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LITERARY ESSAY

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JAPANESE AND TRINIDADIAN IMMIGRANTS
Tolerance, Intolerance, and Goodwill in *Soucouyant* and *Snow Falling on Cedars*

ABSTRACT

Tolerance is popularly understood to be a virtue. It is renowned as a position of sympathy and magnanimity which seeks to promote care for peoples across disparate backgrounds. In reality, tolerance is a far more complicated idea. In David Chariandy's novel *Soucouyant* and David Guterson's novel *Snow Falling on Cedars*, each narrative focuses on immigrant minorities who are subjected to various expressions of tolerance in their respective host communities. These novels show that while tolerance in and of itself does not necessarily promote care for immigrant minorities, it does set a precondition of peace, amity, and politeness through which care and empathy might arise. Through studying these novels, this essay argues that while it is certainly an imperfect position, tolerance is desirable insofar as it allows people, who might otherwise share an uninhibited animus for one another, the possibility to empathize with each other.

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The ways in which immigrants are treated by their respective host societies can have a tremendous influence on not only cultural cohesion, but the safety of all citizens in a community. Deemed as "social others," immigrants regularly face considerable, and even hostile, pushback when attempting to settle into a new community. By their very nature, they are made conspicuous, by having to face increased scrutiny, condescension, and often being subject to different interpretations of local laws. The toleration of immigrants has posed many longstanding issues in Canada and the United States, and these issues can be explored in a condensed narrative form through the medium of literature. While works of literature certainly do not represent reality, they can offer unique and valuable insights into intractable issues through their ability to highlight often unheard or disenfranchised voices in the narrative form. This essay seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the relationship between tolerance and goodwill, both on an interpersonal and communal level, by examining their relationship in literature, specifically the American novel *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson and the Canadian novel *Soucouyant* by David Chariandy (soucouyant is an evil spirit from Caribbean folklore). I argue that although imperfect, tolerance can serve as a more realistic goal than "equality" and is a useful starting point from which empathy, unity, and goodwill might arise, in communities populated by peoples of otherwise disparate backgrounds.

What Tolerance Is and Isn't

The term "tolerance" is largely considered to be a positive and desirable quality. This is evident in the fact that since the year 1996, November 16 has been celebrated as the United Nations' "International Day for Tolerance." UNESCO, a prominent agency within the UN, defines the word as follows:

> Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace (UNESCO 1995).

Based on their definition, tolerance appears to be a virtue and guiding principle that all peoples and nations would be wise to embody. But despite this very positive use of the word, the definition and popular usage of the word does not exactly mirror this combination of "respect, acceptance, and appreciation." Merriam-Webster provides a very different understanding of tolerance; the first definition it offers for *tolerance* is the "capacity to endure pain or hardship" (Merriam-Webster 2023). The verb form *tolerate* is itself derived from the Latin *tolerare* meaning "to endure" or "put up with" (Ibid.). I argue that this definition is more in keeping with the word's actual usage, especially in relation to the tolerance of immigrants by locals. So, working with this definition, it could certainly be argued that tolerance is a peculiar aspiration for relations between immigrants and native citizens. But in

spite of these seemingly begrudging implications of tolerance, I argue that it is still a necessary, if not altogether desirable, trait.

The reason that immigrants must be "tolerated" in the first place is because they are viewed as "Other." This identity as "Other" is largely negative and indicative of disparate power dynamics between immigrants and citizens of their respective host countries. This is illustrated in the introduction to Furman's *The Immigrant Other: Lived Experiences in a Transnational World*:

> When our book proposal originally went out for review, one of our reviewers bristled at the phrase "the immigrant other." He or she suggested that the phrase was largely pejorative, labeling immigrants in a way that marginalizes and positions them as existing outside society and community. We are in complete agreement with this assessment (Furman 2016, 3).

