn to health policy or critical theory as their life's path, but that these theories and histories will inform their clinical work. While some students may appreciate the course more than others may, all students should be able to leave the course with an understanding of how political economic factors are embodied in the lives of people, even if they disagree about the ways to remove political economic barriers. This is a pedagogy that disrupts what students are normally taught about health, illness, and death and makes us reckon with the reality that the doctor/patient encounter is one encounter of many that the person will have regarding their health. We must take politics, economics, and history into account.

The genesis of this course comes from my own experience lecturing in medical schools about the social, political, and economic causes of illness, disease, and death. Two of the common, repeating questions I have heard from healthcare professional students are 1) what does this have to do with my clinical work? and 2) what am I supposed to do about these problems as a healthcare professional? This syllabus takes these two questions seriously and attempts to answer them broadly, knowing that each physician, nurse, or physician's assistant should find their own creative ways to answer these questions specifically. In the end, healthcare professionals should be able to clearly articulate how the care they give is political and the ways that healthcare is implicated in political, economic, and social policy.

With this in mind, the course consists of three general components:

1. How health inequities are produced;
2. How racialized others are produced;
3. How precarious employees are produced.

These general components focus on the production of poverty (e.g. neoliberal globalization) instead of the products of poverty (e.g. food insecurity). A focus on the production of poverty shows how health inequities are directly tied to the health equity of other populations. We will ask the question at the end of each section: Who lives? Who dies? What is my complicity? By the end of the course, students should see how their role as clinicians can inform public discourse about health and well-being.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The course was created for healthcare professional students, with a focus on graduate-level medical, physician assistant, and nursing. Instructors who have a degree in the social sciences or humanities (e.g. medical anthropology, health humanities) should teach the course or co-teach it with social science/humanities and clinical instructors. The syllabus includes readings, case studies, health screening tools, and videos and can be adapted according to the students' level or school's allotted time.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course aims primarily to enhance the role of healthcare professionals through 1) a better understanding of the political economic basis of health and disease, 2) acquiring skills to screen for the social, political, and economic influences of health, and 3) to learn how to advocate on behalf of vulnerable populations.

1. Discuss different definitions of health and define the social, political, and economic influences of health
2. Demonstrate why the social, political, and economic influences of health is integral to the doctor-patient encounter
3. Provide students with the critical thinking skills to identify, read, interpret, and engage literature regarding community and global health
4. Develop advocacy skills at micro- and macro-levels

TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Policy Brief: Each student will choose a health issue (suicide, obesity, HIV, etc.) and discuss the political, economic, and social factors of the health issue. The policy brief should be written in plain language using evidence-based research on the health issue of your choice. For example, if you choose HIV medication access, you will gather 5-10 research-based articles (either from our readings or from outside materials) about HIV, the politics and economics of HIV, and how people's health is affected. The policy brief should be 3-pages and can include photographs, illness

narratives, graphs, or other compelling images/stories. This policy brief is written with policy makers in mind who may or may not agree with your position. Your job is to convince the policy maker that he or she should introduce a piece of legislation or vote on a piece of legislation using the research and stories you provide.

Photo Essay: The photo essay is a 5-page essay, which is based on at least 3, but no more than 5 photographs you take during the course (if you choose to do this as a final assignment, it is a 10-page essay with 7-10 photographs). The photos should relate to health inequities and the written text will provide context, critique, or provocation of the photographs. For example, if you take a photograph of a baby being born, your narrative might discuss the politics of birth, what it means to be born in certain nation-states, and how that might affect your health outcomes. Your narrative descriptions should be based off the course readings, but you can also pull from outside sources.

Screeners: The clinical screener is a tool that you or other clinicians can use in the clinical setting. It should be based on evidence-based research as well as reality. For instance, a 10-page screener that takes one-hour to complete will not be useful to a physician who only has 10 minutes with a patient. The screener should focus on patient's adverse experiences as well as their resiliency and there should be an avenue for healthcare professionals to connect patients to needed community resources based on the results of the screener. This is a creative endeavor, so think about new ways to ask questions, provide resources, and research the results. There should be a focus not only on the presenting issue (e.g. food insecurity), but also on the upstream reasons for the food insecurity and the multiple ways clinicians can intervene (e.g. community food banks as well as advocating for a livable wage). Draw from course and outside materials.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

1. Participation and attendance – 10%
2. End of Section 1 policy brief – 20%
3. End of Section 2 photo essay – 20%
4. Final Assignment (brief, photo essay, or screener) – 30%
5. Final Assignment public presentation – 20%

SECTION 1: PRODUCING HEALTH INEQUITIES

The purpose of this section is to provide a macro-level understanding of the history and status of health inequities in the United States. You will explore different theories for the causes of health disparities and understand the relationship between health inequities and political economic policies.

