

# Wherein Apocalypse: The Time Being in Music Education

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## Abstract

In this editorial essay, I bring forth the Derridian concept of time and its spectral relationship to music education to do the labour of the anti- work in the field. I ask three questions specifically: what does time have to do with anti-racist, anti-fascist, and anti-discriminatory work? What does time have to do with music education? And does time, and in this case, the contemporary historical moment, make the field of music education obsolete or all the more necessary? To put it differently and bluntly, what is the *fate* of music education? Considering the field's place in the current historical moment, I ponder the field from an alternate position: that music education is not *good* for anything, nor is it transformative, or an agent of social change. By taking that burden away and taking itself less seriously, one is faced with a slate uninhibited by righteous urgency without yielding to a felt experience of time constraint, and instead can finally breathe and *be*. It is in this temporal space of being and “out-of-jointness of time” that the authors of this special issue enter and leave their mark and do the anti- work, not because it is necessary or relevant or timely, but because they feel committed to doing this work out of a felt sense of collective responsibility. I invite the readers to pause, take a moment of hesitation, and contemplate the questions posed in this essay and by the authors of this special issue, which leave behind the convention of crisis-management or the urgency-oriented actions and reactive responses to human and environmental crises. I conclude that perhaps it is time to shift from the better world discursive practices to a let's “unleash overflowing” constancy.

## Keywords

Time, spectrality, Derrida, apocalypse, music education, anti-racism (antiracism), social justice

“The time is out of joint” declared Jacques Derrida in his 1993 two-part plenary address at the University of California, Riverside<sup>1</sup>. Calling on Shakespeare’s arguably bleakest and most influential work, *Hamlet*, Derrida gave the lecture after the Soviet bloc had collapsed, when it was the *End of History*<sup>2</sup> that further advanced the rise and establishment of late capital and neoliberal local and global governmentality; when it was time to demolish *The Wall(s)*,<sup>3</sup> end the “cold war,” and start anew with “warm” things: food, colours, brands, choices. I remember intensely the out-of-jointness of time when I was a school child in Iran and our education ministry, in the turn of a night, added a new pamphlet to our geography books to teach us new borders, countries, capital cities, and various corresponding industries; even the Caspian Sea seemed to look different. There were some lovely sounding cities in the pamphlet: Yerevan, Tashkent, Baku, Dushanbe, Bishkek; some sonically mind-tickling languages: Kyrgyz, Azeri, Tajiki, Armenian, Uzbek, and some fascinating industries: metallurgy, vegetable oil, cotton, machinery. Our country was also on the route to a “reconstruction era” (Semati 2008), following the eight years of Iran-Iraq war (1980–1988). Everything surrounding our local and global psyche at the time seemed to proffer better-days-ahead. However, there was a sense of amiss, a surreality to it all. None of these messages brought a sense of security (note a pre-teen child growing up in the Middle East pre- and post-cold war), bright futures, or hopeful adolescent years. Time was out of joint *then*. We were living with a specter that has forever haunted us. We were “third worlders.” I learned that word early in my life and impeccably internalized it. What was excluded from the conversation was very much alive, living amongst us, and cruising around both at the local and global level, and the resulting *affects* were angst and rage, but also longing and urge. We “have learned to live with these ghosts” (Bradley 2022a, 64). All stuck to this day.

Fast forward just over three decades. Time is *still* out of joint. The world is yet again on the verge of an apocalypse in the making: Borders closed, walls back up, “guests” detained or sent back home, ecosystems in shambles, wars abundant, never-once-peaceful democracies gone-awry (Niknafs 2021b),<sup>4</sup> and most of all, the human species is making itself obsolete in the grand scheme of things. It is uncanny how much Derrida’s unassuming declaration rings true to this day, almost to the point of prophecy. And here lies the theoretical framework of this editorial essay: non-linear *time*, embedded in which are concepts of duration, length, interval, beat, meter, frequency, and cyclical movements, but also past, present, and

future, and memory, nostalgia, urgency, relevance, perseverance, commitment, dedication, change, and promise. I ask three questions specifically: what does time have to do with anti-racist, anti-fascist, and anti-discriminatory work? What does time have to do with music education? And does time, and in this case, the contemporary historical moment, make the field of music education obsolete or all the more necessary? To put it differently and bluntly, what is the fate of music education?