It goes without saying that racially and ethnically mixed societies do not typically treat people equally across differences in race and ethnicity. At the very least, this is certainly the case in North America. Given that, in the contemporary moment "equal treatment," whatever that may mean, is a difficult goal to articulate let alone realize in a given community, whereas tolerance appears to be, at the very least, a healthy baseline. At present, in Canada and the United States, because national, racial, and ethnic differences continue to demarcate people, tolerance appears a far more pragmatic and less quixotic goal for immigrants than that of "equality." Tolerance encourages amity, if not enthusiasm, politeness, if not warmth, and peace, if not harmony. With all this established, does tolerance, as it has thus been defined, have a direct relationship to goodwill among otherwise disparate peoples?

To answer this question, the meaning of *goodwill*, along with the words of which it is comprised, *good* and *will*, must be understood. *Goodwill* is defined by Merriam-Webster as "a kindly feeling of approval and support: benevolent interest or concern" (Merriam-Webster 2023). The word *good* is derived from the Middle High German *gatern* meaning "to unite," and the noun form of the word "will" is derived from Old English *willa* meaning "will" or "desire" (Merriam-Webster 2023). From this breakdown we can reinterpret the word *goodwill* to mean "the desire to unite." In essence, to comprehend how tolerance is related to goodwill it must be understood how "putting up" with people is related to "a desire to unite" with them.

The Tolerant Gaze

This essay has so far established that communities find it necessary "to tolerate" immigrants insofar as they are considered "other." This is shown to be the case in both Guterson's and Chariandy's novels. In each novel, an immigrant character is subjected to a tolerant gaze by their respective host communities. In the case of *Snow Falling on Cedars*, the character Kabuo Miyamoto is under particular scrutiny from his host community. The novel takes place in 1954 on San Piedro, a fictionalized island north of Puget Sound, with flashbacks showing the characters' upbringings in the 1930s and 1940s. Kabuo is a second-generation American citizen of Japanese descent, and while not technically an immigrant, he certainly experiences the political and social insecurity of one. Kabuo's position as ethnic "other" is drastically exacerbated during the Second World War, when he, and all others of Japanese descent in San Piedro, were imprisoned in a Japanese internment camp; a period in which "120,000 Japanese-Americans (two-thirds of whom were American citizens by birth) were interned in camps" (Lowe 1991, 40). In

spite of the rampant discrimination Kabuo and his family face at the hands of the American state and its people, he still decides to fight for the very country that had interned him. He does so because he believes it "necessary to demonstrate his loyalty to the United States: his country" (Guterson 1995, 92). In seemingly every way possible, Kabuo attempts to prove himself as a dutiful—even patriotic—American citizen, but despite all efforts, he only serves to maintain his status as social "other" in the San Piedro community. It is in his exceptional loyalty to his country, and nonetheless rejection by his community, that Kabuo becomes victim to what Lisa Lowe calls "the model minority myth:"

> The model minority myth constructs Asians as aggressively driven overachievers; it is a homogenizing fiction which relies upon two strategies common in the subordinating construction of racial or ethnic otherness—the racial other as knowable, familiar ("like us"), and as incomprehensible, threatening ("unlike us"); the model minority myth suggests both that Asians are overachievers and "unlike us," and that they assimilate well, and are thus "like us" (1991, 40).

The uncanny position of the model minority, perceived as both like and unlike the American, makes them a perpetual outsider, no matter how well they act and comport themselves within the larger community. Despite Kabuo seeing active duty in the war, and spending all his life in San Piedro, he returns to a country in which, although he is a citizen, he is seen as an interloper. His position as model minority makes him a figure who is tolerated for the sake of his contributions to his community, but never accepted.