Introduction to the Foundations of Social Medicine

Farmer, Paul. "Preface and Introduction," in *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor with a New Preface by the Author*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Anderson, Matthew, Lanny Smith, and Victor W. Sidel. "What is Social Medicine?" *Monthly*

Review, 56, no. 8 (January 2005): 27-34.

Narayan, Aman, Jean Raphael, Tiffany Rattler, and Claire Bocchini. "Social Determinants of Health: Screening in the Clinical Setting." *Issue Brief*: Texas Children's Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine Department of Pediatrics.

<https://www.texaschildrens.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/83176%20BRIEF%20Social%20Determinants%20of%20Health%20Policy%20Digital.pdf>

"A New Way to Talk About the Social Determinants of Health." *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*, January 1, 2010. <https://societyforhealthpsychology.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/rwjf63023.pdf>

"Upstream Parable," threeleaf.net/download/doc/1

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Test 'Social Determinant of Health screeners' with class members (page 30 in "Social Determinants of Health: Screening in the Clinical Setting")

Definitions of and Ideological Approaches to Health Inequities

Marmot, MG, G. Rose, M. Shipley, P.J. Hamilton. "Employment grade and coronary heart disease in British Civil Servants." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 32, no. 4 (Dec 1978): 244-49.

Smedley, Brian D., Adrienne Y. Stith, and Alan R. Nelson, "Introduction and Literature Review." In *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care*, edited by Brian D. Smedley, Adrienne Y. Stith, and Alan R. Nelson, 29-79. Washington, D.C.: The National Academy of Sciences, 2002.

Felitti, VJ, RF Anda, D Nordenberg, DF Williamson, AM Spitz, V Edwards, MP Koss, and JS Marks, "Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 14, no. 4 (May 1998): 245-258.

Ellis, WR and WH Dietz, "A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience Model." *Academic Pediatric* 17, no. 7 (Sept 2017): 86-93.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Watch "In Sickness and in Wealth" in *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*, https://www.unnaturalcauses.org/episode_descriptions.php?page=1. Use prompts provided in the video, if needed.

Understanding Health Inequities: Race and Ethnicity

Gonzalez, Sergio Rodriguez, trans. by Michael Parker-Stainback. "Introduction" in *The Femicide*

Machine. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2012.

Holmes, Seth. "Introduction," in *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

Roberts, Dorothy, "Debating the Cause of Health Disparities: Implications for Bioethics and Racial Equality." *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics* 21, no. 3 (July 2012): 332-341.

Jones, David S., "The Persistence of American Indian Health Disparities." *American Journal of Public Health* 96, no. 12 (Dec 2006): 2122-2134.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Watch "The Problem with Race-Based Medicine," in TEDMED 2015,
https://www.ted.com/talks/dorothy_roberts_the_problem_with_race_based_medicine

Watch Childish Gambino's "This is America,"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYOjWnS4cMY>

Health and Human Rights

Kennedy, David, "The International Human Rights Movement: Part of the Problem?" in David Kennedy, *The Dark Sides of Virtue: Reassessing International Humanitarianism*, 3-35. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the World Health Organization, "The Right to Health,"
<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet31.pdf>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

Manokha, Ivan, "Foucault's Concept of Power and the Global Discourse of Human Rights." *Journal of Global Society* 23, no. 4 (Oct 2009): 429-452.

Galarneau, Charlene, "Farm labor, reproductive justice: Migrant women farmworkers in the US." *Health and Human Rights Journal* 15, no. 1 (Jun 2012): 144-60.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

"Case Studies in Health and Human Rights,"
https://www.law.utoronto.ca/documents/reprohealth/HCS1-ForcedSterilization_HIV.pdf

Form groups of no more than 3-5 people and use discussion prompts included in the case study.

