Oglethorpe Journal of Undergraduate Research

August 2016

Thou and It: Personhood Actualized Through Water Rights

Kierra M. Powell
Oglethorpe University, kpowell@oglethorpe.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/ojur

Part of the Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons, Rhetoric Commons, and the Social Influence and Political Communication Commons

Recommended Citation

Thou and It: Personhood Actualized Through Water Rights

Thou and It: Personhood Actualized Through Water Rights

Kierra Powell

25 April 25, 2016

Dr. Sarah Terry

Dr. Seema Shrikhande

Dr. Kendra Momon

Dr. Amanda Printz

Dr. Mario Chandler

I.   Introduction

Which lives matter? Responses to the inquiry have centered on issues such as brazen displays of police brutality against African-American men, women, and children, and the recent debate of women's reproductive rights. In both instances the interests and the intrinsic value that are often synonymous with personhood have been forsaken. That such a widespread denial of humanity is still a twenty-first-century issue can be seen nowhere more clearly than with the issue of water rights. As one of the most critical elemental resources required for the sustainability of human life, safe water has been designated a human right, but the current global distribution of water does not mirror this sentiment. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Resolution 64/292 "recognized the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights" (UN 64/292 2). More than that, the UN Resolution called upon "[s]tates and international organizations to provide resources…in particular to developing countries, in order to scale up efforts to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all" (UN 64/292 3). But developing countries are not the only places in dire need of renovations, as is made explicitly clear by the water pollution crises suffered by Flint, Michigan. After administering quality tests of Flint's discolored tap water, researchers found that the water that had been streamed into resident homes for drinking, cooking, and bathing had elevated levels of lead and other toxins (Hulett). Drawing from corrupted water sources for over a year, government officials attempted to maintain their ignorance of water-borne threats to the health and safety of their citizens while dangers streamed through city channels straight from the Flint River (Hulett). Disturbingly, such water crises are not unique to Flint, nor are they unique to the United States. Reports of severe and long-term water-pollution have surfaced from, among other places, Louisiana, Kentucky,

Tennessee, and Mississippi (NPR Staff). Each of these states made a 2015 list, compiled from results from the U.S. Census Bureau, of the poorest states in the nation. While issues of racial and gendered discrimination are more visible and widely discussed, poverty based discrimination is often a silent fact of life for the many. We speak about black lives and women's lives, but hardly do we question the safety or rights attributed to the financially underpriveleged life.

In an interview with George Yancey, Judith Butler, gender, feminist, and queer theory philosopher, was asked to speak about the Black Lives Matter Movement. In her indignation at the rampant extermination of black lives, Butler describes the consequences of these acts on the minority population, as lives taken in this way [referring to police shootings] are not lives worth grieving, they belong to the increasing number of those who are understood as ungrievable, whose lives are thought not to be worth preserving" (Yancey) . The acknowledgement of some lives as ungrievable is the equivalence of recognizing those lives as dispensable. It follows that if personhood is inextricably linked not only to the value of life, but the public recognition of that value, then that status has been revoked from millions around the globe through the denial of water rights due to water privatization, water pollution, and water theft. There is an undercurrent of hate that manifests itself through the allowance of water distribution that lacks in quality and quantity. Though this problem is global in nature, it seems to affect most detrimentally the same group of people: those with lesser financial means. More than anything else, this divide in quality water distribution provokes the question: whose life is intrinsically valued? As the poor man's usefulness to society is deemed minimal, his life is considered less and less valuable. Under such standards the internal value carried by personhood is lost to the level of utility a person has, making lives unlivable just as quickly as they are made ungrievable.

This study seeks to determine the status of personhood as displayed by the movement of water in relation to the underprivileged. Personhood is a state of relation that fundamentally defines and grants access to certain rights and responsibility. For Philosopher Martin Buber's theory of relation, there are two ways in which we relate to others: in an I-it relation or in an I-Thou relation. The nature of the relation determines what one deems is the nature of the thing related to: a person (Thou) or an object (It). Personhood is granted to the 'Thou', while the 'It' is only lived in objectification. The denial of safe and quality water to a subset of people clearly declares that some lives are not actualized in the realm of personhood. This thesis is an effort to determine the validity of the assumption that personhood can be evaluated through water distribution.

Without a central ideology of poverty as subordinate, there would no systematic mistreatment of the poor. Therefore, a dominant ideology or hegemony that works against the poor to sustain the power of the privileged must necessarily be in place in order to establish the existence of a hegemonic paradigm that seeks to diminish the power of the underprivileged to speak out, we must first understand what it means to be underprivileged. In the context of this work, poverty is synonymous with underprivileged. Poverty is considered to be *the* state of ungrievability. It is through the I-It relation that lives are constructed as ungrievable and their mistreatment is understood as insignificant. Because the current global climate relies on a culture of value based upon productivity, quality of life is intrinsically linked to the goods or services that an individual has to offer – their extrinsic value. Such measurements of personhood are considered over intrinsic value when the essential nature of personhood is that a person should be valuable in and of itself. There is a difference between being human and being a person: human is a biological term, a person is something that has rights and responsibilities. You can

have humans that are not persons. Human beings that are not granted personhood stand at a great disadvantage as their abuses are marginalized. The poor constantly face this marginalization.

The social perception of poverty and extrinsic value as mutually exclusive is illuminated through an analysis of two poverty based studies showcasing poverty as the penultimate state of ungrievability. One study was conducted by the Salvation Army and the other by National Public Radio. Where there is a working paradigm there must also be ideologies keeping it in place. Here, fear, shame, and optimism are considered as public emotions and affective experiences that compose and maintain hegemony. Addressing this model internationally, striking issues in North America, South America, Africa, and Asia will be analyzed in terms of water privatization, water pollution, and water theft.

Water has been defined as a human right by the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the World Health Organization, yet it is still treated primarily as a commodity. This commodification of water complicates both the private and the public distribution of water. Water privatization is private sector participation in water services and sanitation. This system has fewer federal restrictions, and as such has resulted in corruption and exceptionally high prices for service users. Though public water services are under stricter federal regulations, many of these systems have become financially unsustainable for governments, resulting in an increased reliance on private systems. Just as water has been commodified, the extrinsic valuation of personhood is also a type of commodification. In both cases worth is determined by a measurement of exchange instead of an embracement of the object's status as being. This dual commodification not only places limitations on the value attached to human life, it also normalizes abuse. Such cases of abuse through privatization are clearly demonstrated in the incidents suffered in the Cochabamba, Bolivia, and Detroit,

Michigan. The injustices against citizens of the respective locations illuminate the dangers of both privative and public water systems.

Water pollution has become a natural mode of waste disposal worldwide as approximately "two million tons of human waste are disposed of in waterways around the world" every day (National Geographic, Water Pollution). The reliance on world water systems as sewage ways has had detrimental effects with some patches of the ocean being so badly polluted that there is not enough oxygen to support aquatic life (National Geographic, Water Pollution). The same damage has been done to many of our freshwater systems, making difficult the extraction of safe drinking water. Even worse has been the continued advisement of the public to partake of the polluted water offered them. This disturbing phenomenon is aptly displayed through the Baby Formula Scandal that devastated multiple African nations and the Flint, Michigan water scandal. Both cases are terrifying in the heavy consequences that they posed for affected children. Specifically, the Baby Formula Scandal offers a glimpse of a situation that is prevalent globally: the intentional risk that children of the underprivileged are put into. The implication here is that the future generation of the impoverished is just as big of a threat as their predecessors. Infant lives were taken and compromised, and though Nestlé was internationally reprimanded, the lives of the infants were never internationally grieved.

The analysis of corporate water theft follows the discussion of water pollution as the final scope of water abuses undertaken against the poor. Water theft is the unauthorized consumption of water. Normally used to describe the process by which citizens attempt to lessen their water bills through illegitimate methods, my interest with water theft is corporate in scale. The corporate theft of water is an appalling reality. Often left unpunished, the threat to fragile ecosystems posed by corporate water theft is exhibited in the cases of Plachimada, a village of

India, and California, an American state. After the case-based application of hegemonic fear, shame, and optimism, I will offer a resolution to the valuing of personhood as extrinsic as opposed to intrinsic, or the commodification of the person. Martin Buber's framework of the I-It and I-Thou modes of relation will be used to highlight what it means to see and treat the other as intrinsically valuable through love, ethical cohabitation, and encounters on Buber's narrow ridge.

I have foremost looked to philosopher Martin Buber's theories of relation. The most well-known account of his theories of relations appears in his work, *I and Thou*. This work is an existentialist account of the human condition as well as a call to action. The human condition—human existence—is defined by two ways of being in the world: I-Thou and I-It. The I-It and I-Thou relation exist within the sphere of the dialogic. In other words, the type of communication, verbal and non-verbal, between two persons is crucial to the conception of personhood. It is the relationship between pairs that defines the actors. Though Buber describes the two models of relation as pair-models, it is important to recognize that the power of this theory resides in its assertion that an individual's relation to the world – not just their counterpart – is defined by their status as object/It or subject/Thou.

The realms of I-It and I-Thou signify the relationship that a subject has to other beings it encounters in the world. The sphere of I-It is the most common form of relation, as "I-It relationships are more typical of everyday living, with the other person or medium perceived as separate" (Rogers 41-42). This mode of relation is only found in separation, as Buber states that "I-It is made possible only by…the detachment of [the] 'I'" from the Other (Buber 73). In separation, the Other is distinct from the subject. There is an understanding of the other as outside of the self, making their plights unimportant when, and because, they are not shared by the subject. Such disinterest makes I-It the prime mode of abuse.

It is in this separation that a person loses aspects of their personhood as the subject interacts with them as nothing more than an object. Separation is dualistic. Foremost is the separation of the Other from any intrinsic value. Here the Other is commodified as nothing more than an experience for the subject. It is in this mode that we act upon the Other, instead of with them, as they are used as a means to fulfill an end. The Other is lacerated – their intrinsic value is detached from their extrinsic value – and through division, they are rendered incomplete. And this is all simply as a result of the stance another person takes towards them. Consequently, the separation of the Other from a place of value lends itself to the second type of separation: separation of the subject from the ability to connect with the Other. Once this separation has occurred, the 'I' can no longer take the subject up as an equal subject. This is harmful to both parties. The Other is never freed from its position of alienation and the subject forfeits the possibility of encountering that Other as a 'Thou'. Though occasional I-It relations are a necessary component of life, for survival lends itself to some objectification of the Other, objectification generally places severe limitations on the object's claim to personhood.

I-Thou is where personhood is reclaimed. Carl Rogers describes Buber's I-Thou as a "philosophy centered on the 'encounter' between the 'I' and the 'Thou'" (Rogers 41-42). Encounter is essentially different from experience in that it completely annihilates the distance created by alterity. Almost paradoxically, the concept of other, or that which is outside of me, vanishes as the Other is fully beheld as itself. In "Thouing," otherness and its consequences are eliminated as a result of the genuine taking up of the Other as another subject. In Thouing there is no aim to define or manipulate the Other in relation to one's own needs, but only to encounter them without any expectations or motives. The refusal to limit the Thou allows zero room for commodification of the Other as their worth in Thouing relies simply on their presence and

being. As we construct the Other in I-It, we deconstruct in I-Thou. In beholding the Other, we see them outside of the context of me, and with that, their extrinsic value to the subject is no longer considered because intrinsic value is both revealed and realized. Encounters can occur between 'I', the subject, and God, man, or nature. The aforementioned may each function as a 'Thou', but the understanding of God, or a higher Being, as the ultimate Thou is crucial to Buber's work. It is through God – or a great spiritual connection – that a subject could encounter another being as an equal, or as a 'Thou'. The boundless nature of the ultimate 'Thou' is what moves I-Thou and I-It out of the context of the individual and into the world. For Buber, it is through God that boundaries cease and all is interconnected. The relationship shared with the higher being of one's choosing shapes the connection one pursues in daily interactions with others.

Whether consciously or unconsciously influenced by Buber, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote of agape, or Christian love, in the following way: "agape means nothing sentimental or basically affectionate; it means understanding, redeeming good will for all men, an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return" (King 8). When we use love in relation to I-Thou, it is not in a traditional romantic sense. Rather, it is a mode of operation requiring the subject to "love men not because we like them, not because their attitudes and ways appeal to us," but because we understand through our connection with the highest Thou, the truest mode of connection (King 9). Agape is an overflowing love as opposed to typical love because love is typically between two distinct experiencing and feeling persons. The deconstruction of differences in I-Thou allows for the existence of a love that is, itself, without boundaries: self-love becomes synonymous with love of other. It is through I-Thou that dialogue is achieved, but the I-Thou is not easy to maintain, or even achieve, as some people never engage in encountering.