In the case of Chariandy's *Soucouyant*, Adele, the narrator's mother, is similarly characterized by the toleration of others. This is apparent when her life is irrevocably altered by the American military that occupied her home country of Trinidad during the Second World War. As a child, growing up in Trinidad during the war, Adele and her mother are pushed out of their hometown in order to make room for a new American military base, and are then offered a temporary place to stay in the town of Carenage (2007, 181). Although still in their native country, Adele and her mother are not treated as citizens, but instead as subversive outsiders by both the people of Carenage and the American troops stationed there. This is largely due to the fact that Adele's mother must resort to sex work in order to earn the very meager living on which she and her daughter subsist. Adele's mother, and by proxy partly herself, are only barely tolerated by the people of their own country because her mother's occupation does not align with Trinidadian rules of propriety. In this way, they are subject to the oppressive force that Susana Morris calls "respectability politics," meaning politics which dictate respectable behavior in a community (2014, 2-3). What Morris refers to as the "paradox of respectability" (2014, 3), is the notion that, like Lowe's model minority myth, respectability politics encourage Caribbean-Americans and African-Americans in the United States to at once be "simultaneously desiring to be respectable according to the ideals of respectability politics and finding this difficult, if not impossible" (2014, 3). Literary scholar Asha Jeffers contends that "respectability politics" and "the model minority myth" are largely speaking about the same thing, albeit in relation to different minority groups (Personal Communication, Fall 2023). And while Morris is largely speaking about politics within the United States and the Caribbean, her argument is also applicable to Canada. This is evident upon Adele's

consequent immigration to Canada in the early 1960s, a time of immigration policy upheaval (Chariandy 2007, 48), because in 1962, "for the first time in the history of Canadian immigration policy, race and nationality were no longer to play a role" (Kelley 2010, 332). Given that the acceptance of immigrants other than Western Europeans was at this time a brand-new governmental policy, Canadian people were similarly unfamiliar and unaccustomed to accepting non-Western European people (Kelley, 333). And Adele is very soon introduced to 1960s Canadian notions of respectability, when, after several weeks of working up the courage, she attempts to enter a restaurant to order a slice of pie, and the owner "softly explains [to her] … no coloureds or prostitutes are allowed, though he knows of other places on another street where she would be welcome" (2007, 50). Of course, despite the ostensibly "soft" demeanor of the owner, this is a characteristic example of intolerance. The owner will not tolerate her presence and so she must leave.

There is a similar kind of ostensibly soft intolerance seen in *Snow Falling on Cedars*, a novel which covers similar time periods, in a country with a similar intolerance to peoples of non-Western European ancestry. Similar to Canada, during the Second World War, the United States interned thousands of their own citizens on the sole basis that they were of Japanese descent. Much of Guterson's novel takes place in 1954, following in the wake of the internment camps and the U.S. implementation of the McCarran-Walter Act (1952) which ostensibly abandoned the whites-only policy for immigrant naturalization, but it assigned only 150,000 slots to the entire Eastern Hemisphere, and provided little opportunity for Asians to gain access to legal immigration. As before, no limit was set for immigration from the Western Hemisphere … The European bias in the legislation was corrected in acts

of Congress in 1953 and 1957 that shifted the stream of refugees from Europe to Asia" (Gerber 2011, 46-47).

And this reluctance towards allowing those of Asian descent into the United States in the 1950s was reflected in the American population, as can be seen in the sentiments of the non-Asians in the San Piedro community. In the days preceding Kabuo's arrest, the community coroner performs an autopsy on Carl Heine, a man who had recently died by suspicious means (1995, 52-57). When the sheriff asks him what the cause of death might be, because the coroner had served in the Second World War, and had seen injuries similar to Heine's inflicted by Japanese soldiers in the war, he tells the sheriff, "Look for a jap with a bloody gun butt" (59). But while he makes this deeply prejudiced judgement in the private company of the sheriff, a fellow white man, when it comes time for him to attest to this on trial, his tone and diction change completely (1995, 59). Much like how the restaurant owner speaks "softly" to Adele, the coroner chooses kindlier, less explicitly prejudiced words, reverting to medical terminology and making inferences about the cause of death that make no reference to Japanese people (Guterson 1995, 59-67). Both the restaurant owner and the coroner make public displays of kindliness in order to belie their private deep-seated prejudices and rejection of those they deem "other." These examples show that public displays of what respective societies may deem as "tolerant" are not always indicative of their holding tolerant values. If at the very least "to tolerate" means "to endure" or "put up with" something or someone, these two instances show a distinct lack of that quality.