END OF SECTION ASSIGNMENT:

In groups of three, create a 3-page policy brief about one of the political, economic, or social factors we studied. Think about the causes of health inequities as well as the solutions to addressing health inequities.

SECTION 2: PRODUCING A RACIALIZED OTHER

The following readings critically examine the social, political, and economic policies, practices, and discourses of health. We will question who is dehumanized in the quest for scientific progress and examine how the production of a certain kind of knowledge values certain people to the determinant of others.

Enlightenment Conception of ‘Man’

Nussbaum, Martha, "Historical Conceptions of the Humanities and Their Relationship to Society," in *Applying the Humanities* edited by Daniel Callahan, Arthur L. Caplan, and Bruce Jennings. New York: Plenum Press, 1985.

Foucault, Michel, "Right of Death and Power Over Life," in Michel Foucault, trans. by Robert Hurley. *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.

Frank, Arthur W. and Therese Jones, "Bioethics and the Later Foucault," *Journal of Medical Humanities* 24, no. 3-4 (Winter 2003): 179-86.

Waswo, Richard, "Introduction and Chapter 1," in *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization: From Virgil to Vietnam*. Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1997.

Armegalos, George, Peter Brown, and Bethany Turner, "Evolutionary, historical and political economic perspectives on health and disease." *Social Science and Medicine* 61, no. 4 (Nov 2005):755-65.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Poetry reading: Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden: The United States & the Philippine Islands, 1899." *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Definitive Edition*. New York: Doubleday, 1929

Mark Twain, *To the Person Sitting in Darkness*, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr/sitting.html>.

Colonial Health

Fanon, Frantz, "Medicine and colonialism" in *A Dying Colonialism* trans. by Haakon Chevalier. Grove Press: New York, 1965.

Marks, Shula, "What is colonial about colonial medicine? And what has happened to

imperialism and health?" *The Society for the Social History of Medicine* 10, no. 2 (Aug 1997): 205-19.

Bulosan, Carlos. "Introduction and Chapter 1," *America is in the Heart: A Personal History*. Washington: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1943.

Farmer, Paul, Peter Drobac, and Zoe Agoos, "Colonial Roots of Global Health," *Harvard College Global Health Review* (Fall 2009):
<https://hcghr.wordpress.com/2009/09/19/colonial-roots-of-global-health/>

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Watch PBS's "The Panama Canal," (2010).

Post-colonial(?) Global Health

Hotez, Peter J. "Introduction," *Forgotten people, forgotten diseases: The neglected tropical diseases and their impact on global health and development, Second Edition*. Washington, D.C.: American Society for Microbiology Press, 2008.

King, Nicholas B., "Security, disease, commerce: ideologies of postcolonial global health." *Social Studies of Science* 32, no. 5-6 (Dec 2002): 763-89.

Anderson, Warwick, "Where is the post-colonial history of medicine?," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 72 (1998): 522-30.

Cueto, Marcus, "A Return to the Magic Bullet?: Malaria and Global Health in the Twenty-First Century," in *When People Come First: Critical Studies in Global Health* edited by Joao Biehl and Adriana Petryna, 30-54. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Walk around campus and take photographs of your perspective of health for 30 minutes. Do not take photographs of patients, even with the person's consent. Download and discuss the images with the class.

Migration and Health Policy

Molina, Natalia. "Introduction," in *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles 1879-1939*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

Rodriguez, Robyn. "Introduction and Chapter 1" in *Migrants for Export: How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Greeley, Chris, Shannon Guillot-Wright, Christine Kovic, Jean Raphael, Hani Serag, and Ken Smith, "Policies, Practices, and Structures Impacting the Health and Care Access of Migrant Children," January 2017,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316110708_Policies_Practices_and_Structures_Impacting_the_Health_and_Care_Access_of_Migrant_Children

Bacon, David. "Introduction" in *Communities Without Borders*. Ithaca, ILR Press, 2016.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Watch PBS's "The Chinese Exclusion Act"

END OF SECTION ASSIGNMENT:

Photograph and write a 5-page photo essay (double-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman with a minimum of three photos) that clearly links how the history of race influences health inequities for patients today. Draw your analysis from Section 1 and Section 2 readings, films, and activities.

SECTION 3: PRODUCING PRECARIOUS EMPLOYEES

This section will examine the history of labor movements and capitalism in the U.S. We will explore how migrants learn to manage and circumvent unfair labor practices as well as the health effects of those labor practices on migrants and their families.