Instead, the space of I-It is a natural part of the cycle of relation. Given the sometimes necessary nature of objectification as a means of survival, "every Thou in the world is doomed by its nature to become a thing or at least to enter into thinghood again and again" (Buber 69). The perpetual nature of I-It is rooted in the need for the body to be sustained. This could be seen in a hunter-gatherer society where one group views the other as an obstacle to their goal of collecting x amount of meat and y amount of grain. It is just as likely to recognize this trend in a commercial society: when shopping for groceries, the sales person or cashier is objectified as a service provider getting you steps closer to preparing dinner for yourself. This is an inevitable aspect of relation, and the naturally unstainable nature of I-Thou ensures that I-It is not strictly problematic in and of itself. The inability of some persons to bridge the gap between I-It and I-Thou is problematic. Some beings are never approached as Thous, they are never perceived as equals, and thus never given the agency of personhood, for "Man becomes an I through a Thou" (Buber 80). Without agency, without recognition of "I-hood," the perception of an object's humanity has proven to be diminished through the sheer fact that it has never been recognized. Discrimination works as a purposive tool to stabilize communications to hegemonic hierarchies. Recognizing this reality, King asserts that discrimination "substitutes an I-It relationship for the "I-thou" relationship" and "relegates persons to the status of things" (King 147). Without ascension to personhood through 'Thouing', lives remain ungreivable. Applying such a lens to Buber's work, his existential dichotomy proves a powerful tool in this analysis of the greater recognition of water rights in conjunction with the recognition of personhood.

As a supplement to Buber's theory, I utilize Judith Butler's article "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation" to highlight the implicit nature of interconnectedness that stems from human relationships. Butler's work operates as a call to

action, wherein she is able to highlight the obligations that are attached to cohabitating with the Other. In regards to Butler's discourse, cohabitation is measured neither by proximity nor choice, but status as human. All human beings occupy the same Earth and all human beings make a physical impact on the shared environment, these are undeniable truths Butler attempts to identify and define the existence of an ethical obligation to protect the life of the Other carried by each individual. I use Butler's conglomeration of responsibility necessitated by precariousness, vulnerability, and cohabitation to highlight the public failure to meet this obligation. This failure is displayed through the clear lack of concern for the well-being of others – displayed through the irresponsible movement of water. This theory seeks to offer a solution to a global problem of inconsideration hinging on relatability by pairing Butler with Buber's account of the narrow ridge and Sarah Ahmed's concept of emotional and affective love. This juxtaposition showcases Ahmed's theories of emotion and affect which seek to politicize feelings, which have traditionally been viewed as irrational, in order to explain social hierarchies. Ahmed's theories are crucial to this study in that they validate the emotions of the outcast. Traditionally emotional responses are cast down, but Ahmed is able to reintroduce emotions into the public sphere as both valid and tangible.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Sara Ahmed deconstructs emotions as modes of existence through which social interactions are mediated. While Ahmed looks at a variety of emotions ranging from pain to hate, the emotions most relevant to this study are fear, shame, and love. Though emotions are generally considered to be both abstract and private in nature, Ahmed instead insists that "emotions circulate between bodies," therefore emotions are largely public in nature (Ahmed 4). This discourse of emotion confirms Butler's prescribed ethical obligation

between persons by illustrating the public and private affectual consequences as emotions are passed between bodies.

Dually, this theory lives in the realm of relation, and as such it serves to emphasize the risks of constantly living in a state of 'thinghood'. In order to showcase the role of emotions in maintaining the status of I-It through the establishment of hegemonic ideologies, I will examine fear and shame, as they are two emotional states that work most effectively by shrinking the social space of certain individuals. Fear is powerful in that it works to "secure the relationship between [bodies]," with said relationship stemming from the suspicion that both parties have towards each other (Ahmed 63). In other words, fear is felt in all directions. Alternatively, shame is an emotion that is experienced as intense self-negation "taken on by a subject as a sign of its own failure, [and] is usually experienced before another" (Ahmed 103). Given the roles of these two emotions in creating boundaries, it should come as no surprise that fear would be instrumental in creating hegemonic ideologies, and shame instrumental in their maintenance. Fear and shame are directly antithetical to the boundless I-Thou mode of relation. Buber describes the subject's relation to the Thou as unmediated, because "every means is an obstacle. Only where all means have disintegrated encounters occur (Buber 62-63)." Fear and shame are obstacles to relation, acting as means to the maintenance of a hegemonic structure

Of course, there are affective emotions beneficial to the cultivation of the encounter-based I-Thou. The emotion that has the most potential for opening passage between 'Itdom' and 'Thoudom' is love. It is through love that the subject is made "vulnerable, exposed to, and dependent upon another" (Ahmed 125). Thereby, it is through love that Butler's proclaimed obligations of cohabitation might be lived out. Additionally, the vulnerability made possible

through love should serve to eradicate both fear and shame, as they both function most prominently to alienate and other.

It is in the name of love that Lauren Berlant's theory of cruel optimism is rooted. Ahmed describes love as "crucial to how individuals become aligned with collectives through their identification with an ideal" (Ahmed 124). Optimism places a subject into a position of subordination to their preferred ideologies. Through optimism a cycle is created where the subject attempts to embody a social ideology that is often practically unattainable. Cruel optimism "names a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility whose realization is discovered either to be impossible, sheer fantasy, or too possible, and toxic" (Berlant 94). Such is precisely what makes these instances of optimism cruel, they rely on virtually unattainable goals. Once an optimistic perspective has been adopted, the challenge is found in the continued work towards realizing a goal over the realization that a goal may simply be unachievable. Cruel optimism necessitates a climate of love as the space in which attachments may form. But where love forges a path towards encounter between two subjects, cruel optimism is forever lodged in the desire that 'Its' feel in their longing to become Thous. Like shame, cruel optimism works to enforce hegemonic ideals, but shame relies on fear of the other and cruel optimism on love of the other. As love can be discussed as a means to a solution, cruel optimism must be discussed in terms of the unhealthy cycle that it creates for the 'It'.

Though important in isolation, this collection of theories work powerfully in tandem to support and expand upon Martin Buber's theory of I-Thou. With that said, there are limitations in utilizing Buber's I-Thou theory in the context of the perceived value of life through water. Within the dichotomy of I-Thou and I-It, one set of relation is clearly prized over the other. Buber stated that "all actual life is encounter" and the I-Thou is just the encounter he meant

(Buber 62). All 'actual life' is valued and all 'actual life' is treated accordingly. If all people were actualized as 'Thous' there would be no discussion about the dangers of privatization, pollution, and theft because a valued life is a life with adequate water privileges. Utilizing the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as our measures, the concept of water as a necessary human rights would be indisputable, but the limitation is found in Buber's stipulation that all 'actual life' should never be subjected to self-limiting boundaries. He states: "This is part of the basic truth of the human world: only 'Its' can be put in order. Only as things cease to be our Thou and become our It do they become subject to coordination. The Thou knows no system of coordination "(Buber 81). Systems of coordination (as in laws, labels, and commands) for the realm of I-Thou are to be navigated through freedom. In such freedom exists the narrow ridge, what Buber describes as a shared space of intimacy between two persons. As mentioned earlier, though these relationships could never be sustained – it is in the natural cycle of relating to others that they return to Itdom – the cycle of return is ever more so true in a society governed by laws and clinging to labels. Still, Buber articulates a solution that is a timeless analysis of the power and responsibility inherent to any relation with the Other. To fully understand the radical implications of a transition into I-Thou relations, there must be an understanding of the current leading social paradigms, specifically in terms of hegemony in the context of poverty and water.

II. Maintaining Hegemony

In *Media and Society*, Michael O'Shaughnessy and Jane Stadler define hegemony as "power and leadership maintained through process of struggle and negotiation, especially through winning the consent of the majority of people to accept the ideas or ideologies of the dominant group as common sense" (O'Shaughnessy, Stadler 205). Subsequently, ideologies are

"sets of social values, ideas, beliefs, feelings, and representations by which people collectively make sense of the world they live in, thus constituting a world view. This world view is naturalized, a taken for granted, commonsense view about the way the world works" (O'Shaughnessy, Stadler 205). It is the dominant ideologies, specifically, that work to support the hegemony as the majority of society shares beliefs that reinforce the status quo. As political theorist Robert A. Dahl explains, "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (King 37). Dahl's statement/equation parallels the structure of hegemony as a two-way process that is maintained purely by the willingness of the oppressed to align themselves with ideals that enforce a structure that does not benefit them. Dominant ideologies that "are so deeply embedded in our society that they are shared by almost everyone and seem totally normal," thus dominant ideologies act as more than just an object, they function to completely construct the social order itself, and by extension the experience of the people constituting the society (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 195).

Attempting to understand the mechanisms through which ideologies were socially transmitted, French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser proposed two sets of systems that worked to broadcast ideologies: repressive and ideological state apparatuses (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 196). Repressive state apparatuses, or RSAs, are "the institutions of force that societies use to control people," whereas ideological state apparatuses, or ISAs, are "the institutions of socialization and persuasion that societies use to control people" (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 197). Political institutions such as military, law enforcement, and prisons are representations of RSAs, while ISAs are exemplified in entities such as education, family, and media (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 197).

The subliminal nature of ideological state apparatuses makes these tools of assimilation most powerful. ISAs are more likely to align a subject with popular opinion without even alerting the subject of their coerced compliance. The affective emotions of fear and shame, are both used to support and spread the prevalent conception of poverty and degradation of character as relative to each other. Both fear and shame are used to impact a being's self-worth or dignity, making them more compliant to the great hierarchical will. Dignity can be the state or quality of being worthy of respect, yet it can also represent a person's own self-worth. In regards to the first definition, the robbed dignity of the poor leaves that subset of individuals without the sympathy that often comes with respect in times of need. When the plight of the poverty-stricken has been normalized, help is less likely to be offered.

Dignity becomes really important in the context of water rights. When a group of people are threatened with water shut-offs it is respect that inspires the public to help. Increased public inaction alienates the water impoverished, who are then left to fight a battle with no ammunition. Bolivians are left with empty wells, citizens of Flint are left to hydrate using lead-tainted water, and Indian villagers watch helplessly as their water supplies are drained before their eyes. Such are the implications of public inaction, and such is the danger of public opinion skewed by ideological state apparatuses. Additionally, the effect of decreased self-worth on the willingness of the poverty-stricken to rise against their situation – and thereby, their oppressor – further enacts Dahl's aforementioned principle of the underprivileged acting against their best interest. Two poverty-based studies, one administered by the Salvation Army and the other by National Public Radio (NPR), exemplify the majority public opinion of people living in poverty as unfavorable. In "Perceptions of Poverty: The Salvation Army's Report to America," the Salvation Army sets out to "raise awareness of the issue [of poverty] as well as programs

available to those in need" (The Salvation Army 2). The "Perceptions of Poverty" survey did not identify where it drew its participants from, or even what their demographics were; but that information is not necessarily needed to unpack the 60% positive result of participants that believed "being poor robs [a person] of dignity" (The Salvation Army 4). Though this majority is not overwhelming, it is a strong majority. A 60% admission of personal disassociation between positive characteristics and poverty speaks volumes.

The Salvation Army Report presented their survey as yielding positive results, stating that their results "reveal a public that is frequently sympathetic but at times misunderstands their neighbors in need" (The Salvation Army 4). Assuming that these results have more to do with the selective questioning of The Salvation Army than true public sympathy, the "Perception of Poverty" report may holistically work as a tool to encourage donations through positive agenda-setting. Figure 1 (Salvation Army Chart), below, highlights the disparity between the sympathetic nature of the public towards the poverty-stricken. Interestingly, this line of questioning was the only less than positive assessment offered by the surveyors, and the overwhelmingly negative results may speak to why that was.
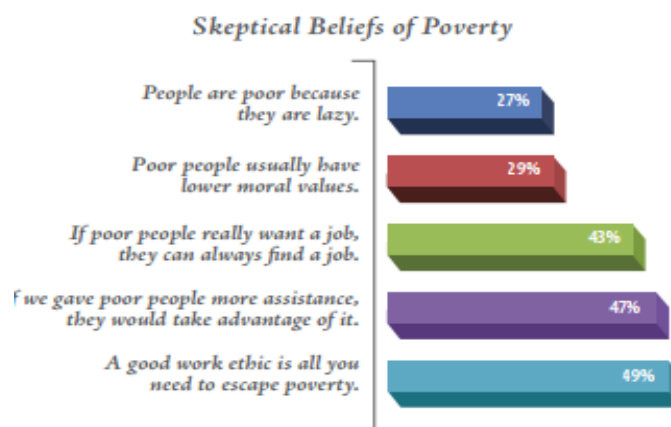

Figure 1: Perception of Poverty (Salvation Army Chart)

The NPR survey provided a much more even line of questioning to its surveyed population – a population which was also outlined as diverse, including participants across a diverse financial income range. The survey was split into eight sections: (1) general background, (2) why are people poor, (3) perceptions of poor people, (4) the government's role, (5) perceptions of welfare and welfare recipients, (6) perceptions of new welfare law, (7) personal experience with economic problems, and (8) demographics (Rosenbaum, Altman, and Blendon). Section two, "why are people poor," is most relevant to the conversation of hegemony and dominant ideologies. The results of NPR survey were much more telling. When asked their opinion on "the bigger cause of poverty today: that people are not doing enough to help themselves out of poverty, or that circumstances beyond their control cause them to be poor?", the largest amount of votes indicated that poverty is the direct result of the poor not doing enough to help themselves (Rosenbaum, et al.). Such sentiments speak to the ever-present perception of poverty as a choice. The perception of choice-driven poverty greatly limits the sympathy felt for the poverty-stricken, thereby limiting the willingness of the privileged to offer assistance. Worse still, this public perception of poverty indicates that poverty is not simply a result of the helplessness of the poor, but it is a testament of their character. The inability for the majority to relate to the impoverished keeps the impoverished in the role of the 'It'. In their role as the objectified Other, the impoverished are normally denied help even from the government officials that are tasked with serving the best interests of their entire public. The thinly veiled divisive discourse already successfully denies the protection of water rights of some in favor of the interests of other, more majority, members of the public. The tables below were taken directly from the NPR Survey, and the accompanying captions describe the nature of the question related to the specific results:

	Major	Minor	Not a cause	Don't know
Total	70	24	5	2

Figure 2: Drug Abuse as a Cause of Poverty

	Major	Minor	Not a cause	Don't know
Total	52	35	9	4

Figure 3: Lack of Motivation as a Cause of Poverty

	Major	Minor	Not a cause	Don't know
Total	46	37	11	7

Figure 4: Welfare as a Cause of Poverty

	Major	Minor	Not a cause	Don't know
Total	57	29	12	3

Figure 5: Decline of Moral Value as a Cause of Poverty

	Major	Minor	Not a cause	Don't know
Total	47	36	13	4

Figure 6: Poor Quality of Public Schools as a Cause of Poverty

As displayed in Figure 2 (Rosenbaum, et al Chart 8A), the overwhelming majority of voters believe that drug abuse is a significant root of poverty. Drug abuse does not simply denote the addiction to illegal and/or prescription drugs; it connotes the deviant nature of the abuser as symptomatic of their inability to function properly within societal boundaries. More than that, most abusers do in fact form addictions to *illegal* substances, and in doing so they are constructed as not only weak, but criminal. The majority association between poverty and such illicit behavior draws a link between poverty and corruption, as Figure 5 (Rosenbaum, et al Chart 8I) displays the majority consensus of the decline of moral value as a serious cause of poverty. The results display a bias regarding the relation of poverty and immorality resolute and degenerate. Such an outcome indicates the loss of sympathy for those that live in poverty. With the loss of sympathy comes indifference towards people that are forced, in many cases, to go without life-sustaining resources. Ironically? The few outlets that do provide relief for the poverty-stricken are effectively detrimental to society as they are, ironically, suspected as sources of poverty.

An example of this phenomenon can be found in the instance of welfare programs. In Figure 3 (Rosenbaum, et al Chart 8H), the most votes on whether or not welfare plays a role in the poverty cycle are in favor of welfare programs as a compelling cause of poverty. The ideal of people in positions of poverty as less than human is strengthened in such cycles as the one exhibited by the views on welfare. And it is within these cycles that the poverty-stricken are simultaneously blamed for being in positons of need and trying to get out of those positions by utilizing the programs available to them. In fact, a similar cycle can be viewed in Figure 4, as a majority of votes are given to lack of motivation as a premium cause of poverty.

Damned if they do, damned if they don't, Figure 4 (Rosenbaum, et al Chart 8F) signifies the general public's view of the poor as culpable in their own economic status. The support of both the issues of welfare and inactivity as causal could be viewed as a direct reflection of their perceived interdependence, especially given the recognition of welfare programs as a "lazy way out." Yet the drug abuse, moral degradation, reliance on welfare, and absence of motivation are not the only observed markings of the poor – improper education is also believed to prevail. Figure 6 (Rosenbaum, et al Chart 8J) depicts a larger number of voters considering poor quality of public schools as a critical cause of poverty. In a society where education is valued as virtuous, the uneducated are often viewed as ignorant, and ignorance is perceived a vice. Therefore, the lack of education of the poor is perceived as akin to a lack of morality. And just as in the case of morality, the lack of education works to dispose the public of their sympathy.

The hegemony is reinforced by these ideals of the poverty stricken as less than. When one half of the world's population lives off of less than $2.50 a day, and nearly one-quarter of the world's population lives in extreme poverty, making less than $1.25 a day, the dominant ideologies that have established the poor as 'less than' keep such discrepancies in income from

being questioned (Shah). Yet these same income discrepancies are a large part of the abuses suffered by the impoverished. These unsuitable wages are often contributing factors to inabilities to pay for adequate water supplies, or even the missed opportunities to supply alternative sources of water in an attempt to supplement the low quality of water that is provided. Further still, "80% of the world population lives on less than $10 a day," and if that were not enough, the statistics above do not even include the population struggling to survive on minimum wage in developed countries (Shah).

Financial and social inadequacies are harshly criticized, but there is very little concern in regards to the insurmountable obstacles that many people must face simply to provide basic necessities for themselves. The dominant ideology of this struggle as self-generated provokes silence. Within this hegemonic state of silence, violators of the dominant ideals – or more simply, the poor – are thrown into a relationship of mutual fear with those that are able to conform. If that were not enough, they are then shamed for their inability to comply with social standards. Shame is important to understand in the domain of water rights. Because water is such an integral part of basic daily procedures such as cooking, drinking, bathing, and cleaning, the person without adequate water access becomes unable to participate in normative actions. The failure to proceed normatively most often translates into social failures, and in terms of water it is almost always understood that inadequacies stem from financial inabilities. As with any perceived failure, the lesser abilities of the other begin to simply translate into them being less and less valuable.

Amidst the transgressions caused them by the reinforcement of the ISAs, the poor are stuck in a cycle of optimism that they will likely overcome their situation, but this optimism is never realized for many. Able to offer very little to society, the poor man's value decreases and

his life is deemed ungrievable. It becomes easier to disassociate the poor man's life from a life of productivity, making it easier to withdraw necessary elements of life.

Sarah Ahmed's critiques of fear and shame as political tools of affect, and Laura Berlant's theory of cruel optimism, are crucial texts in attempting to understand the tightly woven ideologies of poverty that have become integral to the maintenance of hegemony. The unbalanced relationship of the 'I and the 'It' develops an economy of fear, with one party in a superior – and therefore threatening – position to the other. The I-It relationship is secured through the ability of fear to establish "others as fearsome insofar as they threaten to take the self in" (Ahmed 64). This 'taking in of the self' can be likened to a threat of the other's autonomy where the power of the majority is threatened by the need of the minority. The plea for sympathy acts as the most poignant method of 'taking in the Other', or bridging the gap between alterity and encounter. Here the threat of encountering the Other is bound to the risk of losing one's self, and one's most prized material possessions in the face of the Other. Put simply, that which is not (like) you is often automatically perceived as a threat to you.

The dominant group's fear of getting taken in "works to justify violence against [those] others whose very existence comes to be felt as a threat to the life [of the subject]" (64). "Fear does not bring the bodies together [through] a form of shared or fellow feeling," repelling the Other through its construction of a dominance based relationship (63). Instead, affect based on "(mis)readings of the Other's feelings" pass through the bodies creating fearful discord (63). This misreading is the perception of a threat to power caused by poverty. The fear of lost power justifies the violence perpetrated against the poor. This violence takes shape through the denial of water. The stripping of such a necessary right is one of the greatest acts of violence. This violence is systemic. The allowance of constant water-based violence against the poor

definitively defines them as not only Other, but inhuman – through fear Buber's 'It' is taken to new heights.

Fear is cyclical. While it works to reinforce the hegemonic structure, it is simultaneously "dependent on particular narratives on what and who is fearsome that are already in place," both a tool and a by-product of hegemony (69). Dominant ideologies use fear to preserve the power of the majority by building boundaries that, if crossed, threaten hurt or injury the power held by that majority. Fear works through structures of relation, and demands a subject and an object, an 'I' and an 'It' (64). Multidirectional, fear moves symmetrically between subjects and objects, causing them to fear each other due to the potential consequences of social failures. Ahmed frames the construction of social boundaries by arguing that "fear works to align bodily and social space: it works to enable some bodies to inhabit and move in public space through restricting the mobility of other bodies to spaces that are enclosed or contained" (70). Previously, fear was discussed as a byproduct of the threat to hegemony. We now be understood that "the affective politics of fear perseveres through announcing a threat to life itself," not simply threat to a lifestyle, but a threat to the *life* of the Other (65). In the context of water, the fear of losing access to quality water is very concrete given that life cannot be sustained without water.

The threat to the life of the Other has been well-documented through the abuse of water rights of the underprivileged. In his book *Water, Peace, and War: Confronting the Global Water Crisis*, Brahma Chellaney discusses the importance of water as a critical resource that is in serious danger due to scarcity, conflict, and quality degradation. Addressing the necessity of water for the sustenance of life, Chellaney argues, "of the three resources directly critical to human survival – air, water, and food – only air is more critical than water. Without air, a person will asphyxiate within minutes. Without water, a person will die within days. And without food,

a person will shrivel and perish within weeks" (60). Access to a fundamental element of life has been inextricably linked with a person's ability to pay for their rights to the commodity, but the financial constraints of some severely limit the rate at which they can afford water under some highly priced systems. Such consumers are either forced to go without, or expected to deal with lower quantities or qualities than they are used to, or should ever be forced to endure. Such abuses threaten the lives of the poor in order to maintain the power of the few.

Compared to the double-sided nature of fear, shame is experienced by an entity or group. Shame is extreme self-negation felt at the appearance of the self to the Other. Furthermore, "shame becomes felt as a matter of being of the relation of self to itself – insofar as shame is about appearance, about how the subject appears before and to others" (Ahmed 104-05). Shame is experienced when one's failure is witnessed, which is even more shameful than the individual's self-negation (105). Shame acts as a powerful hegemonic stabilizer, working simultaneously against a person as "such a feeling of negation, which is taken on by a subject as a sign of its own failure, [and it] is usually experienced before another" (103). Because a person must work completely through dominant ideologies to acquire legitimacy through the eye of the beholder, shame truly is a public emotion as it could not exist without the social constructions of hegemony. Shame quickly manifests itself in the physical sphere as the sufferer internalizes their shame, experiencing an "intense and painful sensation bound with how [they] feel about [themselves]," and in this moment of pain the sufferer feels that they have transgressed, throwing the subject into a state of "being against itself" (103). In shame, an aspect of the self is questioned and "the badness of an action is transferred to [the Other]" (105). There is no distinction made between the action and the actor in shame. Therein lies shames most poignant

asset to hegemony: the 'It' objectifies itself, limiting its possibility to transcend the boundaries of 'It-dom' and inhabit the Thou.

Because the sphere of I-Thou is lived through unmediated relatability, shame must inevitably be lived through the sphere of I-It. Buber describes the I-It as "the basic word of separation," and as such there is no concept of relation between the 'I' and the 'It' outside of the end that the Other can help the subject achieve. The reality is that shame can only occur through an unequal and unfavorable comparison of qualities (Buber 75). Brought about through identified or perceived transgressions, shame also offers a sanction: in and of itself, shame is "the affective cost of not following the scripts of normative existence" (Ahmed 107). Shame weighs heavily upon the sufferer, taxing the subject's peace of mind. More alarmingly, shame subdues the subject to the world of I-It, a world in which the It begins to lose the ability to actualize as an I (Buber 96). Without actualization the It is forced to remain in a state of total subjugation to cyclical identifications of failure through shame. Experiences of shame are set-up to work perfectly as distractors, creating an environment in which the victimized blame themselves for a cycle of failure, even though the cycle is organized in such a way that failure is inevitable.

While fear is overt, the redirection of attention when attempting to eradicate one's feeling of shame is subliminal because shame works to craft a subject that is an easier target to manipulate. Further, a fear-stricken person may fear for their life, but a shame-filled person will question the validity of their life. Subsequently, the potent effect of shaming on the poverty-stricken is overwhelming in its ability to persuade the shamed to act against their best interest, further digging their heels into their location of shame. The shameful cycle that traps the social transgressor acts as a distraction from the striking issue of water abuse. Shame normalizes situations such as the following, as described by Chellaney: "Almost four-fifths of all countries

actually recognize the right to water. Yet, despite many countries defining national access targets, about 1.5 billion people in the world still lack ready access to potable water, and 2.4 billion people have no water-sanitation services. Those denied basic water supplies are forced to lead qualitatively diminished lives, with little prospect of pulling themselves out of poverty" (17). Through shame it becomes the fault of the poverty-stricken that causes their suffering, when in reality it is a failure of the greater global community. The diminished quality of a life without water strikes the subject twice with shame: the shame following their inability to pay for the services, and the shame following their inability to regularly engage in the socially accepted acts that require water. Twice, then, the subject has been named invalid. And in their shame, they are silenced.

More than institutions of fear and shame, hegemonies are also constructed of promises of hope. Embedded in the hierarchal structure of hegemony are proclaimed opportunities for improvement. These opportunities are often simply symbolic, as most members of the lower socioeconomic class are still regulated to the same social space they are ensured freedom from. Despite the historically symbolic nature of these promises of relief, the belief that significant progress could still be made is a result of cruel optimism. Such scenarios highlight the inconspicuous nature of cruel optimism. Berlant characterizes the optimistic as "[leaning] towards promises contained within the present moment of the encounter with their object," while providing clarification that while "all attachments are optimistic … that does not mean that they all feel optimistic" (Berlant 93). In their resilience, the optimistic ignore patterns and logic to continue striving towards a way out of their shamed existence. Cruel optimism relies on the fear and shame attached to the situation of the optimistic as motivation for their continuous distraction with escaping their plight through conformity. In a striking example of the pure

power of cruel optimism in maintaining individual and social order, Berlant recalls the story of

Dorothy Gael in Geoff Ryman's *Was*. Ryman depicts Dorothy as an elementary school student

who has been abandoned by her parents, bullied by the kids at her school and abused by her

guardians, Uncle Henry and Auntie Em (Berlant 113). In addition to being poorly fed, Dorothy is

raped by her uncle, and her dog is murdered by her Aunt and Uncle (113). To survive, Dorothy

adopts an optimistic attitude, finding means of escape through "dreams, fantasies, private plays,

psychotic projections, aggressive silence…and bully[ing]" (113). Using defense mechanisms to

live inside of her denial allows Dorothy to maintain her sanity, but one moment with her

defenses down is enough to break her. After the brief recess in optimism "Dorothy goes crazy …

to protect her last iota of optimism she goes crazy" (115). Without her hope, Dorothy's unbridled

encounter with her lived fear and shame are so severe "that one moment of relief from herself

produces a permanent crack in the available genres of her survival" (115). Dorothy's breakdown

is a striking example of cruel optimism's force as a tool of individual and social maintenance.