If intolerance in this context is the inability of people to put up with those who are racially and ethnically othered, and acceptance is unhindered and unscrutinized involvement in a community, then tolerance occupies that ambiguous area in between. And if those who are

othered are disproportionately subject to tolerance, it does not seem a far leap to assume that they are also those with whom the community has difficulty empathizing. "Empathy," as described by Keen, is "a vicarious, spontaneous sharing of affect, [that] can be provoked by witnessing another's emotional state, by hearing about another's condition, or even by reading" (4). In the case of each novel, community members feel the need to tolerate social "others" insofar as they have difficulty conceptualizing and understanding them, and therefore, difficulty in empathizing with them.

In *Soucouyant*, tolerance is a practiced not just in the communities in which Adele is situated, but also intra-familially. Much of Chariandy's novel is dedicated to Adele's son, the narrator, taking care of his mother, who in middle age is suffering from very early onset, and increasingly debilitating, dementia. Adele's position, on both a mental and cultural level, at first appears one of distinct otherness to that of her son: Her son was born in Canada, whereas she was born in Trinidad; and her son is able-minded, while her mental condition is deteriorating. For the narrator, his mother's differences from himself make her someone whom he finds extreme difficulty in being around. At just seventeen years old, he leaves home because he can no longer tolerate living with his mother in her condition (Chariandy 2007, 7). However, two years later he changes his mind and returns home to look after her (7). This is a quintessential act of tolerance. Although the narrator finds it difficult to be with his mother because of her illness, he returns to care for her in spite of his misgivings. These misgivings appear to come from the narrator's difficulties in empathizing with her, because while it is of course possible to sympathize with someone who has dementia, empathizing with that same person, whose relationship to space and time is so severely corrupted, can be a much more challenging task. The

Simulation Theory of empathy presupposes that empathy is brought about by a person first understanding what another is feeling, and then simulating that feeling within themselves (Schmetkamp and Ferran 2020, 743-45), but in order for this to occur, a person has to "be able to understand on a very basic level that the other is in some specific mental states" (745) before they can understand and potentially feel those mental states in themselves.

For the narrator in *Soucouyant*, understanding his mother's mental state is extremely challenging; she speaks to her son variously with intimacy and detachment, of things happening now and those that happened long ago or never at all, of things relevant, and those seemingly completely irrelevant. Because of this, the narrator must pay her more or less constant attention in order to see her as a thinking and feeling person like himself, rather than just a victim of dementia. He seems to be able to achieve this in moments where toleration develops into brief but emotionally significant moments of understanding. This can be seen in a scene midway through the novel in which Adele appears in her son's bedroom doorway and asks him a simple question:

> "What wrong?"
>
> "Nothing's wrong ..."
>
> "You lying, dear. I always know when you lying. I you Mother, you know. I don't have to wait for you to tell me anything. I does know ... Is you brother, yes? You worrying because he left like that without saying goodbye. You worrying because you love him. Because he you brother."
>
> "Yes, Mother. That's it exactly" (Chariandy 2007, 125).

This moment shows Adele's momentary understanding of her son, whom she can still empathize with on a deep, visceral, and often nonverbal level despite her dementia. And shortly after this scene, the narrator notes his own understanding and vicarious experience of his mother's feelings. After his mother enters a depressive state and will no longer eat, he tries to feed her, and when she begins chewing, he narrates: "When she slowly and mechanically moves her jaw, my own mouth feels full of something old and exhausted like ash" (130–31). This scene poignantly exhibits how empathic connections are characterized by salient moments, rather than constant understanding between people. It also shows that after tolerating a person for a long time, empathy can sometimes suddenly arise where one might least expect it to.