Cheap Labor

Vonnegut, Kurt. "Preface and Chapter 1," in *Jailbird*. New York: Rosetta Books, 1979.

Knight, Eric. "Chapter 1," in *Lassie Come-Home, 75th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940.

Freedman, Russell. *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor*. New York: Clarion Books, 1994.

King, Jr., Martin Luther. "Chapter 6" in *All labor has dignity*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Watch "Can't Take No More," 1980 *Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13gzGkQtVzg> and listen to "James Baldwin v William F. Buckley Jr. Debate," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFeoS41xe7w>

Precarious Lives

Cacho, Lisa Marie. "Introduction" in *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: University Press, 2012.

Benach, J., A. Vives, M. Amable, C. Vanroelen, G. Tarafa, and C. Muntaner, "Precarious

Employment: Understanding an Emerging Social Determinant of Health. *The Annual Review of Public Health* 35 (2014): 244.

Standing, Guy. "Chapter 1 and 4" in *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury, 2011.

Butler, Judith. "Chapter 5" in *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London and New York: Verso, 2004.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Research journals that publish and conferences that accept academic research about 'health, migration, and employment.' Share and discuss journals and conferences with classmates.

Neoliberal Globalization

Harvey, David. "Introduction" in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2005.

Wacquant, Loïc. Prologue and Chapter 1 in *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.

Best, Steven, "Introduction," in *The Global Industrial Complex: Systems of Domination*, edited by Steven Best, Richard Kahn, Anthony J. Nocella II, and Peter McLaren. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011.

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Family Work History Interviews (Appendix 1) with class members

Case Studies: Migrant Seafarers and Migrant Construction Workers

Guillot-Wright, Shannon, "The Changing Economic Structure of the Maritime Industry and it's Adverse Effects on Seafarer's Health Care Rights." *International Maritime Health Journal* 68, no. 2 (2017): 77-82.

Theodore, Nik, "After the Storm: Houston's Day Labor Markets in the Aftermath of Hurricane Harvey," *Fe y Justicia Worker Center and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network*, 2017, https://greatcities.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/After-the-Storm_Theodore_2017.pdf

Wu, Bryan, Liz Hamel, Mollyann Brodie, Shao-Chee Sim, and Elena Marks, "Hurricane Harvey: The Experiences of Immigrants Living in the Texas Gulf Coast," *Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation*, March 20, 2018, <https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/report/hurricane-harvey-experiences-immigrants-texas-gulf-coast/>

Najarro, Iliana, "Houston day laborers suffer wage theft in post-Harvey reconstruction," *Houston*

Chronicle, November 22, 2017,

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/business/article/Houston-day-laborers-suffer-wage-theft-in-12377200.php>

In-Class Activity & Discussion:

Listen to “Harvey Means More Jobs, but more exploitation,” KUHF

“Labor Abuses After Harvey,” NPR

FINAL ASSIGNMENT:

Final Assignments will be part of a public showcase. Attendance is required.

Choose your own adventure:

1. Write a 5-page research essay on health, migration, and employment and translate this research essay into a 1-2 page policy brief
2. Create a 10-page health, migration, and employment photo essay (7-10 photos)
3. Create a health, migration, and employment screener and a community resource guide for a clinical site

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

If only they would think of themselves ever after as brothers and sisters, yes, and as mothers and fathers, too, and children of all other common people – everywhere. The only person who would be excluded from such friendly and merciful society would be one who took more wealth than he or she needed at any time . . . I still believe that peace and plenty and happiness can be worked out some way. I am a fool.

-Kurt Vonnegut, *Jailbird*

I often imagined leaving my son for nine months every year like seafarers and other migrant workers do, and I knew that I would make the same sacrifice if I had to, but I did not have to make that sacrifice. This cruel reality has been the heart of this story. Who lives? Who dies? How am I implicated? These questions drove my research and my analysis, leading me to a focus on structural and symbolic violence. Structural violence holds the poor accountable for their poverty instead of the social origins of their poverty and symbolic violence is how we are complicit in our own destruction. For Filipino migrant seafarers, I focused on the history of colonialism and political economic practices and the internalization of violence.