This consequence of the disruption of optimism truly highlights the reliance on cruel optimism,

and the fear of danger and exposure that underscores both the dependence on hope and the

constant overlooking of disappointment.

  The Dorothy character exhibits one of the many ways that life of the 'It' is a life mired in

the cruelest of optimism. The site of optimism can be located in the struggle for the subject to

achieve personhood, a feat that simply cannot be completed through the restraints of 'Itdom'.

Characterized by encounter and relationship, the world of the 'Thou' differs vastly from the

experiential world of 'It' (Buber). In Itdom subjects perceive, feel, imagine, want, sense, and

think, but they are not complete because the life of a human being is found in personhood (Buber

54). Personhood is itself only found "by entering into relations with other persons" (112). And

though the state of relation can never naturally be sustained, the 'It' can "enter into the event of relation" (84). Without the recognition from the other as valid, the 'It' has no ability to transcend into Thoudom – into personhood. This is where the optimist relies on the promises of institutional advancement. It is where the constant fear and shame, instilled within the society and the individual, work to simultaneously constrict the subject's perception of self, while increasing the unwavering will to be more. This is cruel optimism. In fact, this is the cruelest of optimism because the ascension to personhood cannot be completed without the recognition of the Other. Only an Other that has been granted the freedom to move as an 'I' will ascent to personhood. Buber declares the measurement of personhood as the following: "how much a person a man is depends on how strong the I of the basic word I-Thou is in the human duality of his I" (Buber 115).

   With so many lives left in the unforgiving mode of 'It', the consequences that these lives face often go unquestioned. In such an abysmal system, rights are not only withheld, but such mistreatment is accepted by the optimists as a temporary plight to be overcome. In such a state advantages are given to the economically sound, while opportunities are taken from the poor and optimistic. Such unfair advantages are highlighted in the faulty distribution of water. Water is such a necessary element that it should indubitably be made accessible to those that would otherwise be forced to go without. In an interview with Carl Rogers, Martin Buber offered the following: "I think no human being can give more than this. Making life possible for the other, if only for a moment" (Kirschenbaum 56). The fulfillment of promises regarding water rights is how life, assured with the promises of personhood, is made possible. Unfortunately, "the linkages between resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and conflict often spur the vicious cycle that chains the poor to interminable penury" (Chellaney 164). The cycle continues

manifesting itself in instances of public and privatized water governance gone wrong, irresponsible use of polluted waters, and corporate theft.

Seemingly counter-intuitive modes of analysis for an issue as tangible as water rights, the abstract principles of fear, shame, optimism and relation work to anchor the multifaceted issue. While it might normally be easy to distance oneself from an issue that does has offers no personal connection at surface level, the introduction of shared ground challenges the reliance on distance. Fear and shame are not brand new concepts, but they are not often seen as tools of power. But that is exactly what they are. For some, there is nothing that strikes more fear than the inability to cook a meal for one's children – a task made nearly impossible without clean water. For others, there is nothing more shameful than a look of disgust spurred by an unkempt appearance due to the inability to shower or bathe. In each of these cases, cruel optimism digs a tunnel of hope. For the impoverished, these tunnels of hope are bombarded with the dangers of abusive water privatization, the chemical and physical consequences of water pollution, and the absence of resources due to theft. While affect and emotion work to close the distance between those that suffer from the denial of water rights and those that watch in silence, Buber's 'Thou' and 'It' framework bridges the gap in the equation of the Other's experience with our own. At the very least, this paradigm allows no room for the denial of the societal stripping of the intrinsic value of the impoverished.

III. The Value of Life as Determined by the Movement of Water

The nature of water as a life-sustaining resource cannot be questioned, but there remains a significant population that maintains that water is a privilege. Though water abuses are still rampant, the body cannot survive more than a few days without the life-giving liquid. These facts are inalienable: to condemn a person's water supply is to condemn a person's life. Concern

lingers when those in power, those controlling the resources – by constructing the hegemon – deny the validity of water as a human right.

One such case of a power company restricting the resources of the public can be seen with Nestlé. Nestlé is the largest food company in the world in terms of revenues, and as such it is one of the water giants. Servicing billions globally, Nestlé collects, processes, packages, and distributes their own bottled water. A superpower in the water industry, Nestlé has a very powerful voice in the global water conversation. Former CEO of Nestlé and current Chairman, Peter Brabeck, has utilized this voice to decry the view of water as a human right. In a 2013 video interview, Brabeck made the following statement: "Water is of course the most important raw material we have today in the world. It's a question of whether we should privatize the normal water supply for the population, and there are two different opinions on the matter. The one opinion, which I think is extreme, is represented by the NGOs, who bang on about declaring water a public right. That means as a human being you should have a right to water. That's an extreme solution. And the other view says water is a foodstuff like any other and like any other foodstuff it should have a market. Personally I think it's better to give foodstuff a market value" (Martino). Brabeck's classification of the right to water as "extreme" lies in direct opposition to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations.

On December 10, 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The commission of the UDHR stemmed from the atrocities witnessed in the Second World War. Work on the document began in 1946, and spanned an impressive two years during which authors representing "a range of ideologies, political systems and religious and cultural backgrounds, as well as different stages of economic development" united to craft a document simultaneously diverse and inclusive in scope

(UNRIC). The authors "sought to ensure that the draft text would reflect these different cultural traditions and incorporate common values inherent in the world's principal legal systems and religious and philosophical traditions. The unified hope of the committee was to create a document that might build a more just world (UNRIC).

Comprised of thirty Articles, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights addresses significant rights within five realms: political, civil, social, economic, and cultural. Articles 3-21 were constructed in the name of political and civil rights, while Articles 22-27 were representative of economic, social, and cultural rights (Britannica). From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights grew the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (each covenant corresponding to their related Articles). The three documents combine with two other codes to form the International Bill of Rights. Still, water as an individual right was not explicitly outlined in any of these documents, but was instead assumed as "a tool to guarantee other rights" (UNRIC). Without proper access to water, many of the rights considered self-evident would not have been at all possible. The language of 'tool' immediately characterizes the resource as a privilege instead of a right. Just as a stapler-remover is, though beneficial, not a necessary tool when attempting to remove staples, water was construed as a beneficial but unnecessary component of the process towards securing and supplying rights.

The United Nations has acknowledged that "clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of all human rights," thereby violating water rights is tantamount not only to violating an array of human rights, but indeed to violating an individual's status as human (UN 64/292). Recognizing the potential consequences of the oversight of water access as an explicit right, the United Nations (UN) officially declared the definitive nature of water and

sanitation (made possible through water) as a human right. The UN's declaration came in 2010 through Resolution 64/292, "The human right to water and sanitation," but this resolution was not the first public statement regarding the importance of water (UNRIC). Since 1977 a multitude of UN conferences, conventions, and summits have publicly highlighted water access and its intrinsic connection with the solution of human rights crises. The rights in question vary widely in topic, and the table below displays the quality and quantity of water related issues discussed within United Nations Parameters:

Issue	# Times Water is Mentioned		Issue	# Times Water is Mentioned
Women/Gender	1		Environment	1
Children	1		Human Rights (Gen.)	11
Sustainability	4		Disabilities	1

Figure 7: Compiled from Data Taken Between 1977-2011 (UNRIC)

Drawing upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, Resolution 64/292 commits three critical actions. Upon recognizing "the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights," the Resolution calls for states and international organizations to provide the resources with which "safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation" might be ascertained (UN 64/292). The Resolution ends with an invitation for the Human Rights Council to continue their research and reports on the subject.

Resolution 64/292's recognition of water as not just a human right, but as one of the most significant rights, is vital to my argument that water distribution mirrors the perception of personhood. If one of the most significant rights is not vehemently supplied to a being, then one might wonder if that life was deemed inessential and ungrievable. The United Nations acts as an ultimate international authority, comprised of nearly every nation in the world, UN membership is currently held by 197 countries (UN, A Brief History). The UN does not create laws, because it does not serve as a global government, but each member must agree to aid in the UN's four purposes: "1) to maintain international peace and security, 2) to develop friendly relations among nations, 3) to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights, 4) and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations" (UN, A Brief History). Therefore, states are not obligated to abide by any specific UN policies; instead, individual nations make the choice to act in their own country's best interests in regards to security and rights. Furthermore, each state receives a vote for what they believe is the best mode of operation in matters of security, economics, and human rights. The passing of Resolution 64/292 was favored by 122 nations and opposed by none. Twenty-nine nations were absent and forty-one abstained. Among the count of abstaining was the United States of America. Interestingly, one of the world's greatest political powers kept quiet when voting for such a widely supported bill. There could be a parallel between the U.S.'s strong capitalist roots and the lack of support for a bill that could cause financial setbacks for the water system. Ultimately the concept of water as a human right, was championed internationally (UN 64/291). Tragically, in practice dedication to the realization of human rights is not similarly displayed.

When reflecting upon his participation in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Hernán Santa Cruz, Chilean lawyer, diplomat and founder of the Economic Commission

for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), wrote the following: "I perceived clearly that I was participating in a truly significant historic event in which a consensus had been reached as to the supreme value of the human person, a value that did not originate in the decision of a worldly power, but rather in the fact of existing—which gave rise to the inalienable right to live free from want and oppression" (UN, History of the Document). As poetic as Santa Cruz's sentiments are, they also shed light on today's political environment. In the recognition of human rights, human life is given value. But in the protection of certain people's rights over others, each life is given a particular, even relative value, and there emerges a distinction between person and Other, 'Thou' or 'It'. Though a vast majority favor access to safe and clean water and sanitation as a human right, the wide-scale global mistreatment of those that simply cannot afford to pay for such a commodity tells another story. The forces through which Othering – and thereby dehumanization – take place are most notably destitution constructed by water privatization, wide-spread water pollution, and corporate water theft. When these three methods of exploitation are examined through case studies, we find that their occurrence, regardless of disparities in global governing styles, clearly demonstrates that water-based oppression is a consistent threat to the recognized personhood, and thereby lives, of the impoverished

This study considers four different continents: South America, North American, Africa, and Asia. The collective violations of water rights across these continents due to water privatization, pollution, and corporate theft, demonstrates the global perception of the value (or lack thereof) of certain lives. That the perceived value of the other contributes to their mistreatment is in direct concurrence with the I-Thou, I-It paradigm. The value that a subject allocates to another directly influences their treatment of the Other. Within the realm of encounter, a Thou would never be placed in a position that is unequal to the subject. However, in

the realm of It an Other is located in a place of subordination to the subject. This directly translates to the other's needs, as they are considered inferior to the needs of the subject. Actively understanding and purposefully attempting to apply Buber's modes of relation to relationships with those outside of oneself. Otherwise, Butler's concept of ungrievabilty is vividly displayed as objectification of the Other becomes perpetual. The connection to Butler's work is key, providing both a means by which, and an incentive, to take responsibility for the wellbeing of the Other. The mean is the establishment of a strong community. The divide in community and commodity is visible in each of the case studies. Only the emergence of community provides solutions to the abuses faced by the underprivileged. An incentive for mobilizing community is quite simple: to ensure the quality of the life of the subject. In other words, the life of the Other directly affects mine. In cohabitating my life is bound to the other and their life is bound to me.

The Cochabamba water riots and the Detroit water scandal are prime examples of the implications, and potential consequences, of water privatization. The two cases offer multiple opportunities for comparison: Cochabamba is a rural area in a third world country that was essentially forced into privatizing its services and Detroit is a poverty-stricken metropolis area in a developed country that sought to fix issues within the public services utilizing the same services. Cochabamba is a Bolivian town situated in the Andes Mountains. Bolivia is not only the poorest South American country, it is the second poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, with a whopping 70% of Bolivians living below the poverty line (Murdock). Unable to support itself, and receiving no international support, Bolivia was forced to sell its public assets to private companies (Murdock). To foreign investors, Bolivia sold its railroads, airline, and mining and electric company. These sales helped with Bolivia's inflation problem, but they also resulted

in "severe recession and massive unemployment" (Murdock). Still in desperate need of

assistance – and still refused by the World Bank – Bolivia was forced to auction its water system

to a division of Bechtel, an American construction firm (Murdock). Almost immediately, Bechtel

raised prices to unreasonable rates. At the time, Cochabamba's minimum wage totaled to less

than $65 a month, yet many were met with water bills of $20 or more, a 35 to 50 percent increase

of previous rates ("Oscar Olivera"; Strother). Unable to afford the steep increase in water prices,

peaceful protest broke out in January, 2000 (Sadiq). In February of 2000 riot police used tear gas

against demonstrators, injuring roughly 175 people and blinding 2 others, eventually

transitioning the riots from peaceful to violent (Sadiq). Ending in April with the removal of

Bechtel, the riots lasted a little longer than three months, but the lessons imparted by the events

were short-lived. Instead, 14 years later Detroit, Michigan (U.S.) suffered a similar problem.