Much of Adele's relationship to her son is characterized by acts of tolerance, but her experiences in the larger Canadian society are almost always characterized by acts of intolerance. Her integration into Canadian society is not at all a seamless one. In seemingly all aspects of her life she experiences friction when interacting with the greater Canadian society. In her early years living in Canada with her husband Roger, himself of South Asian descent, when phoning potential landlords about apartment listings, they realize their accents are the reason that their applications are invariably rejected (75). After attempting to Canadianize their voices to no avail, they persist in apartment-hunting and eventually find a landlord who begrudgingly rents them a dilapidated and cockroach-infested room, in which they are under the constant scrutiny of racist and complaining neighbors (75-76). When the two tell their landlord they are going on their honeymoon, and then return to their apartment two weeks later, they find their home to be not just burglarized but completely ransacked; written in feces on the wall

are the words "GO BACK" (77). Adele and her husband are more than a little suspicious that their landlord orchestrated this, but because as they are minorities, they do not believe they have any viable recourse for this injustice (77). As their landlord says, "You people come here. You insist on coming here. So what the hell do you expect?" (78). Adele and her husband seem to have no rebuttal to this provocation, because to them the sentiments of the landlord appear to be the sentiments of the rest of Canada. Decades later, in an ostensibly more accepting Canada, Adele and her husband own a home together in a nice neighborhood in Scarborough, but even then she and her family retain their status as interlopers. After Adele's episodic delirium causes her to disrupt the neighborhood's annual Heritage Day parade, in reference to her and her sons one neighbor asks the question, "what kind of people are we allowing to live here anyway?" (62). This seems to be a question Adele faces throughout her life; she is in a perpetual role of subservience to Canadian society, being "allowed to live" there, but only ever on the thinnest of ice.

In Guterson's novel, in the scenes depicting life in San Piedro in the years preceding the war, it seems as though the Japanese-American people living there are tolerated, even accepted, by the rest of the community. However, after the war, in which many Japanese-Americans fought for the United States, the fact that the Japanese had just been considered such notorious combatants in the war served to draw a stark line between Japanese-Americans and the rest of the San Piedro community. The Second World War is an enormously significant event in this community as it serves to divide those who were once members of a more or less united if not unified whole. The prior unity of this community can be seen in the annual "Strawberry Festival," which each year attracted the entire San Piedro community (77). The festival

involved food, drink, sports, and ceremonies. Japanese-Americans were integral to these activities, but their roles were explicitly demarcated from the rest of the community. This can be seen in the annual softball game, in which "the Volunteer Fire Department played … against the Japanese Community Center team" (77). But this delineation is even more overt in the fact that "the entire affair hinged on the coronation of the Strawberry Princess—always a virginal Japanese maiden dressed in satin and dusted carefully across the face with rice powder" (78). The openly ritualistic nature of this ceremony clearly serves to delineate the Japanese-Americans from other Americans in the community, but inversely, it also makes their participation in the festival not only significant but essential. In 1941, Hatsue, who would later become Kabuo's wife, then a girl, is crowned the strawberry princess (82). In 1942, she, Kabuo, and the rest of the Japanese-American population on San Piedro are "loaded onto a ship while their white neighbours looked on … the fishermen felt, like most islanders, that this exiling of the Japanese was the right thing to do" (79). In this instance, it appears the initial toleration of Japanese-Americans by the San Piedro community allowed the former a merely tenuous integration into the community. It is only after internment that the Japanese-Americans understandably treat their relationship to the greater community as fragile and ephemeral. This transition from unity to division is also a transition from tolerance to intolerance. While the Japanese are allowed to live in San Piedro after their internment, they are no longer welcome. This is evident in the novel's main conflict: the wrongful imprisonment of Kabuo for a murder he did not commit. In the wake of a war that had wreaked havoc on and traumatized the San Piedro community, with the white protagonist Ishmael losing his arm and the love of his life Hatsue, as well as many other able-bodied men returning with PTSD, the citizens

adopt the simplistic logic that because the Japanese had been their enemy during the war, citizens of Japanese descent in their community remain their enemies as well. This simplifying logic also precludes the community from empathizing with the Japanese, because if they solely envision them as alien enemies, and therefore fundamentally unlike them, they can never understand them in terms of their own experiences.

