

Project 2: Mask Exhibition

Course Code & Course Name: MSJ11211 Mass Communication

Project Name: Hercules No Hero

Project Description

That semester our theme was *“Broken Window Theory.”* The theory says that if one broken window is left unrepaired, soon others will be broken too. In social terms, it means if a crime or wrongdoing is ignored, it can spread and encourage more people to follow. At that time, there was a news story that caught everyone’s attention. A man took the law into his own hands and killed a rapist. Many people on social media were celebrating him, calling him a hero. But here lies the problem: while his act seemed like justice, it was also a crime killing is still killing. The cheering and support he received gave him even more motivation, and it created a dangerous message for others. Through my project, I tried to connect this with the Broken Window Theory. The vigilante himself became the “broken window.” If his actions are not stopped or questioned, then more people may feel encouraged to take justice into their own hands. This can lead to a cycle of extra-judicial killings, where people commit crimes in the name of justice. My mask design showed this idea. The mask had the face of a vigilante hidden behind a black screen, someone with no identity. I wanted to show how he could be anyone, and how dangerous it becomes when society allows or even celebrates such acts without addressing the root problem.

Project Justification

In Bangladesh, most rape victims never receive justice. Cases often collapse because of weak evidence, loopholes in the legal system, or court proceedings that drag on for years. This failure created the space for a man who called himself Hercules to step in. He decided to take matters into his own hands and killed three rapists. After his first killing, when a rapist was released, Hercules left a chilling note on the crime scene: “I am a rapist and this is my justice.” This message spread quickly, and many people on social media began praising him. They saw him as a hero, someone finally doing what the system could not. But this is where the danger lies. Killing even if it is of a criminal is still a crime. Justice, no matter how slow or flawed, must come through a fair trial. If we start celebrating extra-judicial killings, we create what the Broken Window Theory warns about: one broken window that, if left unfixed, will lead to many more being broken. In this case, one vigilante killing, if not stopped, could inspire others to follow the same path and commit crimes in the name of justice. My mask project tried to capture this message. The mask showed a faceless vigilante, hidden behind a black screen. This represented Hercules, an anonymous figure who could be anyone, blending into society. The mask was my way of saying that this kind of justice must not be encouraged. The broken window must be repaired, which means Hercules himself must also face justice, so that society does not fall into a cycle of lawlessness.

No Hero

The theme of this semester in my own language :

The theme this semester CI forum was based on the 'The broken Window theory '. Broken window theory is a criminological theory that shows visible signs of crime, anti-social behavior and civil disorder create an urban environment that encourages further crime and disorder including serious crimes

My message :

The message on the mask was about the recent vigilante killer 'Hercules' who killed the rape victims in vigilante style. The bodies he killed were found with a note confessing their crime saying that he was the rapist and this is his punishment. It got attention of news and also the mass people on various social media. Fascinated by the style of the murder the youth loved. The news was shared several time because to them it was justice as our legal system is delayed in giving justice. They even compared the vigilante from many vigilante super hero like the DC character Batman. Experts believes that getting all those positive reviews the vigilante Hercules started killing after one week of the first murder. And again with in few days. The first murder he did was a crime, people should not have supported his crime. It is believed that those positive replies got him in killing so frequent that he committed three murders within 2 weeks. According to broken window theory, if a window is broken it should be mend or it will attract other crimes. Similarly the crimes the vigilante Hercules did was not less vicious than the crime of rape suspects he killed. One cannot give justice to a criminal by committing another crime. The window was broken when he first killed the suspect. He deserved the same amount of hatred the rape suspects got. It might or might not have change his intention but the least people can do is acknowledge that a window is broken meaning by not supporting the murder because it is also a crime.

The message on the mask :

The mask is the imaginary face of the vigilante Hercules. Hercules was mainly the son of Zeus was the king of Olympus. He was known for his heroic deeds. But this Hercules from Bangladesh who took a heroic name was no hero at all. The mask delivers this message that we should not support any crime. Not even on a criminal. The face on the mask is the vigilante Hercules who broke the window several times and people kept supporting his crime as it was an easy verdict. Vigilante justice is just a fictional thing. In practical vigilante justice is not acceptable. This mask is delivers this message according to broken window Theory, the vigilante Hercules has broken window by murdering and the people who supported him.

To be honest the mask had only Hercule's imaginary evil face. I Didn't put Any arts or illustration so that I can attract people about it. People wanted to know about it then I explained the message.

The process of painting :

The process of painting was a very hard work. The first mask collapsed as we were beginners. And For some inconvenience the second layer didn't dry properly. And it was too late then. We had only one day. Then we decided to paint on that with oil paint. Suddenly the paint started to come of. Then with majority decision we used permanent wall paint. Then finally it dried and got exhibited.







Exhibition venue :

The exhibition venue was Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. It is the biggest exhibition hall of Bangladesh. It is only 30minute road without traffic from our University. We exhibited on gallery 3 of 5th floor. People from different ages came here. There was another pregame going of children beside our venue. Children came with their parents. So luckily we got audience of different ages.

Feedback :

We got all sorts of feedbacks. The best one I've heard was from the chief guest the assistant police super who said, “after seeing all those Arts I was not sure that it was from journalism department or fine arts department “

So this was about the whole program. Our posters didn't got that attention as I planned. But some of them asked. What was it about so I asked if they heard about the vigilante Hercules. I wanted to know about their view. Most of them supported him. Then I explained why we shouldn't support him. I tried to show the consequences such as what if more vigilante gets inspired and starts to take matter in own hand. Then when I showed facts and made my point they understood and agreed with me.

I tried to explain the broken window theory. The audiences got the theory and they said they would reflect on it.

Realization :

It was during first semester when I first visited a CI forum. Everything was so confusing when I first entered. But then by doing it from my own everything is crystal clear now. It is a very good opportunity to express your thoughts through art. I realized that expressing Thoughts can be expressed not only in paper but also in all sorts of stuffs. Our University doesn't believe in only pen and paper. They encourage us to be Creative. And our course teacher Mahmudun Nabi Sir and his teaching assistant Nabila Akter apu was so inspiring and helped us throughout the whole process of making the mask

Conclusion

Even though the topic of this CI forum was very critical but the students managed to portray their Thoughts and got applauded by the guests and audience. I would like to say the more critical the topic the more thinking student will invest. So I hope the topics of CI forum needs to be more interesting and applying.

Learning Outcome : Through this project, I learned how art can be used as a powerful medium to express complex social issues. Despite the technical challenges during the painting process, teamwork and creative problem-solving helped us complete the mask and present it successfully. Exhibiting at Shilpakala Academy gave me the chance to interact with a diverse audience, explain the Broken Window Theory, and engage people in meaningful discussions about justice and vigilantism. This experience taught me that critical social ideas can be communicated beyond pen and paper, and that creativity combined with awareness can inspire reflection and dialogue in society.