Colonialism not only created direct oppression through war and the inhumane treatment of Filipinos, but colonialism was also a disciplining and subjectifying tactic. Following Foucault's biopolitics, although some people were directly killed and murdered during colonialism in the Philippines, what was also significant were the ways that mechanisms of power created certain norms, and then how life was livable or unlivable under those norms. Norms are created from a perspective – and for Filipinos, norms were created from the perspective that they were uncultured, savage-like, and child-like. The norms were created through institutions of power, like public health, schools, and churches. One can see how disciplining Filipinos to be a certain kind of person or subject through programs like 'benevolent assimilation,' which created education, public health, and religious campaigns – were dangerous because of the way Filipinos were framed as "backwards," "uncultured," and "child-like" needing U.S. interventions. What becomes important for this work are the ways that we are all disciplined to be certain kinds of subjects and the ways

in which our lives or our deaths are part of political life, even as I may resist some of the techniques that govern me. In short, biopolitics shows how life is the center and the concern of the political, which means that our interventions must take the ways that the political operates in the lives of people into account.

Many of the stories I heard from migrant seafarers' centered on the sacrifices they make for their families in order to provide for them, which is directly related to their inclusion as one of the world's cheapest labor sources. Filipinos as one of the largest exported commodities in the world is possible because of a history of exploitation and economic debt. Filipino's have been produced to be poor, and then their poverty is used against them to create a reserve army of cheap labor. Filipinos as a cheap source of labor is important to a capitalist economy that generates revenue based on the accumulation of goods, and more products can be accumulated the cheaper they are. The most expensive costs in the production of goods is human labor – so in order to have cheap products, cheap labor must be part of this equation.

How Filipinos become the people who do this dangerous and lonely work is steeped in colonialism as well as neoliberalism, which motivated the ideals of industry deregulation, decreased labor power, free enterprise, and advanced notions of personal responsibility. These ideals changed how employees interact with employers as well as the responsibility of employers to employees. For Filipino's, this is seen most clearly in labor export programs of the Philippines. The Philippines as a profit-generating state and its Filipino citizens as commodities has been extended through neoliberalism in the form of short-term contracts and the pervasive pursuit of profit.

The changed conditions of labor and worker protections through neoliberal policies helped to create a precarious workforce, but I paid particular attention to both the political economic dimensions of these changed conditions as well as to the everyday practices of seafarers. The health inequities that follow precarious employment for seafarers are produced through social policies that are inscribed onto the body, leading to an embodied violence. However, seafarers also found ways to live beautiful, fun, and socially connected lives despite (or maybe because of) the dangers

they faced – as apparent in some of the photographs. This work is not about taking agency away from seafarers or assuming they are cogs in a wheel with no choice, but what I do show is how limited that choice actually is given the history of exploitation.

There is a reason Filipino's are more likely to work as seafarers – there is a history of exploitation and an economic system that not only allows for it, but actively creates less advantage for certain people. At the same time, Filipinos also internalize these systems as natural instead of produced. Migrant seafarers internalize the blame, responsibility, and sacrifice that comes with their *de facto* healthcare status. The way these different forms of violence take shape in and on their bodies results in higher rates of injury, illness, and death. As Holmes so accurately described, this is “sickness as the embodiment of violence.”³⁸⁷ This embodied violence is an everyday experience. The most common stories I heard from seafarers were working through injuries, like broken legs and deep cuts, and sacrificing for their families. Their suffering is then embodied through addiction, illness, injury, death, chronic pain, emotional anguish, and self-medicating.

Before beginning my fieldwork, I was aware that seafarers experience more injury, illness, and death compared to other occupations. However, I was not fully prepared for how much and how often seafarers internalize such risk. There was a point mid-way through this project where I felt despondent: “The laws are there,” I said aloud to myself, “so what’s wrong?” The laws and policies are there to protect seafarers. Activists and advocates who know far more about seafaring than me fought and fight for good laws and policies, yet seafarers are still denied rights or those rights are inaccessible. While health rights are *de jure* guaranteed for seafarers, they are *de facto* denied.

Further, what I found was how prevalent healthcare inaccessibility is even when the right is guaranteed, not only among seafarers, but among the Filipino workers who went on strike in the 1960s and then were still denied contractual rights, hourly workers who lose pay when they take their children or themselves to a doctor’s visit, and immigrants who do not take their children or

³⁸⁷ Holmes, *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*, 28.

themselves to clinics for fear of deportation. We proclaim that everyone has the right to health, yet good laws, policies, and human rights norms, solid research into the social determinants of health, and medical information that targets the socially vulnerable still do not strike at the heart of the problem. The right to see a doctor means nothing if you cannot feed your family or fear for your life.