### The Spectrality of Time

Looking backward from the future to where Derrida began contemplating the corresponding historical moment, pre- and post-Marx and Marxism, I frame this essay theoretically through his treatment of conjuration. Herein, I consider time as a living and breathing specter that “hesitates... between address as *experience* ... address as *education*, and address as *taming* or *training*.” (Derrida 1994/2006, xvi–xvii). Depending on what one desires to do or what happens to a person(hood), time shapes and reshapes the unexamined, unheard and unseen. Time is involvement, but it also teaches and is experienced. As well, it extracts and ages but contributes to a living force. Time is magic. It is always here, there, nowhere and everywhere. It conjures away but conjures up. Time is resource. Time urges one to do something with life or death but also haunts and paralyzes. It necessitates, but it also makes archaic. Time solidifies materiality, “an excess, force, vitality, relationality, or difference that renders matter active, self-creative, productive, unpredictable” (Coole and Frost 2010, 9). Hearing and feeling time both actively and passively, time becomes tactile: a hot topic, cold case, trendy, timely, stale and old-school or even retro; and in terms of ghostly specters, simulacra, and haunted imaginings of time: “we are running out of time,” the felt experience of fear through time. There will be an unwanted end, a full-stop if we do not act *now*, at this very moment that has already passed by trying to conjure it up. Is one always already late? And by being late, is there any reason to do what one is compelled to do?

In Farzaneh Hemmasi’s (2022 forthcoming) keynote lecture, “Doing Our Essential Work” at the Canadian Society for Traditional Music, she asked an alarmingly fitting question: “What do you do when your house is on fire”? Her response to this question was even more pointed: “Well, that depends on how you feel about the house”—referring to her home discipline of ethnomusicology when facing its colonial past and pillars. Perhaps I would extend her statement—if that house is

haunted, fire acts as the cleansing material conjuring away the colonial, the oppressive, the burdensome, and the ghostliness; just “walk away and let it burn” (14). Hither, I would like to hesitate and give this thought some time.

The call for the current special issue of *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* went out in the wake of the global anti-racist movements triggered by the killings of many Black people including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery by police and vigilantes in the US in 2020, also during the early days of the Covid pandemic. Since then, two distinct arguments have arisen concerning global anti-racist movements. If giving it a positive or perhaps naïve light, in a matter of almost two years, public conversations of anti-racist and anti-fascist movements took a different turn, from a level of revolutionary ethos to a sustained evolutionary movement: “untimely, ‘out of joint,’ even and especially if it appears to come in due time, the spirit of the revolution is *fantastic and anachronistic through and through*” (Derrida 1994/2006, 140, emphasis in original). The sense of urgency yielded to a prolonged critical engagement in anti-discriminatory practices at all levels of society, public and private, even if some or most of these engagements are and have been purely doing lip service to the real engagements: “a performative politics of repetition . . . a purely ideological artefact, but with the proviso that the performativity of the process absolves us from the responsibility of seriously considering it” (Grzinić 2012, 4).

Along the same lines, the academy and music in higher education have also gone through some major changes in terms of hiring practices—again, even if doing lip service—falsely claiming to enact cluster and diversity hiring without securing senses of belonging, and opening up to different ontological and epistemological forms of knowledge creation and dissemination, thus allowing “the institution to say it is committed to diversity without being committed to it at all” (Hemmasi 2022 forthcoming), and misleadingly declaring changes in gate-keeping exercises, programming, and curricular decision making. The rhetoric exists now, ubiquitously, even if hijacked by ever-becoming corporate universities. This school of thought asserts that the anti- conversations do not occupy the margins anymore but are the centerpieces of anti-discriminatory educational planning and practices, thanks to many activists who have dedicated their personal and professional lives to it.

However, if looking at it from a more “nihilistic,” or some would say realistic angle, the revolutionary ethos that was ripe to result in positive change bowed to

lethargy, numbness, over- and ab-use of these movements for economic gain, misplaced judgments and recognitions, and maleficent goals, thus confirming Derrida's (1994/2006) statement: "as soon as one identifies a revolution, it begins to imitate, it enters into a death agony" (144). And if not deadly, decayed. So, should my peers and I in the field of music education walk away and let the house burn? Should I *become* cynical or *remain* committed? When I talk about time in conjunction with anti- work, I would like to know the relevance of the work, but also how the work is situated in time, and how it is materialized through time. Is it finally time to change the scope of the field or who it is serving? Or has the time passed for a bright future for the field? I contend that in the grand scheme of things, in the continuous wars and societal polarizations, music education cannot do anything because it is unnecessary; it is inessential. Nevertheless, music education is a part and parcel of a collective responsibility to inhabit the world differently (Mbembe 2019a), toward our shared planetary conditions. Where even to *begin*?

