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2016 Literary Review (no. 29)

Sigma Tau Delta

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Sigma Tau Delta 

 SINCE 1924

INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH HONORS SOCIETY

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Foreword

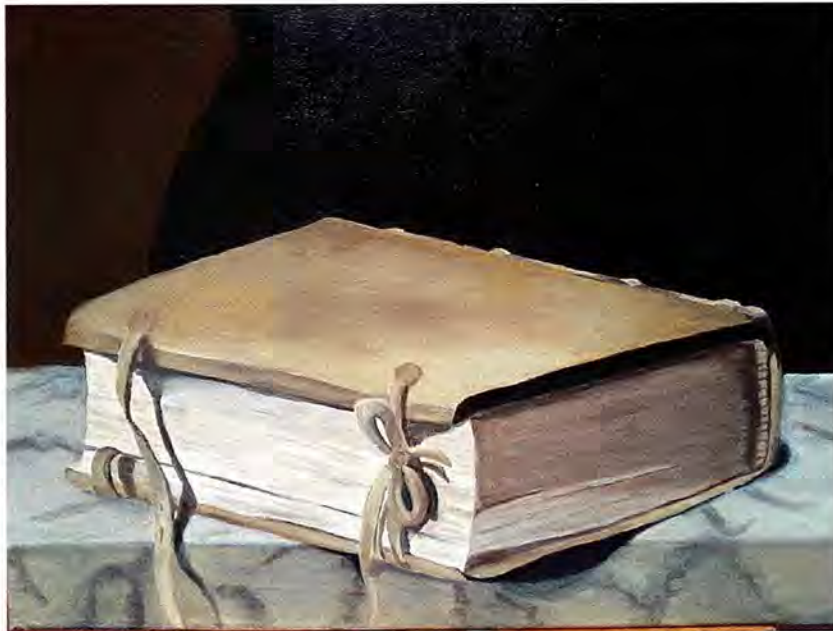
Dear Reader,

One day at the end of my freshmen year at Whittier College, I opened my email to a delightful surprise. My sonnet had been chosen for publication in the annual Literary Review. Although I had been writing for many years, never had I seen my work in print. Yet, a few weeks later, I held in my hand my first ever published work.

Fast forward to this balmy April day, four years later. I find myself not only a published writer, but a world traveler, Co-President of Upsilon Sigma, Editor of this publication, and soon-to-be college graduate. I never would have imagined that entering a small poem would catapult me into the adventures I have had. But it did. So I never want you to believe, dear reader, when someone says “writing doesn’t pay.” My tax man recently said this me, but retracted his statement after I read to him an excerpt of my food and identity research paper, written from my experiences on a Grecian island last summer, all supported by a very strong and generous legacy of donors. And after I showed him a copy of the fellowship check, all \$7,500 of it. (Tax-free, I will add).

The creativity and academic prowess present in this year’s literary review is just a glimpse of what I have encountered in every classroom and around this campus. I will treasure these wonderful writings and beautiful artworks, and I hope they will inspire the next literary-minded freshman with big, bright dreams. Do not only travel far and wide, but look inside, too. You’ll find all you need to make those big, bright dreams become an amazing and astonishing reality.

Rebecca Briggs Baker, Editor & Co-President



“Book” by Amanda Blazey’16

Contest Winners

English Department Writing Contest Winners *

Each year, students enter an annual writing contest judged by the English faculty and are honored with prize money and certificate at Honors Convocation.

Scholarly Writing

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| 1 st place | Brianna Sahagian | Lorca's Poetics of Duende |
| 2 nd place | Matthew Voegtle | Concerning Swift's Problematic Tale |
| 3 rd place | Priscilla Lam | Robert Frost: Individuality and Isolation |

Fiction

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1 st place | Kourtney Brodnax | Family Ties |
| 2 nd place | Nicholas Barreras | Puzzled |

Creative Nonfiction and Journalism

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 st place | Ashley Mora | "Quindecennial Dreams" |
| 2 nd place | Keanna Garcia | "Film, Fan Base and Franklins" |
| 2 nd place | Sommer Hernandez | "So Others May Live" |
| 2 nd place | Rika Drew-King | "Untitled" |

Poetry

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 st place | Taylor Charles | "The Truth Lay Only in Quiet" |
| 2 nd place | Brianna Sahagian | "God Wrapped Me In Fire Flies" |
| 3 rd place | Brianna Martinez | "Heart of Gold" |

Honorable Mentions

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Brianna Sahagian | "I Saw" |
| Shaydon Golub | "Serotonin" |
| Troy Chavez | "Typical Fashion of a Righteous Brutality" |
| Brandy Barajas | "Weeping Coconut" |

Auntie's Bakery and Sigma Tau Delta Poetry Contest *

Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honors Society and Auntie's Bakery celebrated the spirit of poetry, coffee and community by printing poems from over 70 students, faculty and staff on mugs that will be used at Auntie's Bakery. Three winning poems were selected and were awarded prize money and certificates at Honors Convocation.

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1st place | Brianna Sahagian | "Prism" |
| 2nd place | Rebecca Briggs Baker | "Traffic" |
| 2nd place | Derek Blankenship | "Biking Beijing" |

Samsara by Matthew Aranda

Like salmon, tears return to breed and die:
Both pregnant pools give birth to fish, they swim
Down creeks of cheek, away from home: our eye.
They fall obtrusive towards our downward brim,
Grow older in the wrinkles that they trek,
They feed by contact on their parent strife,
And learn how the dark pores can scar and wreck
A happy ocean, a fresh now salty life.
They reach the chin, and so they must turn back,
They jump into the air, evaporate,
Sink into the iris as a flashback,
Repeat and seek more sad to procreate.