The Minorities must Tolerate, too

As is the case in this essay, the idea of tolerance tends to promote discussions about those of the majority and tolerating those of the minority. However, what is rarely discussed is how minority classes must tolerate the condescension, circumspection, and scrutiny of the majority. While native-born citizens typically hold a disproportionate amount of power in immigrant-native relations, tolerance is of course a reciprocal engagement. In a "tolerant" community, just as the majority must tolerate those of the minority, perhaps even more crucially, those of the minority must tolerate the actions of those who dictate the rules of propriety in a community.

In Guterson's novel, there is a scene in which Kabuo, while on trial for a murder he did not commit, must listen to the victim's mother give testimony against his father, and for the sake of maintaining his integrity and innocence, he must tolerate her vitriol: He had felt his carefully constructed exterior crumbling when she spoke to the court so insultingly about his father. The desire had come over him to deny what she said, to interrupt her testimony with the truth about his father, a strong and tireless man, honest to a fault, kind and humble as well. But all of this he suppressed. (Guterson, 155). Kabuo must maintain his "carefully constructed exterior" as a model minority, no matter how

tenuous that representation may be given that he is on trial for murder. Were he to speak out against this woman, he would only serve to embolden her and the rest of the community's belief that he was a dangerous and subversive figure in the community.

In Chariandy's novel, Adele must put up with her son behaving condescendingly towards her, both due to her suffering from dementia and to her not having a formal Canadian education. While at times this condescension certainly seems reasonable, at others it evidently annoys Adele. When her son attempts to tell her about Trinidad, the country in which she grew up and about which he has only read, she says:

> "How old is you, child?"
> "Seventeen, Mother."
> "And what some boy who have seventeen year think he know about oil and Empire?"
> "I told you, Mother. I learned. I read it in books."
> "They does always tell the biggest stories in book" (Chariandy, 175).

Despite Adele's debilitation by dementia, she is still his mother possessing experiences and wisdom that far outreach that of her son, but because of her disability, she must tolerate his condescension towards her.

Acts of Generosity and Kindness Amid Waves of Intolerance

In both Chariandy's and Guterson's novels, characters suffer greatly from the intolerance of others: Kabuo from his internment, and later his wrongful imprisonment and near conviction for a crime he did not commit; Adele in the violence she suffers at the hands of American soldiers, the continual intolerance she faces from the Canadian people,

and even from her own family. But these characters also benefit greatly from acts of generosity and empathy that are brought about from attitudes of tolerance. In *Soucouyant*, because Adele's experiences in Canada are largely characterized by intolerance, she experiences no great acts of compassion or grace from the Canadian people, save her son and her nurse Meera who bears Trinidadian heritage as well. However, in more tolerant environments these acts occur far more frequently. In Carenage, after being assaulted and badly hurt by American soldiers, Adele is given life-saving medical aid by the people of Carenage, those who looked down on her and her mother. An act of tolerance also brings her son back into her life, when he returns to be with her despite how obviously difficult this is for him. Her son's return allows Adele to transmit her wisdom to him in the form of stories like that about the soucouyant, an evil spirit from Caribbean folklore. But perhaps more importantly, her son's return allows her to spend time and empathize with him during a period in which she inevitably feels extremely alienated and lonely.