Learning to Live. Fully. Begins.

If one were to mark their life into turning points, how would it look or sound? Would one divide one's life into different turning points depending on in which part of their life they resided? Can the same apply to eras, epochs, historical moments, and contemporary movements of the time and the urgencies felt by them? What becomes significant in these narratives? When I was sensing the out-of-jointness of time in my adolescent years, I was missing "time" while thinking about it. I was already being late. The matter was true in 2020 and true today. Time is here but also there, in one's life in an ever-expanding life. "Third world" is still part of the conversation, perhaps residing within differing terminologies (Mbembe 2019b): developing world, poor(er) world, global south, rising economies, the enemy. Doing the anti- work through the concept of time "as address" (Derrida 1994/2006, xvi-xvii) is dismantling not this kind of labelling but the effects and affects of these namings on the real lives of persons and ecologies. Should *doing justice* to third world in all its renditions—even within every nook and cranny of the "first world," global order, developed world, G-20, the "us" world who is doing everyday violence to its own residents—be an embedded part of music education practices? Or is doing the anti- work only *a* line of thinking and doing in music education? Can time be a resource for music education? Derrida's (1994/2006) treatment of the post- (time *passé*) comingles time with just-ness:

To be just: beyond the living present in general—and beyond its simple negative reversal. A spectral moment, a moment that no longer belongs to time, if one understands by this word the linking of modalized presents (past present, actual present: “now,” future present). We are questioning in this instant, we are asking ourselves about this instant that is not docile to time, at least to what we call time. Furtive and untimely, the apparition of the specter does not belong to that time, it does not give time, not that one: “Enter the ghost, exit the ghost, re-enter the ghost” (*Hamlet*). (xix)

Time is also a double-edged sword. It can be a resource if kept wild, but if domesticated,<sup>5</sup> it recreates disparagement and skepticism. If tamed, one forgets the inheritance. Mortals neglected, memories awashed, the dead unburied. Multiple *turns* in the field since the 1990s such as a major post-modern ontological turn, or democratic turn, and ethical turn (Bradley 2022b; Kallio and Niknafs 2021) were due to the grander events in the world demanding the profession think twice about its goals and societal role. However, these waves of thinking—of which I am a guilty participant—are reactive at best, going along the necessities of and relevancy to time. They feel urged. This sense of urgency, I contend, domesticates time, and makes the anti-work too familiar (Niknafs 2018). When the anti-work happens, “it comes at a great price” (Derrida 1994/2006, 220). Time needs to remain wild. Chaos, perhaps, is indispensable: “it is dangerously soul crushing to believe there is nothing here worth saving ... No, there is no post-oppression world, there is only *this world*” (Laura Yakas 2019, in Hemmasi 2022 forthcoming, emphasis in original). Perhaps music education, then, with all its self-professed glories, is trying to tame time, keeping material events intact, curricula un-changed, promises kept, forms untouched. In short, music education’s goals are perhaps misplaced. If accepting the post-world (Kuntz 2021),<sup>6</sup> as *this world*, and this world only, then music education’s dealings with time become all the more astute and their effects and affects more significant.

Let us imagine ceasing the thought that music education is *good* for anything. It is not transformative, or an agent of social change, it does not matter, it is not necessary, urgent, or essential. It does not serve anything but itself. And perhaps that is good enough. Taking that burden away and taking itself less seriously, then, one is faced with a slate uninhibited by righteous urgency to be good or self-aggrandizing without yielding to a felt experience of time constraint. The wilderness, the time unexamined, the “burning house” as Hemmasi suggested, becomes a space of experimentation with differing ideologies, modes of expression, belongings, ontologies, and epistemologies. Advocacies would change the route from a

prolonged *relevancy conundrum* and “legitimation crisis” (Bowman 2005, 30) that justifies the place of the field in public education to one of justifying the place of human species in relation, not in comparison, to its environment in this historical moment, through shared registers of musical events. Music education can finally *breathe*, in an era when literal breathing has become a goal for many (Davidson-Harden 2021). In that breath, one can “make mischief of one kind and another,” to travel to “where the wild things are” (Sendak 1963/2013, 3). This might yield the field to “Wittgenstein’s ‘rougher ground,’ an acceptance of respon/ability (Bowman 2002) grounded in action and pursued without the false comfort of certainty” (Bowman 2005, 33).