Situated in the Midwest region of the United States, Detroit, Michigan has been named

by Forbes, Times, and CBS News as the poorest city in America (Badenhausen; Kennedy). In

2014 Detroit made history when it became "the largest U.S. city to ever declare bankruptcy"

(Kennedy). As of 2015, a whopping 48% of Detroit residents bring home less than $25,000 a

year, placing them below the poverty line (Kennedy). Unlike Bolivia, Detroit's infamous poverty

rates resulted in the shutting off of public water access to thousands of delinquent customers

(Kennedy). Between March 2014 and August 2014, nearly 20,000 Detroit citizens were victims

of intentional water service interruptions (Lambertz). This shut-offs was a result of the massive

amount of bad debt that Detroit's Water and Sewage Department had amassed – more than $120

million (Guillen). The strategy of the Department was to "order shut-offs for customers who

owed at least $150 or had fallen at least two months behind on their bills" (Guillen). Detroit

utilized a uniform user class pricing system, which meant that the "rate differences were made

between categories (commercial or residential)," but not individuals users (Lambertz). This led

to non-proportionate rates between individual consumer water consumption, and incomes,

meaning low income families were expected to pay high rates for water that they may not have

used and could not afford. Representatives of the United Nations took a tour of the city in an

effort to study the city's water policies, especially as it concerned delinquent customers. The

Special Rappateour on the human right to water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, had

this to say: "It is contrary to human rights to disconnect water from people who simply do not

have the means to pay their bills…"I heard testimonies from poor, African American residents of

Detroit who were forced to make impossible choices — to pay the water bill or to pay their rent.

(Guillen)". The reality of this statement is unreal on its own, in light of the failure of the City of

Detroit to completely resolve the affront to its citizens' rights makes de Albuquerque's findings

horrifying. Shut-offs continued even after statements were made by the United Nations (Guillen).

With the initial rounds of shut-offs and backlash occurring in 2015, Detroit was still set to host

another round of shut-offs in the spring of 2015. As one Michigan city suffered from city-wide

shut-offs, another was suffering from high levels of lead pollution. Flint, Michigan and some

African countries exemplify the dangers of polluted water sources. Just as with Cochabamba and

Detroit, Flint being a city in a developed country and the Baby Milk Scandal taking place in a

developing nation offer the opportunity to highlight differences while bringing out the strikingly

similar plights that the underprivileged face internationally. Suffering becomes universal instead

of individual.

Mass water pollution is a fairly recent development. Many of the most prevalent water

pollutants can actually be directly traced back to the nineteenth-century Industrial Revolution

and the consequent population boom (Woodford; Hogan). The Industrial Revolution birthed the

capitalist machine that the world, at large, has become today. Within such a system, increasing financial gain is one of the highest principles an individual or organization can achieve. A consequence of these values is that a small group of companies has been allowed near complete domination of the world market. One of the highest grossing of these companies is Nestlé. Owning at least 90 different brands, Nestlé is also one of the most boycotted companies. Nestlé's water production is questioned and widely protested by activist groups worldwide. The infamous infant formula debacle was perhaps one of the most high-profile cases of the 1970s and 80s, and it was also the first incident to incite an international boycott against the company (Smith).

Creating a standard for regulating infant related product advertisement and accessibility, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) developed the Code of Marketing for Infant Formula. Drafted in 1981, the Code provides "that there should be absolutely no promotion of breastmilk substitutes, bottles and treats to the general public; that neither health facilities, nor health professionals, should have a role in promoting breastmilk substitutes; and that free sample should not be provided to pregnant women, new mothers, or families" (UNICEF). The crucial nature of this code increases in the case of developing countries, where mothers do not necessarily have readily available access to clean water, a must when mixing infant formula. The outrage over Nestlé's promotion of their infant formula in the 1970s was most probably a direct cause of the drafting of the Code. In 1974 the booklet "The Baby Killer" was published by a London organization known as War on Want (Muller). The report charged Nestlé with "promoting their products in communities which cannot use them properly; of using advertising, sales girls dressed up in nurses' uniforms, giving away samples and free gift gimmicks that persuaded mothers to give up breast feeding" (Muller 4). Nestlé did send out company "nurses" to "make

home visits and to attend clinics to promote sales further" (Muller 4). Nestlé profited immensely from these invasive marketing ploys, raking in one billion dollars from developing countries alone by 1980 (Mokhiber). One billion dollars, on a product that most of these women did not actually need, given to a corporation that was completely aware of the dismal water resources that most inhabitants of developing countries have access to. The question of resources becomes important when the formula mix requires "clean water, good sanitation, adequate family income, and a literate parent to follow printed instructions" (Mokhiber).

Most of the affected women were advised to use a product that they simply could not sustain. Once the illusion of a need was established, Nestlé solidified the consumer's dependence with free samples. If a mother were to use the sample, by the time the sample had been used, the mother's milk had typically dried up, or the baby would not take to drawing milk from her breast – leaving the milk to dry up (Solomon). They were advised to prepare formula for their children based off of instructions that many of them simply could not read. It should have been no surprise to Nestlé that their clientele would suffer from the continued use of their product – even a literate parent might be forced to mix the formula with contaminated water –as the only available sources were often polluted. Through "convincing consumers the products were indispensable," the corporation created the perception of a need where none actually existed (Kransy). Additionally, many women, under financial burden, would dilute the formula to stretch their use of it (Mokhiber). One mother diluted a formula that should have lasted under three days for one child so much that she was able to feed two children for two weeks (Solomon). Such types of misuse of the formula powder was rampant and resulted not only in infant malnutrition, but in contamination, as the water sources accessible to the mothers were often vastly polluted. Cruel optimism promoted mothers to trust the marketing that came their way. In optimism there

was faith in the illusion of the safety of formula for the infant. Believing that they were actually being helped, mothers contributed in the inadequate nourishment, or lack thereof, of their children. As a direct result of Nestlé's intentional and irresponsible marketing to people without the facilities to make proper use of their product millions of infant lives were lost. Yet the company continued its intrusive and misguided marketing. Though the Nestlé Milk Scandal had less of a visible impact in developed nations, dishonest marketing is still prevalent practice. Such dishonest marketing ploys were revealed in Flint, Michigan in the summer of 2015.

Problems of pollution are not solely caused by issues in the private sector. At times, public governments have also been known to fail their constituents. Governments are also subject to codes and tests to ensure product quality is maintained and the Flint government was no exception. The Flint Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance implemented a testing structure suitable for a city with a population of less than 50,000 when Flint supports a population of almost 100,000. With this testing cycle in place, water from the Flint River was allowed to pass through improper channels for 17 months (Oosting). For 17 months this water was untampered. In a partnership with the City of Detroit, the City of Flint received finished water that had been treated with a chemical (orthophosphate) responsible for controlling copper and lead levels in the drinking water; once Flint ended its partnership with Detroit, the City failed to continue the treatment of their water, creating an environment in which toxic pollutants grew rampant (Hulett). This failure to maintain the water treatment violated the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead and Copper Rule, which mandates all large water systems "install and maintain corrosion control treatment for lead and copper" because lead levels are prone to increasing without corrosion control treatment (Hulett).

Such negligence put the citizens of Flint in tremendous danger, as even light exposure to lead and copper is linked to complications ranging from stomach distress to brain damage (EPA). The EPA lists the maximum recommended level of lead as 15 parts per billion (ppb), but a Flint Water Study found 10% of the city's water has values of lead upwards of 25ppb (). Children in areas with the highest concentration of water lead levels suffered from lead levels of 6.3% in their blood (where before their levels were at 2.5%) compared to children directly outside of the city that ranked blood levels of 1% (where before their levels were at .6%) (Hulett). The tests compared the blood lead test results from 2013 with levels in 2015, over a year after Flint ceased ties with Detroit as its water source. With their Detroit water contract ending prematurely as a result of the realization of a plan to tap Lake Huron for water, Flint City officials opted to use the Flint River as their new water source; this decision, paired with their violation of the Lead and Copper Rule, was devastating to their population. Because the Flint River is "highly corrosive to iron and lead," pipe materials heavily used throughout Flint, there was always a chance that water from the Flint River would not be safe for consumption (Davis, Matthew et al.).

In fact, the corrosive reaction between the water of the Flint River and Flint pipes constructed a system five times more likely to fail than that of Detroit (V Davis, Matthew et al). Repairs would have cost Flint "tens of millions of dollars more in pipe repair costs in the coming years compared to what they would have paid if they had stayed on Detroit water," so to cut down on costs the city opted to distribute water from the River through their incompatible pipes (Davis, Matthew et al). Following that informed decision, Flint officials covered up the polluted water for over a year until citizen complaints of yellow and brown water were too prominent to ignore. By that time, thousands had been poisoned.

Attempting to alleviate a portion of the responsibility attached to their names after the incident, Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality insisted that the long-term pollution incident was attributable to confusion due to the staff's inexperience with overseeing "a water source switch on a system as large as Flint's" (Wisely and Erb). Confusion may have been a viable cause of pollution for the first couple of months but after "complaints from residents and reports that the water had high lead level, local and state officials denied there was a problem," once complaints were disregarded, and unsafe conditions were denied, confusion became negligence (Delaney).

In a "City of Flint Water System Questions & Answers" FAQ, officials responded to a question regarding the nature of the decision to shift to supplying city water needs from the Flint River, both question and answer may be found below:

> "Q: Was it known prior to the switch that there would be problem managing total coliform and fecal coliform bacteria levels in the water?
>
> A: It was understood that the Flint River would be subject to temperature variations, rain events, and have higher organic carbon than Lake Huron water and would be more difficult to treat. These facts were balanced against a licensed staff, LAN engineering's extensive experience in this field, advanced equipment that Flint has for treatment, and support from the [Department of Environmental Quality]" (Department of Public Works)

With all of the licensed staff, extensive experience, and advanced equipment it is implausible that the Flint Office of Drinking Water Staff – and thereby the Department of Environmental

Quality – simply made a mistake for 17 months. Instead it is probable that the Flint government knowingly left their citizens "exposed to dangerously high levels of lead contamination" (Delaney). Such criminal irresponsibility can only be achieved when respect for the personhood of the other does not exist. And when the lives of children are put so intentionally at risk, bold statements are made concerning the value of their lives.

Water pollution and water theft seem to be intuitively different from each other, but at their root they both eliminate the vitality of a population's water source. In pollution a water source is contaminated, often to the point of becoming unsalvageable. When contaminated water can be treated the process is often fairly expensive. Theft on the other hand normally involves the unauthorized taking of one population's resources to benefit another party. Often times the stolen water is irrecoverable. Water pollution and corporate water theft are two ends of the same spectrum of abuse., The water deprivation suffered by Indians, at the hands of Coca-Cola, and Californians, at the hands of Nestlé, will both be examined here. Nearly ten thousand miles apart, India and California are both victims of corporate water theft. Coca-Cola's theft of India's water and Nestlé's theft of California's water both exhibit blatant disregard for the value of human life in the pursuit of profit. Currently, many parts of India do not welcome Coca-Cola with open arms. The corporation continues to attempt to set up bottling plants, but in many cases their efforts are rejected due to memories of Coke's past unauthorized water withdrawals. Such an incident occurred within the Palakkad District of Kerala, a state in south west India, in the small village of Plachimada. The majority of Plachimada's villagers are engaged in agricultural labor, relying on water to sustain their livelihood (Mathews). In 1998 permission was given for Coke to set up a 35-acre bottling plant within the village of Plachimada. This agreement granted the company rights to draw roughly 510,000 liters of water each day from Plachimada's water

sources. Instead, Coke extracted about 2 million liters of water each day (Mathews; Right to Water). Within a span of six months, the village's water levels had not only drastically decreased, with some areas actually running completely dry, but the water that was left was greatly polluted (Cockburn). In an effort to rid itself of the massive waste created in the production of their beverages, Coke reintroduced the used water that they stole back into the Plachimadian ecosystem, resulting in "milky white and…brackish" water" (Mathews). More than that, the company dumped trucks of the toxic sludge into the fields and banks of the village, claiming that the waste would nourish the crops, hailing it as "free fertilizer" (Cockburn). Instead, the 'fertilizer' killed the crops it was supposed to nourish, the stench sickened the elderly and the young, and those who came in direct contact with the waste contracted myriad rashes and infections (Cockburn).