Providing health insurance or providing transportation to a clinic is not enough of a guarantee for the historically vulnerable. As I have shown, if seafarers are not capable of accessing their human right to health, then it is tantamount to not having that right at all. The factors that create this scenario, though, are not simple. It is not enough to blame poverty and fight for a livable wage (though I am in full support of that conversation) without questioning the history of colonialism in the Philippines and our role in accepting global policies that reproduce poverty for the benefit of the few. Structural violence, though, is also not the full story. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence also shows how Filipino seafarers become complicit in their own destruction through the internalization of responsibility, physical strength, or masculine pride.

The production of Filipino migrant seafarers as better and cleaner workers by those in the seafaring industry and as culturally suspect of biomedicine by those in the medical industry further racializes Filipinos. Ethical people, who work and volunteer at seafaring advocacy centers, unintentionally reproduced cultural and racialized myths about Filipino's through the assumption that their internalized responsibility was natural, not created. Rarely, if ever, did I hear explicit conversations about the social, political, or economic history of the Philippines that produced a state dependent on export labor or the current global policies that allow for precarious employment and the subsequent lack of social and legal protections. Much of this work followed Foucault's concept of biopolitics, which was taken up as a way to explain the subjectivation, disciplining, and

dominating processes of colonialism, assimilation, economic accumulation, neoliberal globalization, and internalized responsibility, thus understanding the particular ways that some people's lives are disallowed by exposing them to a higher risk of injury, illness, and death for the benefit of other lives deemed more socially valuable.

Taking these critiques together, – biopolitics, structural violence, symbolic violence, and the deniability or inaccessibility of guaranteed rights – idealism and hope did not bounce off the pages of this work. Yet, I do believe this work provides a certain hope for social change, even if not in an idealized way. In an interview in 1991, Foucault described his writing as an experience: “An experience is something you come out of changed. If I had to write a book to communicate what I have already thought, I'd never have the courage to begin it. I write precisely because I don't know yet what to think about a subject that attracts my interest. In so doing, the book transforms me, changes what I think.”³⁸⁸ Similarly, my ideas have transformed while writing. The health policy I so adamantly wanted to enforce or change to ensure that migrant seafarers have health rights now looks different to me. It is not that risk and disease should not be studied, nor is it that health policy should not be advocated for, changed, or enforced. Tellingly, while engaging in this research I testified before the Texas Legislature's Public Health Committee. However, I do think I have an obligation, and any researcher or advocate has this obligation, to confront structurally and symbolically produced social suffering by naming the systems of injustice, like neoliberal globalization and racism, as well as to think deeply about my complicity in and benefits from these systems.

³⁸⁸ Michel Foucault, *Remarks on Marx: Conversations with Duccio Trombadori*, trans. R. James Goldstein and James Cascaito, (New York, NY: Semiotext(e), 1991), 27.

Holmes calls the uncovering of violence the “denaturalization of social suffering,”³⁸⁹ which confronts the ways that inequities are perceived to be produced naturally, both by society and the people who suffer. The idea of denaturalizing social suffering fits with what this work has become, which is to question our assumptions about how ill health is produced and how to intervene at the level of health inequities. This work has an audience that is mainly academic, but through public photography showings, it also aims to inform the community about the ways that people suffer and to critique our silence. Furthermore, Chapter 6 confronts the very health system that socially vulnerable people are fighting to access by questioning the way culture is thought of and understood in U.S. clinics and hospitals. What appears to be the seeming unwillingness of seafarers to access healthcare is perceived as a cultural norm or personal choice rather than a political economic dynamic. Cultural competence courses and diversity essays will not save us. We need to teach and understand the political economy in order to denaturalize social suffering and to interrupt interventions that devalue the social, political, and economic causes of injury, illness, and death.