This sense of self-acceptance would let one learn to live, fully, uncompromisingly, and abundantly, taking Derrida’s self-identified paradox in revolutionary moments that can be “imitating” or “death agony” (Derrida 1994/2006, 144) as the point of departure: there lies this “poetic difference,” and “it is in this unleashed overflowing, at the moment when all the joints give way between form and content, that [the movement] will be properly its ‘own’ and properly revolutionary” (1994/2006, 144). Perhaps music education does not need a revolution, a felt sense of urgency to change and to *promise* a better world, as it necessitates keeping that promise and conjuring it up, adding to a kind of moral obligation (Niknafs 2021a) that is constrained by time rather than liberated by the spectrality of time. But what it needs is to become “properly its own,” not to be over-wrought by the sense of urgency and relevancy that add both a time-limit to anti- work and domesticates the work when the sense of urgency and relevancy diminishes. Within that non-linear moment of becoming-one’s-own, the acute relationship between time and music education makes itself visible. That moment may never come or may have already passed. The trouble with *becoming* has always been its non-materialization; the entire reasoning is to not get there but reside in the becoming. Perhaps it is time to leave behind the becoming and shift from the better world discursive to a let’s “unleash overflowing” constancy. “*I would like to learn to live finally*” (Derrida 1994/2006, xvi, emphasis in original).

(Time) Commitment—of the Authors in this Special Issue—to ...

When framing my arguments around time, the dis-jointed time invites me to commit to “being-with specters [that] would also be, not only but also, a *politics* of memory, of inheritance, and of generations” (Derrida 1994/2006, xviii, emphasis

in original). Hence, I also commit to a “when” rather than “what” (Richerme 2020), to upping the “anti-” (Hess 2015), to engaging with the political (Kallio 2022), to attending to the trauma of separation from the earth (Smith 2022), to taking social justice work seriously when it is already late (Bradley 2007), and to a sense of constancy rather than urgency when thinking about *Music Education in Nihilistic Times* (Bowman 2005). I also echo Jeananne Nichols and Wes Brewer (2017) when feeling the urge to grapple with narratives of violence in music education:

Because now, and always, in times when humans engage in acts of public and private, personal and political violence against one another—violence of both word and deed—I am compelled to tell another story.

Now, when over-simplification is used to persuade and even to instill fear, I seek to disrupt with complexity.

Now, when lives of teachers and students are threaded through punishing master narratives, including disturbing core narratives in our own music education community, I seek to forward counter-narratives.

...

Because now, more than ever, we have the need to walk and live with dignity and respect for our fellow human beings.

This is a necessary moment ... But if we wish for social, educational, or political change that we hear as yearning or even movement in each story, then the telling is not enough. Telling, particularly telling to each other in conference papers and journal articles, is a luxury, a privilege. Having listened, having heard, having spoken and written, *how will we then act?*

(Nichols and Brewer 2017, 11, emphasis added)

How do time and responsibility coalesce? Where does commitment come into play and “when” should commitment come into play? “How will we then act” (Nichols and Brewer 2017, 11)? Does commitment take work? What is “work”? What is “good” work? What is social justice- and anti- work? What is commitment when bodies are exhausted or cannot breathe? Who should collect the dead leaves and plant new trees? What is justice? Why justice? These are questions that the authors of this special issue put forth, painstakingly committing to the idea that

No justice—let us not say no law and once again we are not speaking here of laws—seems possible or thinkable without the principle of some *responsibility*, beyond all living present, within that which disjoins the living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead, be the victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence. (Derrida 1994/2006, xviii, emphasis in original)