After suffering Coca-Cola's violations for two years the people of Plachimada's began protesting the water shortages and pollution. The locals began protesting the danger their lives had been put in, marching against Coca-Cola and picketing the factory (Right to Water). Representing Plachimada as the President of the Kerala State Janata Dal Party, M.P. Veerendrakumar spoke to the Indian Parliament about the village's troubles with Coke, stating: "The cruel fact is that water from our underground sources is pumped out free and sold to our people to make millions every day, at the same time destroying our environment and damaging the health of our people. For us rivers, dams and water sources are the property of the nation and her people" (Cockburn). Coca-Cola did not take these claims lightly, and when the village declined to renew their contract with Coca-Cola, the two entered into a suit. Coca-Cola denied the allegations that they behaved in a criminally offensive manner, but tests found that "there were high levels of calcium and magnesium in the water" which could only have been "caused

by excessive extraction of water" (Mathews). Ultimately, in an effort to deal with the atrocities committed against them by Coke, the villagers of Plachimada revoked the license given to the company, but there was no pressure against the company to offer any form of restitution (Cockburn). Meanwhile, the well water in Plachimada was declared unfit for human consumption because their clean water had been stolen and replaced by the company's heavily contaminated waste water (Cockburn).California, however, has not been so fortunate in its battle with Nestlé.

California has suffered from an extended drought since 2011. Though the recent drought was not California's first or driest, it has been the state's most precarious, as the population has increased by almost 15 million since 1977, while the available acre per foot of water has decreased from .345 to .331. With its 154 reservoirs, California currently holds 12.7 million acre feet of water, which is 58% of the national average (Mercer). California has the highest state population in the U.S. and its reservoirs are continuously being depleted as the state has not received a significant amount of rainfall in years (Mercer). In April of 2015, California Governor Jerry Brown mandated a 25% reduction of the state's water usage (Bernstein). Tasks as seemingly small as "allowing landscape water to spill into streets, and hosing off sidewalks and driveways" were deemed as criminal acts of water waste in 2014, with offenders being subject to $500-a-day fines (Bernstein). Nestlé, on the other hand, pays an annual rate of $500 for the rights to draw about 705 million gallons of natural spring water from the drought-stricken state of California (Peck). Amidst California's attempts to protect and preserve its water supply, Nestlé has continued to drain roughly 1.9 million gallons of water each day – taking an average of 705 million gallons of water each year (Carricarte). To gain the rights to drain such exorbitant amounts of water Nestlé pays "less than the average Californian's annual water bill" (Carricarte).

When asked if his company would stop bottling Californian water, Nestlé CEO Tim Brown defended the continued use of California as a source for the company's spring water. Brown stated that the amount of water that Nestlé draws is "roughly equal to the annual average watering needs of two California golf courses" (Peck). Going further in a radio interview, Brown made the following statement: "If I stop bottling water tomorrow, people would buy a different brand of bottled water. We see every day. In fact, if I could increase [bottling], I would" (Peck). The defense of the 705 million gallons that are drawn annually does not take into account the dire state of California's drought. With an executive order from California Governor, Jerry Brown, to his citizens mandating a 25% decrease in water use, golf courses watering levels will surely decrease, yet Nestlé will still be drawing water. Undoubtedly, Nestlé will be looking for ways to continue to ravage the fragile Californian ecosystem. Unfortunately, Nestlé's theft is committed more subtly, as Brown affirms that the company "adheres to all local, state, and federal regulations regarding [their] operations, all of which are in good standing."

Such inconsideration for the struggle and restrictions suffered by the average Californian, as well as the implications of this shortage on a state and national level, was not only immoral, but illegal. Assisted by the negligence of the United States Forest Service, Nestlé was drawing water from California using a permit that expired over 27 years ago, in 1988. Rationalizing their theft by depicting the oversight of Forest Services as a free pass, there seems to be no end to the pilfering of millions of gallons of water from California in their greatest times of need. Nestlé receive no punishment for their violation, further speaking to the biased treatment of self-interested corporate action.

In his work *Managing Water as an Economic Resource*, James Winpenny builds his argument on the principle that "water is becoming one of the largest, and certainly the most

universal, of problems facing mankind as the earth moves into the twenty-first century" (1). Winpenny's argument rang true in the early 1990s, but it is now the latter half of the 2010s and his prediction has become a hard fact – there is a global water crisis. The strain of supplying citizens with adequate amounts of quality water becomes more and more difficult as populations continue to grow (1). Burdened by the challenge of supplying this resource, many authorities have turned towards the private industry for relief. Though the privatization of water services may be the only option for some governments, the decision to switch systems is one that affects every member of a society. Robert Gottilieb makes the following statement in *A Life of Its Own: The Politics of Power and Water*:

> Water policy touches our lives in an enormous number of ways. It affects the water we drink and the food we eat. It is central to irrigation and urban growth. It addresses water quality and toxicity associated with increasing kinds of industrial hazards. It is linked to our mighty river systems, deep-water lakes, and shallow streams. It establishes in legal, political, and economic terms what to some is sacred but to others is nothing more than a commodity to buy or sell, transfer or lease. Control over water has ultimately become tantamount to controlling the destiny of the land and the people who settle the land. (xi)

Gottilieb's observation speaks volumes on two very distinct levels: water as a human right and water as a tool of power. This is the very same fine balance that has left millions without adequate water supply as they live ungrievable lives because they are denied a fundamental life resource. Water is both a universal in its role as an essential nutrient for the human body, and a

universal channel of waste removal. Water's universality is ultimately manifested in its presence in nature, in our rivers, our streams, our lakes, our oceans, our forests whose lifeblood is water, our fields whose lush green color directly correlates to their intake of water, our Earth whose composition is almost 71% water. 97.5% of the world's water is seawater, but humans can only consume freshwater. The high costs of the desalination process, both in terms of finance and pollution, eliminate seawater as a viable source of water for the needs of the population (Chellaney 60). This leaves only about 2.5% of the water as potentially drinkable, but the majority of that is trapped in glaciers and icecaps (60). Ultimately, less than 1% of Earth's drinkable water is accessible to the human population (60). In these facts lie the sheer power that comes with the control of a water system; making the steady transition from public water control to privatized water control is troubling at the very least.

Privatization in the water sector involves transferring some or all of the assets or operations of public water systems into private hands. This transfer could involve specific responsibilities, or it could result in complete ownership of operation responsibilities of the water system (Gleick et al. 6). Privatization is not a new concept; services that are now generally considered public in the United States were largely provided by private organizations during the nineteenth century. The transition from private to public occurred because "companies were failing to provide [equal] access to all citizens" (Gleick 23). Preferring to minimize their personal investments, companies would "lay their distributing pipes through the wealthier sections of the city and hold back from carrying water into the poorer districts" (Gleick 23.). They would also choose water sources "that would minimize the initial investment outlay" ignoring the increased possibilities of contamination (Gleick).

It would be false to claim that there are no possible benefits to water privatization, but history does suggest that any proposed benefit of privatization is matched by an equivalent drawback. The drawbacks that we will examine are: general water supply, system efficiency, constituency health, local government resources. First, a proposed benefit of water privatization is its propensity to improve the quality of the general water supply (Lombardo). Conceptually, private companies would not benefit from producing anything less than quality water because that is what they are being paid to produce. As optimistic as this theory is, the reality is that private water companies actually fight to ensure that water quality regulations do not increase (Public Citizen). With a heightened interest in remaining cost-effective instead of quality-concerned, the National Association of Water Companies (NAWC) represents the United States' private water industry, as it "intensively and perennially lobbies Congress and the Environmental Protection Agency to refrain from adopting higher water quality standards" (Public Citizen). Even unchanging standards of water quality are not necessarily enough to keep prices from rising. Such was the case with Cochabamba. While the people of Cochabamba rioted, most citizens are paralyzed by the shame that comes with not having access to water. Fear of backlash and embarrassment prohibited citizens of Detroit from openly voicing their concerns. Fear of further alienation empowered shame to act as a silencing tool.

The concept of private water services providing much more efficient service to their customers hinges upon the previously iterated concept that a company would only profit from adequate service. Such a system should effectively limit the chance of the water being contaminated within the system channels (Lombardo). However, such efficiency is rarely the case. As is true with the myth of increased water quality, the water companies often do not put consumer needs first, making efficient systems a rarity. Private companies' level of

accountability to their shareholders instead of the public often results in poor customer service. Because private companies are normally able to make deals that allot them exclusive access to distribution for between 25 to 30 months, they essentially enter into a monopoly. With such power, companies are "under little pressure to respond to consumer concerns," which is disconcerting considering the necessity of water to the lives of the consumers (Public Citizen).

An additional proposed benefit of privatized water is its potential to reduce mortality rate. This concept is discussed in terms of accessibility and quality, insofar as "people have more of a guarantee that their water will be clean or have a monetary source of damages if they are given dirty water" (Lombardo) The implication here is that there is a greater risk of public water services providing contaminated water because government services are less accountable due to their positions of authority. In reality, government services are often under much stricter federal regulations than private sources, resulting in a multitude of ways in which privatized water actually potentially increases mortality rates. Though issues with privatization are rampant in developed nations, the developing world especially suffers because there is even less regulation by a central government, and, with this, water privatization has resulted in decreased access to water for the impoverished. These countries are often suffering from such high levels of destitution that they are forced to take the outrageous offers of the private companies. Many times this means massive layoffs to "reduce costs and increase profits" (Public Citizen). Such a blow can be life altering and sometimes completely destructive, when a family relies on one check just to break even. Layoffs are also prone to affecting the water and service quality, leaving consumers at risk of digesting potentially deadly water. The most severe case in which privatization has cost lives is during water protests and riots, when armed officials gas or murder civilians in attempts to restore peace. This is a fact that the World Bank hesitated to realize when

suggesting privatization to Cochabamba, proving that even a conglomeration can work within the confines of cruel optimism. Berlant warned that a subject's willingness to embody the success of an ideal often creates a blind spot of sorts, trapping the subject in a cycle of abuse that they unwittingly participate in. The World Bank's optimism put the lives of the underprivileged at risk. Even after Bechtel showed clear signs of power abuse, the World Bank was adamant in their support of privatization. It is difficult to imagine that the World Bank would support such clear violations of human lives if those lives were privileged.

The fourth and final plausible benefit of water privatization is that it saves cities both time and money; even, in many cases, providing cities with profits from the initial deals (Lombardo). Though the burden may have shifted from government funding to private funding, the costs of projects are still carried by the public through taxes. Interest rates leap higher and higher under the privatized system as consumers are now subject to pay for "executives' salaries and dividends to shareholders," as well as "payments on company loans" in association with the projects the private company has taken on for the city (PublicCitizen). Privatization increases the average cost per citizen, while the voice of the citizen loses its power. The voice of the citizen is manifested in its political representatives, and without said representatives only the public's money is taken, not their opinions. Once a municipality has entered into an agreement with a private water company, it is difficult to reverse the agreement. There are institutions set in place that protect the rights of the private companies, and breach of contract could cost a city billions of dollars (PublicCitizen).

Though privatization may not be a viable option if the water rights of the impoverished are to be upheld, the public water systems are not necessarily always less problematic, given their negligent behavior towards the impoverished. The denial of water access in Detroit exposed

the vicious nature of the public system's treatment of the underprivileged. Touting interest in assisting the needs of the public, the private sector is rooted in securing financial gain for itself. Most often, the means through which financial gains are achieved are not congruent with the needs of the public; therefore, it should come as no surprise when the needs of the public are not met. The same cannot be said for the public sphere. In relation to crucial functions of government, Thomas Paine, author of *Common Sense*, stated the following: "Rights are not gifts from one man to another, nor from one class of men to another… It is impossible to discover any origin of rights otherwise than in the origin of man; it consequently follows that rights appertain to man in right of his existence, and must therefore be equal to every man" (Paine 134). In other words, human rights are inalienable and it is the role of the government to protect them equally. Equal protection did not happen in Detroit. What did happen was perhaps more atrocious than the offenses committed by the private water companies, as they did not violate the standards that they pledged themselves to uphold.

Of course, it is nothing new for a public water company to cut services to an individual who has defaulted on their loans. What is unusual is the way in which Detroit citizens were targeted in the cut-offs. Businesses owing thousands of dollars were allowed to continue operating while individuals owing upwards of $150 were unable to drink, cook, or bathe without securing outside sources of water. The elderly and the handicapped experienced service cuts, their personhood was forgotten. Their rights went unprotected. The divide in perceived personhood was all too obvious in the Detroit Scandal. The objectification of those unable to pay their bill was distinctive. Fear was used to Other the poor from the rest of the society by painting them as unproductive members of society, harming the status quo instead of contributing to it. The ease with which Detroit citizens were labeled ungrievable by the entity that was actually set

in place to protect them should serve as a warning against allowing companies solely interested in financial gain to privatize a life-sustaining industry.

Even with the difficulties that have arisen out of privatized water, the World Bank Group has promoted the option as a "key solution to the water crisis" (Lappé). Amidst their support the World Bank Group's internal data reveals "that a high percentage of its private water projects are in distress…with a [documented] 34 percent failure rate for all private water and sewerage contracts entered into between 2000 and 2010" (Lappé). These failure rates are significant compared to other privatized utility failure rates with transportation ranking the second highest with a 7 percent failure rate (Lappé). Throughout the World Bank Group's support of privatization, civil society groups and international advocacy groups have implored the World Bank Group to cease their support for private water. In a letter of address, Corporate Accountability International requested a complete termination of the "World Bank's direct investments into water corporations" (CAI). Because of the World Bank Group's responsibility in addressing the "staggering humanitarian crisis" that global water access has become, their support of privatized water is unsound (CAI). While the battle against privatization rages,

Water pollution is the contamination of natural water bodies by chemical, physical, or pathogenic microbial substances. Roughly 50 million lives are claimed each year by the illnesses propagated through water pollution. While water pollution can be a result of natural events (extensive rainfall, algae blooms, volcanic eruptions), the actual impact of natural causes on water quality is relatively insignificant (Hogan). Overpopulation and human interaction are two key stressors affecting the quality of water. This pollution can be grouped into two overarching categories: chemical and physical. Chemical water pollutants are essentially particles that have been released into natural water bodies – most often by human activity. This type of pollution

often manifests in the form of mercury, lead, acids originating from a variety of industrial sources, and fragments from sewage or water treatment plants (Hogan). In contrast, physical water pollutants arise from large particles and physical factors (such as temperature change). The most common physical pollutants are "excessive sediment loads, mostly arising from over-intensive land use and practices" and daily discarded trash (Hogan). Chemical pollutants are more often toxic than their physical counterparts, but physical pollutants do pose a multitude of threats. Physical pollutants can be linked with visual pollution, which might seem harmful in comparison to dangerous chemicals, but in large quantities – think landfills, dumps, etc. – these effects of physical pollution are magnified.