Interrupting or denaturalizing suffering comes at a cost, of course, but it is more than protests or boycotts. As I have traced throughout, social suffering is intertwined in structures, systems, subjectifying discourses, and the internalization of responsibility. We are both complicit in the suffering of others, while at the same time we too are entangled in systems that create our suffering. Foucault called the experience of “tearing the subject from itself a de-subjectifying undertaking,” which prevents us from being the same.³⁹⁰ In his 1991 interview, Foucault was asked about his book *Discipline and Punish* and its reception among a wider audience. He responded:

When the book came out, various readers – particularly prison guards, social workers, etc. – gave this singular judgment: “It is paralyzing. There may be some correct

³⁸⁹ Holmes, *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*, 3466.

³⁹⁰ Foucault, *Remarks on Marx: Conversations with Duccio Trombadori*, 31-32.

observations, but in any case it certainly has its limits, because it blocks us, it prevents us from continuing our activities.” My reply is that it is just that relation that proves the success of the work, proves that it worked as I had wanted it to. That is, it is read as an experience that changes us, that prevents us from always being the same, or from having the same kind of relationship with things and with others that we had before reading it.³⁹¹

Uncovering health inequities, but more importantly, the political economic drivers of the inequities and the subjectifying discourses that mask the deep social and physical harm they cause, is the work set before us.

Throughout this body of work, I described the ways that Filipino migrant seafarers are constrained by historical, racial, and political economic policies, while at the same time they are not without agency or choice. My ultimate hope is that *Casting Aside Bent Bodies: Embodied Violence as an Everyday Experience for Filipino Migrant Seafarers* makes us all aware of our complicity in the violence against others and creates new paths for advocacy. We must all feel uncomfortable, almost paralyzed before injustice, and then act to ameliorate suffering, to ameliorate the casting aside of bent bodies to proceed with green.

³⁹¹ Foucault, *Remarks on Marx: Conversations with Duccio Trombadori*, 41.

Appendix A

Family Work History Assignment

Source:
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Work and Health Equity Instructor Syllabus, Family Work History Assignment

Part 1- Interviews with family members: Talk with **one or two** people in small groups. Take notes and consider how their answers effect their health.

Questions:

- 1) What is your job title at work?
- 2) What are your major job duties or responsibilities?
- 3) How long have you been doing this kind of job?
- 4) What do you most enjoy about your job?
- 5) How often do you feel pain, discomfort, or other kinds of problems at the end of the workday? What kind of pains or discomfort? What are some causes?
- 6) Have you ever been injured or become ill at work? If yes;
 - What caused the injury/illness?
 - Did you report it to a supervisor or someone else? Why or why not?
 - Did you get workers' compensation? Why or why not?
 - What was the outcome?
- 7) Do you experience job stressors? For example, unrealistic time pressures or workload, too much overtime, fatigue due to long hours or shift work, temporary or other unstable work, harassment or discrimination? If so, what kind of stressors and how do they affect you?
- 8) What do you think is most hazardous to your health or safety at work?
- 9) If there is one thing you could change about your work, what would it be?
- 10) How comfortable do you feel making suggestions to change the way your work is done to reduce any of the problems?
- 11) Is there a union in your workplace?
- 12) What do you know about OSHA (the government agency responsible for worker safety) or other organizations available to help workers who face workplace hazards?

13) If an immigrant and worked in another country, ask: How is your work here similar or different from your experience working in (name of country)?

Summary/Analysis

Part 2 – Summary/Analysis: Be prepared to discuss the following questions in class.

- 1) Who you interviewed and the similarities and differences between the 2 interviews.
- 2) What kind of hazards emerged in the 2 interviews? Consider the following types of hazards:
 - Safety (e.g. unsafe machinery/equipment, potential falls, explosions, assaults, etc.)
 - Chemical (e.g. gases/vapors, liquids, dusts such as cleaning chemicals, vehicle exhaust fumes, asbestos in building demolition, etc.)
 - Biological (e.g. viruses, bacteria, insects, animals – made be found in unsanitary conditions, when caring for people who are ill or other settings)
 - Physical (e.g. noise, extreme temperatures, radiation)
 - Biomechanical, ergonomic (e.g. repetitive motions, awkward postures, heavy lifting)
 - Psychosocial (e.g. harassment, violence, stress of long hours, low wages, etc.)
- 3) What social, political or economic factors might influence exposure to job hazards or the ability to speak up to improve working conditions? (e.g., temporary or permanent job? Immigration status? Union representation? Other?)
- 4) What did you learn that you surprised you?

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