In *Snow Falling on Cedars*, in the years preceding the war, tolerance allows for amicable, if not altogether homogenous, relations between Japanese-Americans and the rest of the San Piedro community. But once that tolerance breaks down, intolerance takes its place in the form of internment camps and unjust racial profiling. However, at the end of the novel, an act of grace and compassion by a member of the community vindicates Kabuo of any involvement in the "murder" with which he was charged. In the conclusion of the novel, while the jury remains undecided as to whether to convict Kabuo, Ishmael Chambers, a man who once secretly dated and still loves Kabuo's wife, Hatsue, of his own volition finds exonerating evidence to vindicate Kabuo of all wrongdoing. Ishmael sits on this evidence for one full day before

deciding to help Kabuo, because he, a racially prejudiced war veteran still in love with Kabuo's wife, still harbors resentment (449). The novel precariously hinges on this decision. During this period of indecision, Ishmael thinks of what Kabuo's attorney said about the prosecutor, "*He is counting on you to act on passions best left to a war of ten years ago*" (424), meaning the prosecutor hopes to convince the jury as to Kabuo's guilt based on racial prejudices which had remained since the Second World War. Ishmael thinks to himself, "But ten years was not really such a long time at all, and how was he to leave his passion behind ...?" (424). His "passion" refers both to his anger about losing his arm in the war and to his love for Hatsue, the woman whom he believes would become immediately available if Kabuo were found guilty. But despite his long-harbored resentment, Ishmael decides to submit the evidence and clears Kabuo's name (444). Through an enormous act of tolerance, Ishmael swallows his prejudices and lust in favor of helping Kabuo and the woman he loves. This act very clearly shows the ways tolerance affects goodwill in that Ishmael acts against societal and personal prejudices, and in favor of enduring heartache in order to vindicate Kabuo of all wrongdoing, an act which ultimately serves as a powerful symbol of future unity for his community. And while this act does not erase the difficult history which still lies between the Japanese and the rest of the San Piedro community, it shows that at the very least tolerance can bring about compassion and grace. It was in the more tolerant prewar period that Ishmael was able to fall in love with Hatsue in the first place, and that love, fostered in times of tolerance, served to be a powerful enough force for him to overcome his intolerance in the far less tolerant postwar period.

In both *Soucouyant* and *Snow Falling on Cedars*, tolerance is certainly shown to be favorable to intolerance, but as an end in itself its

desirability becomes ambivalent. In both texts, when characters are "tolerated" it is not always a pleasant experience. In *Soucouyant* the tolerant attitudes of Trinidadian and Canadian society make Adele an outsider, but in the former society, the tolerant Trinidadian community saves her life, however, in the latter, for Adele, tolerance does not appear conducive to any meaningful sense of goodwill in Canadian society. But on the other hand, within her family, the mutual tolerance between Adele and her son ultimately allows them to reconcile their relationship and love for one another. In *Snow Falling on Cedars*, the tolerant attitudes of the non-Japanese members of the San Piedro community, directed at those of Japanese ancestry, creates a stark ethnic division in the San Piedro community, but it is a division which allows for friendships and even love to be forged in the succeeding generations, as opposed to a division rooted intolerance, as can be seen in the practice of internment camps. In both texts, tolerance is certainly imperfect and for the most part discomfiting to those who endure it, but it is also obviously preferable to intolerance. So, what can be said about tolerance is that, in each of these texts, it is a foundation from which empathy can arise.

While intolerance negates empathy, tolerance, while certainly imperfect, promotes amicable engagement between peoples, and it is this very pursuit that allows for empathic connections to grow. This brings us back to the question posed at the beginning of this essay: "How is tolerance related to goodwill?" or in other words, how is putting up with someone related to the desire to unite with them? It seems that tolerance may not, in its own right, promote the desire to unite with others. However, the desire to enforce peace and stability among peoples of disparate backgrounds and social statuses may establish the preconditions through which empathy and compassion might arise.

Note on the Author

Jackson Mattocks completed his Bachelor of Arts (Honors) in English and History at the University of Manitoba. Following this, he taught conversational English at public schools in small towns across the Czech Republic. He is currently doing his MA in English at Dalhousie University, where he is now writing his thesis on the themes of childhood memory, shame, and empathy in the novels of Kazuo Ishiguro. He also serves as Book Review Editor for *The Dalhousie Review*, where he has published an interview with author Andrew Davidson. Jackson intends to continue his studies in English at the PhD level at the University of Calgary in the Fall of 2024.

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