

## LETTER FROM FOUNDING EDITOR, MELISSA MORRIS

The Motley is a community of scholars, readers, editors, reviewers, and storytellers bound by a shared love of learning and creation. As a journal based in Moh'kinstis (Calgary), we acknowledge the traditional Treaty 7 territory of the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani Nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy; the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations (Bears paw, Chiniki, and Goodstoney First Nations); and the Tsuut'ina Nation. This region is also home to the Otipemisiwak, the Métis Nation within Alberta (Nose Hill Métis District 5 and Elbow Métis District 6) within the historic Northwest Métis homeland. We express our deep gratitude to the Indigenous communities who have cared for this land and whose communication practices continue to guide our understanding of reciprocity, relationship, and respect. We recognize that traditional academia has long privileged colonial ways of thinking and conducting research. This bias has contributed to the marginalization of Indigenous voices and epistemologies. In our work, we aim to challenge these hierarchies by embracing multiple ways of knowing. By supporting Indigenous scholarship and amplifying Indigenous-led initiatives, we commit to fostering dialogue that moves us toward genuine reconciliation and restitution.

The legacies of colonialism extend far beyond Canada. They are woven into the global struggles of peoples resisting occupation, exploitation, and erasure. In that spirit, The Motley Journal stands in solidarity with those resisting systemic violence worldwide.

We call for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine and for an end to the genocides and humanitarian crises unfolding in Sudan, Congo, and Tigray. The right to self-determination and sovereignty is universal, and our commitment to truth, justice, and reconciliation demands that we speak up whenever these rights are denied.

This Special Issue belongs to the student authors who dared to put their ideas into the world. Understanding the intersection of social movements and media demands rigorous, engaged scholarship. Who better to lead this inquiry than students—the generation who came of age alongside these movements, and who often stand on the front lines of change themselves?

Throughout the last two years, we witnessed students being brutalized across the country for sit-ins, encampments, and occupations, which called for the end to the genocide of the Palestinian people by the Israeli government. We saw professors silenced, news broadcasters fired, and research wiped from public databases. We have a duty to push back against these injustices.

For this issue, we encouraged undergraduate and graduate students from across Canada's post-secondary institutions to contribute their voices, analyses, and stories. Your insights are vital to understanding and shaping our collective future. At a time where student voices have been silenced across campuses in North America, including acts of police violence against peaceful protestors at our own institution, it is The Motley's job to continue to be a place for students to share their excellent, thought provoking research, and to push back against colonial frameworks, including the idea of academic institutions as arbiters of truth and justice themselves.

This publication would not exist without our faculty partners who volunteered their time to review submissions, promote the journal, and champion student research. We are especially grateful to **Dr. Maria Victoria Guglietti**, whose mentorship, insight, and tireless support have nurtured The Motley from its earliest days.

I want to express my personal thanks to **Skye Baxter** and **Sheroog Kubur**. When I founded The Motley in 2022, during my final year as an undergraduate, I met **Skye**, then only in her second year, and instantly knew her passion for student research would guide this journal into the future. I tossed her into the fray of running a journal while attending full time university and for the past two years, she has made this job look easy, leading The Motley team with capable, and visionary hands. Now she passes this role onto **Sheroog Kubur**. Thank you, **Sheroog**, for recognizing the value in the challenges, late nights, and dedication that come with serving as Managing Editor while pursuing your studies. This is no small undertaking, and I have full confidence that your insight, leadership, and creativity will guide The Motley toward an even brighter and stronger future.

To our readers: thank you. In a time when attention is a scarce resource, we are honoured that you've chosen to spend yours with us. We hope that the voices you encounter in these pages challenge, inspire, and move you to think differently about the power of media and the movements it amplifies.

We look forward to sharing more of your stories, your research, and your insights in future issues. It has been an honour to be the founder of this space for academic expression, I look forward to what the future holds for The Motley!

With gratitude and solidarity,

**Melissa Morris**

Founding Editor, The Motley Undergraduate Journal