Water theft: the unauthorized, and thereby illegal, consumption of water. Such a broad definition, but the examples listed on municipal websites time and again do very little more than describe transgressions which citizens can commit against their service providers. A few of the typical examples given for this public theft of water are meter tampering and fire hydrant manipulation. Using a variety of mechanisms, citizens have been documented attempting to lower their water bills. Breaking into fire hydrants, citizens have attempted to gain a supply of water that did not require post-payment. When privatization and government budget cuts push monthly water prices upwards, people who could barely afford to make their payments even before price increases are given a choice: deprivation or theft? When the choice for survival is made, individuals are persecuted, receiving irregularly exorbitant fines (Irdell & Birmingham Water Works). Service providers argue that such punishments are befitting of the crime, given that "tampering with or bypassing water meters not only costs…thousands of dollars a year, but also imposes costs on each and every paying customer" (Boston and Water Sewage

Commission). It is worth noting, however, that when corporations such as Coca-Cola and Nestlé steal from desolate communities their actions often go unpunished.

The taking of another person's property without permission or legal right and without intending to return it is theft. Whether theft ranks as a misdemeanor or a felony largely depends on the type and value of the stolen property. In the cases involving highly valuable property, charges of 'grand theft' are prescribed. Such a felony charge could result in the offender penalized with large fines, restitution hours, and a jail sentence. In some instances, grand theft is linked to moral turpitude, which is a Western concept referring to conduct that gravely violates the moral sentiment or accepted moral standards of the community. It seems that perpetrators of grand theft receive heavy punishments when they are *not* multi-billion dollar companies. In the case of Coke, a direct violation of contract was committed, but punishment of their grand scale water theft was notably minor, if not altogether absent. Where citizens are typically seeking to save a couple of dollars on their bills, Coca-Cola devastated an entire community through the theft of its water.

If Nestlé's irresponsible actions are acceptable under government regulations, perhaps those regulations are not strict enough. Perhaps there is a tendency to overlook the damage caused by large corporations in favor of financial support. And the double standard between treatment of corporate and citizen theft, acts as a reminder of which lives are given value. Solidifying this point is the state's insistent proposal to fine a group of farmers a whopping $1.5 million for "allegedly stealing water during the state's devastating drought" ("Theft of 1.5 Million Proposed"). The Byron-Bethany Board District "serves 160 farming families and a suburban planned community of 12,000 people," and it holds senior water rights dating back over a hundred years ("Theft of 1.5 Million Proposed"). Because senior rights predate the

modern water system, the issue stems from the unanswered question of whether or not the state

has authority over the water use of senior rights holders ("Theft of 1.5 Million Proposed"). As

citizens are being prosecuted for theft of service, Nestlé and Coke are being afforded abundant

opportunities to profit from the service of theft.

IV. Embracing the Thou

The exorbitant fines being doled out to citizens who disobey the strict water limitations is

a tool to inspire fear. In regards to the theft-related sanctions, the claims that there is a threat to

the wellbeing of the state cannot be completely valid when thieving corporations are not

reprimanded. This one-sided sanctioning functions dually. First, the fear of punishment creates

distance between those that are privileged to take and those that are not. Secondly, fear is

strengthened through the perception of a threat, and in doing so it justifies violence. Acts of

violence are, once again, normalized. The greatest act of violence is seen in the unmitigated

corporate theft of water that is already scarce. These violent acts restrict the personhood through

fear, but value can be restored through love. Love, itself, becomes a "form of dependence on

what is 'not me' whereby what is 'not me' is also part of me" (Ahmed 125). The dependence

upon the Other gives the subject value and subject-hood is found through value. In this space,

increased proximity is desired, for in these spaces of relation the Thou is found. Earlier we

established that Otherness is dissolved through the I-Thou encounter. Boundaries are dissolved

in Thouing because encounter is embodied through agape love. The Other is beheld as equal

because their personhood is finally fully taken in account by the sheer recognition of their

intrinsic value – agape love simply is that full recognition of intrinsic value of the Other.

Where fear is lived through experiences, love is lived through relation. Experience is

mediated through a lens of observation and analysis. Relation is unmediated connection, it

unites, and it is the root of encounter. Buber highlighted this difference as the root of what empowers love to facilitate an encounter, saying "the human being to whom I say Thou I do not experience. But I stand in relation to him, in the sacred basic word. Only when I step out of this do I experience him again. Experience is remoteness from Thou" (Buber 59-60). While standing in relation to the Other, the concept of two separate subjects is essentially dissolved. What was an Other and a subject will transform into a relation. A more concrete method of visualization is to picture the pair as a 'we'. As a *we*, my actions cannot be separated from the actions of my alter. This concept bridges the gap between Butler's theory of cohabitation, Ahmed's theory of love, and Buber's I-Thou. In the I-Thou agape is realized, and vice versa, as encountering. The union that forms through encounter validates Butler's declaration that each person directly influences the life of the Other. The precarious nature of this state of reliance upon the Other almost requires embracing vulnerability through encounter.

Relating to the Other is crucial in one's attempt to avoid persecution of that same life. The only reason that abuses of privatization, pollution, and theft are even made possible is because the privileged are uninterested in the plight of the population that is forced to go without. Agape reminds the person in a position of power that the life of the Other is just as valuable as their own life. When the encounter inevitably ends and the two parties return to the domain of the It, the agape that existed between them should manifest itself in the form of respect. Incompatible with Thouing, respect necessarily relies on recognition of boundaries. However, because the Thou is ultimately unsustainable, respect offers the closest thing to encounter that one living in Itdom can both offer and receive. In respect the Other is regarded with esteem. As respect of the other increases, so does the ability to recognize their intrinsic value and, with this, the willingness to violate and deprive the other decreases.

Seemingly unrealistic, love could be applied to situations of privatization, corporate pollution and theft with relatively little strain. The transition into humane treatment of the other would take little more than a stricter adherence to policies that eliminate, or decrease, room for transgressions against the underprivileged. The reliance on love as a tool to combat the inhumane treatment of the ungrievable may seem naïve, but it is no more so than the Declaration of Independence. On July 4, 1776, members of the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. Within this document is one of the most vital concepts to Western life: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (Jefferson). In his work *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud suggested that a technique used in both the pursuit of happiness and the avoidance of suffering is making 'love the center of everything' (Ahmed 125). And though today the guarantee of the pursuit of happiness is at times taken as a guarantee *for* happiness, the original message was intended to guarantee the right to work towards one's happiness. The question then becomes: What is happiness? James Madison defined happiness as "taking the word 'interest' as synonymous with 'ultimate happiness' in which sense it is qualified with every necessary moral ingredient" (Rogers). Additionally, pursuit would have been synonymous with occupation, practice, or vocation (Rogers). In the proper context, Freud's statement paired with the writings of the Declaration of Independence support the offering and reception of love as fundamental to the realization of personhood. Embracing the embedment of love as a primary tool for self-actualization, Buber's theory begins to seem more attainable than lofty.

By being offered love, a subject realizes the necessity of practicing love in order to access their right as a principled person. In reception, love offers the opportunity for an object to

become a subject by increasing the prevalence of encounters: love introduces personhood and recognition as intrinsically valuable. Interestingly, the offering and reception of love "makes the subject vulnerable, exposed to, and dependent upon another" (Ahmed 125). Though vulnerability is a theme common to fear and love, the acceptance of love allows for the embracement of the 'Thou '. I-Thou relationships can only be lived through mutual vulnerability. In each case study, the objectified people were in complete states of vulnerability, but their defenselessness was taken advantage of. Such is the danger of acting through lenses of domination instead of care. There is no room to practice the pursuit of interests when one is concerned for their life. Acting in a mutually vulnerable space, the privileged person might reconsider stripping the underprivileged of their right to store rainwater, or their right to drinking water that is not yellow and brown, or even the right to water one's garden without a $500 fine though millions of gallons of water are stolen regularly by a public entity. During the act of relation, the 'I' steps away from institution and into feeling. In the presence of the 'Thou' true community comes into effect, creating persons through the I-Thou encounter.

In "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation," Judith Butler writes of the responsibility that impresses upon any individual sharing living spaces with another, specifically highlighting the obligations of the privileged towards the underprivileged. Though living is comprised of precarious and vulnerable situations, some lives are at threat more than others. The urgency of precariousness "only makes sense if we are able to identify bodily dependency, hunger, and the need for shelter, the vulnerability to injury and destruction, forms of social trust that let us live and thrive, and the passions linked to our very persistence as clearly political issues"; the disparities made evident through privatization, water pollution, and water theft are all caused by the conscious threat of unsympathetic lives (Butler 147). Of course,

'unsympathetic lives' is a misnomer, for shared space and resources necessitates that "the life of the other, the life that is not our own, is also our life, since whatever sense 'our' life has is derived precisely from this sociality" (Butler 140-141). In other words, when properly enacted, successful cohabitation mirrors the I-Thou encounter. There is a mutual consideration of the Other that naturally takes place because the relation has resulted in a we-like body Thus our dependence on the other ensures that all lives are equally valuable. The objectification of those who cannot comply with dominant ideals, ultimately harms the personhood of those that do – creating a cycle of harm through Othering.

The ability of the subject to recognize the other as valuable is reflected in the success of cohabitation. The strength of cohabitation can be found in the mutuality of action. Subject A is just as responsible for protecting the life of Subject B, as B is for protecting A. The precariousness of cohabitation is found in the undeniable mutually vulnerability between two subjects. A water violation could not be committed against the Other without enacting it upon the self. Consciously or otherwise, one's decisions cannot simply be made for oneself because they will not solely affect oneself. If this theory were properly actualized, encounter would trump experience because relatability is ultimately built into the human condition. Though there are cultural boundaries present in global cohabitation, "the set of ethical values by which one population is bound to another in no way depends on those two populations bearing similar marks of national, cultural, religious, [and] racial belonging (Butler 139). It is the ethical obligation of the privileged to extend personhood to the other, to relate to the other. Efforst to connect with the other protects the self. Without that connection "the detached I is transformed – reduced from substantial fullness to the functional one-dimensionality of a subject that experiences and uses objects – and thus approaches all the "It for itself" …the man who has

acquired an I and says I-It assumes a position before things but does not confront them in the current of reciprocity" (Buber 80).

Such a life is not truly a life because the other is not given respect. Without reciprocity, and space for relation, the encounter does not come into being. The inability to cohabitate is not natural. Owning responsibility for the well-being of the other produces a relationship that "preceded individuation, [because] when I act ethically, I am undone as a bounded being. I come apart, I find that I am my relation to the "you" whose life I seek to preserve, and without that relation, this "I" makes no sense" (Butler 142). Within the I-Thou encounter the object becomes a human, and the life of the subject begins, as "all actual life is encounter." (Buber 62). Encounter through cohabitation is only made possible through the love that is agape. In "An Experiment in Love", Martin Luther King describes agape as active love, "seeking to preserve and create community" due to the "recognition that all life is interrelated" (King 20). In this way, love is a necessary means through which the precarious management of water rights might be mediated.

We have discussed the mechanisms through which. By realizing the power of agape and cohabitation to actualize and solidify the I-Thou mode of relation, and even realize the full-potential of the I-It mode of relation with respect of the other's humanity we take one step towards resolving the disparity between the perceived intrinsic life value of the haves and have nots. Once the path to encounter is more fully established, the opportunity to enter the narrow ridge arises. This ridge is where the interaction between two Thous is manifested. Martin Buber offers the narrow ridge, as the prime state of being. On the Narrow Ridge two persons enter "into an undivided relationship", within which two persons are profoundly open to the each other (Kramer 78). This space is one of the few where genuine dialogue can occur, with this concept in

mind Buber writes the following: "on the far side of the subjective, on this side of the objective, on the narrow ridge, where I and Thou meet, there is the realm of "between" …here the genuine third alternative is indicated, the knowledge of which will help to bring about the genuine person and to establish genuine community" (Buber 204). The true dialogue promoted by 'the between' is instrumental in the protection of life because it is the root of the recognition of personhood. When I recognize you as valuable, I am connected to you. When "the essence of man…can be directly known only in a living relation" I must always strive to encounter (Buber 205). The between is where personhood in its fullest extent is realized. The narrow ridge can only be shared between two Thous, further entangling the life of one being with the life of another.