The authors of this special issue are pushing the boundaries of what constitutes commitment, social justice work, and the felt experience of time in music education. They also remind the reader of the inheritance in music education, of scholars

such as Deborah Bradley, Julia Koza, and Ruth Gustafson who have led the way into the generative anti-thinking and doing in the field, that it is alright not to take oneself too seriously, but it is not alright to dismiss the world in which one lives with all its daily atrocities, alienations, hostilities, and displacements. These authors portray the wild side of time, the undomesticated, the untameable. They do not work for or against time. They do not commodify time as an urge to do something. *They enter time and leave their mark*. Even if always already dealing with the out-of-jointness of time, this collection speaks to “policies and the narratives that ... are always already haunted by that which was not actualized, that which was at some point desired yet unaccomplished, that which was left as a mere possibility. *The point is not, therefore, to determine who or what was silenced, but whom or what cannot be kept entirely quiet*” (Friedrich 2020, 121, emphasis added). The authors of this special issue feel a sense of responsibility and are committed to doing this anti-labour, grappling with the simultaneous contradictory urgency and irrelevancy of time, not to abdicate responsibility, but to shift its current and contemporary place in music education scholarship.

**adam patrick bell, Jason Dasent, and Gift Tshuma**, drawing on DisCrit—Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory—portray a profound picture of the lives of Jason and Gift as disabled and racialized people learning and teaching music, and highlight the dearth of epistemologies of disabled and racialized people in Disability Studies in music education. By way of interview narrative, they point to the liminal space of the terminologies of differently-abled and disabled people, going against “statistical anomaly” and Disability Studies’ “pervasive whiteness.” The authors demonstrate their commitment to music education by examining its out-of-jointness and lack of self-critical accounts “that disconnect disability from race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, age, and other identity constructions and lived experiences.”

By portraying some of the racist encounters that she and her fellow Asian-American music educators have endured during the years, **Clara Haneul Yoon** powerfully critiques the construct of “model minority” and instead offers seven pathways to “empower Asians and Asian educators in [times] of crisis.” By applying “Erving Goffman’s notion of *covering*, Kenji Yoshino’s extension of this concept (the *four axes* of covering), and Edward Said’s *Orientalism*,” Yoon “briefly proposes the concept of 흥익인간 (Hongik-Ingan) to course-correct, support, and acknowledge Asian educators’ multiplicity of identities as allies.” Yoon’s remarks

on working against lost time highlights her commitment to a collective responsibility at a time when micro and macro-aggressions toward Asian bodies are increasingly prevalent.

**Mya Scarlato**, through a timely self-critical narrative, brings forth Maxine Greene's concepts of wide-awakeness and social imagination to critique "correct interpretations" of "the Star-Spangled Banner" (US national anthem) that have racism and white privilege at their center. By exploring "the patriotic re-imaginings of the US national anthem by Black musicians Jimi Hendrix, René Marie, and Jon Batiste—two of whom incorporated 'Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing,' otherwise known as 'the Black national anthem,'" Scarlato brings a different light to patriotic conversations in the field of music education and encourages an anti-racist pedagogical practice for encountering patriotic music in the classrooms.

Applying Derrick Bell's principle of interest convergence, **Juliet Hess** highlights the all-pervading music institutions' performance of "wokeness" in "diversity work" and pinpoints the fact that it is only through the convergence of White interests with racialized communities that institutions begin to pay attention to educational oppression. Hess clearly grapples with the concept of time and commitment in her article by seizing this opportunity to offer constructive pathways to capitalize on interest convergence for "curricular and policy change in higher education in music institutions." Time becomes an indispensable concept in this article whenever concerns for trendiness and getting-on-the-bandwagon become a part and parcel of "diversity work" in higher education music institutions.

Through relevancy discursive in western classical music practices, **Chris Jenkins** poignantly critiques conservatory educational practices at multiple fronts: gatekeeping practices, assimilationist thinking, and aestheticism. Jenkins argues that if educators in western classical music intend to stay relevant and have a flourishing future, it should go beyond demographic diversification and instead think differently about aesthetic diversification in the kinds of music and curricula being produced and *re*-produced, practiced, and commissioned. Jenkins' acute analysis in his article highlights the felt experience of time and running-out-of-time-ness of conservatory music education.

Acknowledging the inheritance of anti-racist scholarship in the field of music education, **Stephanie Espie's** critique of prevalent whiteness in world music practices concludes the first volume of this special issue. Espie's research and

practices with steelpan music and musicians reveal the embedded whiteness in the US-based steelpan school ensembles that “have unintentionally distanced themselves from West Indian community ensembles and Afro-Trinidadian traditions.” By adding nuance and shifting the conversation to “world ensembles,” Espie constructs an anti-racist approach in multicultural thinking and doing in the field.