The Realization of Personhood

In concurrence with the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights we have established the necessity of water a right, not simply a commodified privilege. This view acknowledges and accepts the necessary nature of water as a propagator of life. At its very essence water is life. Much more crucially, water also simultaneously, at its essence, acts as a symbol for the actualization of personhood. A body that is denied a proper supply of water is a body that is deemed invalid and ungreivable. Of course, the existing hegemon seeks to profit from the mistreatment of lives that have not been empowered through subjecthood. Methods of intimidation and trickery saturate the dominant culture and relationships between participating members of said culture. Fear encloses the body in an affective tomb of objectification, and shame induces the body to further restrict itself. In an attempt to escape the bondages, the underprivileged takes on optimistic notions, notions that almost seem realizable. Optimism is clung to, as the reality of the situation is denied further and further. Once caught in the cycle of

denial, the cold realities of a hegemonic structure that maintains its power by taking advantage of its constituents fixes itself into a semi-permanent structure. The dangers of limited regulations are manifested in increased privatization of water services, the exponentially rising levels of pollution of valuable freshwater continue as the limited pockets of clean freshwater are harvested for profit.

Embracing Buber's dialogic frame offers solutions. Understanding the difference between being objectified and devalued and being autonomously valued simply for offering value as another being can make all of the difference between a lifetime of bondage and a lifetime of freedom. The human being perceived as a fraction of a person is able to remove her bondage by engaging the other in encounter. When animosity towards one's struggle begins to seep out into interpersonal relationships, agape acts as a reminder of the opportunities for wholesome living that are waiting when we embrace the Other. Successfully embracing the necessary position of vulnerability that every being lives in, in order to embrace a position of strength is how cohabitation could serve as an opportunity to increase the ability to encounter another.

There is a tendency to default the larger solution off onto the next group of people; here that group is often the financially privileged. But the beauty of Buber's framework is that it is dialogic – it requires interactions based in dialogue: or involving at least two bodies. Buber's theory offers the opportunity for a self to work on empowering themselves in a variety of ways. The power of the I-Thou mode of relation is the clear conception of personhood being equally inherent in each individual. There is no one measure of personhood that is greater than another. Instead, through empowering one's self through positive social interactions and empowering others to both actualize themselves and empower their alters, a system that once thrived off of

commodification of the individual and the individual's needs may move closer to holistic

profiting from the wellbeing of the other. The embrace of Buber's simultaneously radical and

simple mode of relations is the significance of this project. The willingness of a larger public to

move through the world under this, or a similar framework, will be its test.

Works Cited

Aguayo, Ellen and Clark, David. "Protecting Breastfeeding In West and Central America". *United Nations Children's Emergency Fund*. UNICEF, 2005. Web. 24 Oct. 2015.

Ahmed, Sarah. *The cultural politics of emotion.* (pp.62-81). New York, NY: Edinburgh University Press Ltd. 2015. Print.

Badenhausen, Kurt. "Detroit Tops 2013 List of America's Most Miserable Cities". *Forbes.* Forbes. 21 Feb. 2013. Web. 23 Nov. 2015.

Benson, Ezra. "The Proper Role of Government". *Laissez Fairer Public.* Laissez Fairer Public. 1968. Web. 13 Oct. 2015.

Berlant, Laura. Cruel optimism. In Gregg, M. & Seigworth, J. (Eds.), *The Affect Theory Reader* (pp.93-117). United States of America: The Duke University Press. 2006. Print.

Bernstein, Sharon. "California Governor Orders 25% Reduction In Water Usage Statewidde". *Reuters*. Reuters. 1 Apr. 2015. Web. 5 Nov. 2015.

Birmingham Water Works. *Water Theft. Birmingham Water Works For You*. Birmingham, N.D. Web. 13 Nov. 2015.

Boston and Water Sewage Commission. *Water Theft. Boston Water and Sewage Commission*. BWSC, N.D. Web. 23 Nov. 2015.

Buber, Martin. *Between Man and Man*. Martino Fine Books. 2014. Print.

Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*. Trans. W. Kaufman. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Inc. 1995. Print.

Butler, J. "Precarious life, vulnerability, and the ethics of cohabitation". Journal of Speculative Philosophy. 26. 2. PA: The Pennsylvania State University. 2012. Print

Butler, Judith. Interview by George Yancey. "What's Wrong With 'All Lives Matter?" *New York Times,* 12 Jan. 2015. Web. 3 March 2015.

Carricarte, Lindsay. "Environmental Groups Take Legal Action on Nestle Bottling Scandal". *Elephant Journal*. Elephant Journal. 17 Oct. 2015. Web. 5 Nov. 2015.

"Case Against Coca Cola Kerala State: India". *Right to Water*. Right to Water. N.D. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Chellaney, B. *Water, peace, and war: Confronting the global water crisis*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2013.

Cockburn, Alexander. "How Coca-Cola Gave Back to Plachimada". *Counter Punch*. Counter Punch. 21 Apr. 2005. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Crockett, Stephen. "How a Bankrupt City is Putting the Squeeze on Its Tapped-Out Residents". *The Root*. The Root. 26 June 2014. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Davis, Matthew, Kolb, Chris, Reynolds, Lawrence, Rothstein, Eric, and Sikkema, Ken. "Flint Water Advisory Task Force (Final Report)". *Flint Water Study*. 23 Mar, 2016. Web. 25 Mar. 2016.

.Delaney, Arthur. "Michigan Ignored Conclusive Evidence' of Flint Lead Poisoning, Researcher Says". *Huffington Post*. Huffington Post, 21 Dec. 2015. Web. 5 Jan. 2016.

Environmental Protection Agency. *Lead and Copper Rule. Environmental Protection Agency*. EPA. N.D. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Finnegan, William. "Leasing the Rain" *Frontline World.* PBS. ND. Web. 22 Nov. 2016.

Flint Department of Public Works. *City of Flint Water System Questions and Answers*. *City of Flint*. City of Flint, 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Gleick , Peter, Wolff, Gary, Chalecki, Elizabeth, and Reyes, Rachel. "The New Economy of
  Water: The Risks and Benefits of Globalization and Privatization of Fresh Water". *Pacific
  Institute*. Pacific Institute. Feb. 2002. Web. 24 Nov. 2016.

Gottlieb, R. *A life of its own: The politics of power and water. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt
  Brace Jovanovich Publishers. 1988.*

Guillen, Joe. "Detroit Water Shutoffs to Begin Tuesday". *Detroit Free Press*. Detroit Free Press.
  24 Mar. 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Hogan, C. "Water Pollution". The Encyclopedia of Earth, 17 Nov. 2014. Web. 23 Nov. 2015.
  "Group to World Bank: Stop Funding Water Privatization". *Stop Corporate Abuse*.
  Corporate Accountability International. 16 Apr. 2012. Web. 23 Oct. 2015.

Hulett, Sarah. "High Lead Levels In Michigan Kids After City Switches Water Source".
  National Public Radio. NPR, 29 Sept. 2015. Web. 25 Nov. 2015.

Jefferson, Thomas. "Declaration of Independence". *The Charters of Freedom*. 4 Jul. 1776. Web.
  24 Nov. 2015.

Kennedy, Bruce. "America's 11 poorest cities". *CBS News*. CBS. 18 Feb. 2015. Web. 24 Nov.
  2015.

King, Kendra. *African American Politics*. Cambraidge, UK: Polity Press. 2010. Print.

King, Martin. *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King,
  Jr*. Ed. James Washington. Harper One. 2003. Print.

Kramer, Kenneth. *Martin Buber's I and Thou Practicing Living Dialogue*. Paulist Press.
  2004.Print

Kransy, Jill "Every Parent Should Know The Scandalous History of Infant Formula". *Business
  Insider*. Business Insider. 25 June, 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Lambertz, Kate. "United Nations Says Turning Off Poor Detroiter's Water Violates Human
  Right". *The Huffington Post*. The Huffington Post. 26 June 2014. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Lappé, Anna. "World Bank Wants Water Privatized, Despite Risks". *America Aljazeera*.
  Aljazeera, 17 Apr. 2014. Web. 23 Oct. 2015.

Lombardo, Crystal. "Privatization of Water Pros and Cons". *Vision Launch*. Vision Launch, 20
  Marc. 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Martino, Joe. "Nestle CEO Says You Shouldn't Have The Right to Water." *Collective Evolution
  RSS*. October 24, 2014. Web. December 4, 2015.

Matthews, Rohan. "The Plachimada Struggle Against Coca-Cola in Southern India". *Dialogues,
  Protests, Histories*. DPH. July, 2011. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Mercer, Brandon. "California Officially Enters 4th Year of Drought With Worst Water Situation
  in History". *Central Broadcasting Station*. CBS. 30 Sept. 2014. Web. 4 Nov. 2015.

Mokhiber. "Infant Formula: Hawking Disaster in the Third World". *Corporate Crime and
  Violence*. The Multinational Monitor. Apr. 1987. Web. 25 Oct. 2015.

Muller, Mike. The Baby Killer. The War on Want. March 1974. Web. 23 Sept. 2015.

Murdock, David. "The Story" *Frontline World*. PBS. N.D. Web. 22 Nov. 2015.

NPR Staff. "Beyond Flint: In The South, Another Water Crisis Has Been Unfolding For Years".
  National Public Radio. NPR, 6 Feb. 2016. Web. 20 Feb. 2016.

Oosting, Jonathan. "Water is a Human Right. Democrats Say With New Bills Addressing Flint
  Crisis, Detroit Shutoffs". *MLive*. Michigan Live, 12 Nov. 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

 "Oscar Olivera". *The Goldman Environmental Prize*. Goldman Environmental Foundation.
  2001. Web. 23 Nov. 2015.

O'Shaughnessy, M. & Stadler, J. Media and Society (5th ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Oxford University Press. 2012. Print.

Peck, Emily. "Lawsuit Seeks to Stop Nestle From Sucking Water Out of Drought-Plagued California". *HuffPost*. Huffington Post, 14 Oct. 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Rogers, C. *Carl Rogers: Dialogues (pp.41-63).* Eds. Kirschenbaum, H. & Henderson,V.L.. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1989. Print.

Rogers, James. "The Meaning of the Pursuit of Happiness". *First Things*. First Things, 19 Jun. 2012. Web. 24 Nov. 2016.

Rosenbaum, M., Altman D., and Blendon, R. "Poverty in America". Figure 2-6. Charts. *National Public Radio.* NPR, 2010. Web. Dec. 15, 2015.

Rosenbaum, M., Altman D., and Blendon, R. "Poverty in America". *National Public Radio.* NPR, 2010. Web. Dec. 15, 2015.

The Salvation Army. "Skeptical Beliefs in Poverty". Chart. *Salvation Army*, 2012. Web. Dec 15, 2015.

The Salvation Army. "Perceptions of poverty: The Salvation Army's Report to America". *Salvation Army*, 2012. Web. Dec 15, 2015.

Sadiq, Sheraz. "Timeline Cochabamba Water Revolt" *Frontline World*. PBS. N.D. Web. 22 Nov. 2015.

Shah, Anup. "Poverty Facts and Stats". *Global Issues*. Global Issues. 7 Jan. 2013. Web. 4 Apr. 2016.

Smith, S. "5 Shocking Scandals That Prove It's Time To Boycott Nestle". *Daily Dot*. Daily Dot, 15 May 2015. Web. 29 Oct. 2015.

Stephen, Solomon. "The Controversy Over Infant Formula". *The New York Times.* The New York Times. 6 Dec. 1981. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

Strother, Emma. "On Water Scarcity and the Right to Life: Bolivia". *Council on Hemispheric Affairs*. COHA. 27 June 2013. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.

"Top 10 Reasons to Oppose Water Privatization". *Public Citizen.* Public Citizen, N.D. Web. 24 Nov. 16.

United Nations. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. United Nations*, 10 Dec. 1948. Web. 23 Oct. 2016.

United Nations. *History of the Document. United Nations*. N.D. Web. 6 Dec. 2015.

United Nations. *The UN in Brief.United Nations.* 2009. Web. 5 Dec. 2015.

United Nations, *Water for Life Decade.* UN, 29 May 2014 .Web. 5 Dec. 2015,

United Nations General Assembly. *64/292. The human right to water and sanitation.* United Nations. 3 Aug. 2010. Web. 5 Dec. 2015

United Nations Regional Information Centre. *Making water a human right*. UNRIC. N.D. Web. 5 Dec. 2015.

Unprecedented California Water Theft Fine of 1.5 Million Proposed". *The Weather Channel*. The Weather Channel, 21 Jul. 2015. Web. 23 Nov. 2015.

"Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)". *Encyclopædia Britannica.* N.D. Web. 2 Dec. 2015.

"Water: the Coca-Cola Company in Kerala". Open Rim. N.P. Aug. 2007. Web. 2 Feb. 2106.

"Water Pollution: Find Out What's In The Water". *National Geographic*. National Geographic, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2015.

Winpenny, J. *Managing Water as an Economic Resource*. New York, NY: Routledge. 1994.

Wisely, John and Erb, Robin. "Chemical Testing Could have Predicted Flint's Water Crisis".
    Detroit Free Press. Detroit Free Press, 11 Oct. 2015. Web. 14 Nov. 2015.
Woodford, Chris. "Water Pollution: An Introduction". *Explain That Stuff*. Explain That Stuff, 29
    Jun. 2015. Web. 24 Nov. 2015.