### Moment of Hesitation

When thinking about two major historical moments that occurred during my lifetime—the end of cold war on December 26, 1991, and the global awakening of 2020 (or the end of human species as we know it<sup>7</sup>)—I cannot help but to think about the linking code, the cyclical nature of these two moments, and what constitutes an apocalypse. Is it an end to something good, or the beginning of something better: let’s burn the house and move on? Or perhaps neither, it is just what it is, the annihilation of human species *by* human species. Who is left behind, always already, in these major moments? “Third worlders” or newly minted “first worlders”? Does apocalypse bring a promise, a futurity yet unmaterialized, or a doomed hereafter, or is that future now, right at this just passed moment: apocalypse is us? Through these questions I try to make sense of music education’s faith, which I contend has nothing to do with its relevance, or lack thereof, to the broader good, or its positive functions and “effects.”<sup>8</sup> What music education as a field can do for its own benefit is perhaps to conceive of time as a specter, to avoid the convention of crisis-management or the urgency-oriented actions or reactive responses to human and environmental crises, to be able to let go, to inhabit the world differently (Mbembe 2019a), and to take itself less seriously. When persons feel compelled and committed to do something to make the field a more hospitable arena, or better yet, change the rules of the game so that different epistemologies and knowledge creation can not only enter the conversation but flourish, similarly to what the authors of this special issue have been courageously doing, they can enter the labour of music education: doing the anti- work while residing in the wilderness with moments of hesitation; reinforcing the President of University of Toronto Faculty Association, Terezia Zorić’s, strong but unassuming commitment: “There is no catharsis in doing the labour of social justice. We pick up where we can, assume nothing, expect nothing, but we do what we need to do” (Terezia, Jan 27, 2022, personal communication). So, let’s hesitate. Let’s welcome the chaos inherent in this labour, “to live otherwise, and better. No, not better, but more justly” (Derrida 1994/2006, xviii).

The labour of music education has contingent provisions, one of which is to pause and give time its due spectrality in relation to the field. Perhaps the charge is to enter whenever, unravel what one can, and keep at it until one's time has arrived. In the meantime, let's do the serious work of not taking ourselves too seriously. Now is the time to do the anti-work. Now is the time to be present.

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## About the Guest Editor

Nasim Niknafs is Associate Professor of Music Education at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, where she also serves as the Associate Dean, Research and Coordinator of Music Education. Her interdisciplinary research concerning social justice, activism, and politics of contemporary music education, cultural politics, and popular music has been widely published in international journals and edited volumes of music education. Concluding longitudinal research on the music education of rock musicians in Iran, Nasim is conducting a SSHRC-funded research project titled, *Sanctuary City: Cultural Programs, Music Education, and the Dignified Lives of Refugee Newcomers in Toronto*, which examines the cultural programs and music education practices developed for refugee newcomers by the municipal government and arts organizations in Toronto. Nasim is also a co-investigator of an arts-based participatory research project funded by the School of Cities, University of Toronto, which brings together the cultural and academic sectors to jointly imagine strategies for thriving in a post-pandemic reality. Nasim holds degrees from Northwestern University, New York University, Kingston University, London, and University of Art, Tehran.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The two-part plenary address was later published as *Specters of Marx: The state of the debt, the work of mourning and the New International* (1994/2006).

<sup>2</sup> Referring to Francis Fukuyama’s highly criticized book, about which Derrida also had much to say in his book.

<sup>3</sup> The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Overturning *Roe v. Wade* by The United States’ Supreme Court on June 24, 2022 “declaring that the constitutional right to abortion, upheld for nearly a half century, no longer exists” (Totenberg and McCammon June 24, 2022, para. 1) is one example of trampling upon human rights by democratic societies.

<sup>5</sup> Here, I am specifically thinking about the treatment of women in Afghanistan since the withdrawal of the US military in 2020, and the ongoing Ukraine War, around which the conversations on the ground and in the media were ripe with

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gender equity and anti-war sentiments. However, both of these ongoing events have become old news and gone away from the public psyche.

<sup>6</sup> I thank my dear friend, Dr. Alexis Kallio, for bringing this article to my attention.

<sup>7</sup> Here I am referring to Greta Thunberg’s speech at The U.N. Climate Action Summit on September 23, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> I would encourage readers to refer to Gaztambide-Fernández’s (2013) gripping argument against “rhetoric of effect.”