 Their generations' strength alive and bold,
 A pain that breeds near corpses new and old.

Snowflake by Matthew Aranda

The transparent walls
Obscure which path I should take.
A reachable path is as unclear
As the sun in a cloud.
The dangerous wonder across this frictionless pavement
Is an escape from fog.
I reflect in the powdery eyes of all these
Frozen droplets on the walls that
Slowly descend to the floor,
Reminding me of my own sliding towards an ultimate halt
On cracked ice.

This flake falls through a larger world than mine,
As if in a violent plunge,
And my last sight
Is my body bitten by the frost,
Dead, black.
So the only traveling of myself
Is by my tears,
May they roll to the floor
And melt and mend the broken roads of ice.

As I arrive with a cohort of flakes,
Us cowards who ran from the clouds,
I can somewhat tell the sun is out,
Though my dead senses cannot be sure,
And all the walls of my snowflake
Fall and clear a path.
I, a blind speck,
Gently arrived to this goal,
A paralyzed breath
Evaporating into a transcendent soul.

Excerpts from “Dining with Zeus: Food, Travel and Memoir”

by Rebecca Briggs Baker

I am a traveler of expectation. Perhaps this is because of where I was born. While waiting in the drugstore line, Los Angeles often boasts varied yet dazzling postcards of itself. The little 5-by-7 squares captures beauty both natural and man-made. The sun dips orange, red, pink, and purple into the Pacific Ocean, the foreground palm trees always black and back-lit. The Hollywood sign stark white against sandy mountains and valley city. Then the view from sign, the valley all decadent city-lights for miles and miles across. Then, in embarrassingly big and gold font like the iconic sign, ‘LOS ANGELES’ or ‘HOLLYWOOD’ takes up 1/3 of the postcard. The postcards boast. The postcards beckon. The postcards are the traveler-of-expectation’s ambition and prize.

Even though I am not yet twenty-two, I have traveled quite extensively. At first, to Mexico, then to China and Indonesia, then to Ireland, England, and France, and now, finally, Greece. Everywhere I have gone, I have seen these countries’ postcards in their airports or market kiosks, their most iconic image all the traveler of expectation seeks. White sand beaches, a pina colada. Yachts in Hong Kong, dwarfed by skyscrapers’ vibrant lightshow. Rainforest, waterfall, and maybe a monkey. Blarney Castle, a four-leafed-clover. And finally, both towers in London and Paris (though, as such drastically different cousins, one often wonders how they can both be called towers). When in these countries, I have bought their postcards, slipping them through the mailbox maw -- black, white, red, green, but never the blue of home. They travel home, admired by my recipients, perhaps treasured.

But propped against mantelpieces or slipped in drawers, the postcard are just paper, ink, and stamp. They are frail and easy reminders that a traveler of expectation is not a good traveler to be. The perfect postcard captures not just the sender’s expectations but her recipient’s, her friends and family happy to keep glossy photo on simple paper stock as the most esteemed document of true, satisfying travel. The expectations are small and plain. *Was your pina colada tasty? Did you ride in a yacht? Did you feed a monkey? Did you find a four-leaf clover? Weren’t the towers big?* The answer’s always a frail and easy ‘yes’.

When I traveled to Greece I planned on buying postcards to send home. I planned on warm days on its beautiful beaches and hikes among homely pines. I planned on eating fresh fish, and I planned on drinking good wine. I planned on eating olives and I planned on posing with ruins. For those who receive a postcard from me, I’ll be saying ‘yes’, ‘yes’, ‘yes’. I’ll be the traveler of expectation they expect me to be.

But for the few who don’t get postcards, I’m a traveler of a different kind. For them, I bring home stories. For them, the stories unwind in familiar cafes, in parks, in my living room.

For them, no frail or glossy paper would do. For them, I give them expectations of a different kind.

The kind that says, ‘yes’ asks ‘why’...

•••

Bear with a memory of mine. On Thassos, we made bread. Tassos and his workers loaded the stone oven with wood, and lit it at around 7am. By 10am, the oven was roaring. Our bread would be put in only at 1200 degrees. No thermometer needed. If Tassos couldn’t keep his hand in the oven for even a second, it was ready. But was our dough? After letting the yeasty prozemi rise and fall with each meal of honey over the course of several days, we had to mix it in with the whole grain wheat, salt, and oil. The bread had to be worked. On the first bread-making morning, my teacher reprimanded my dough-kneading attempts. He took the bread and aggressively pushed it into the table, but fast enough so it wouldn’t stick. When he handed it back to me, I copied his speed, and realized how I’d gone wrong. I was so busy thinking – about articles I needed to read, about research questions to write down, about posts to my blog – that I hadn’t been paying attention to the bread. At home, in the States, bread is packaged, perfect square loaves that never require a stone-oven, three hours of my morning and aching wrists. The bread in Greece demands time, attention and physical effort, and the bread at home does not. But the bread at home doesn’t taste like the wonderful bread I made in Greece.

While worrying about how I was going to document the morning, I wasn’t even mentally present. Bread-making called for a union of the body and mind, a totally holistic activity that I simply wasn’t used to. At home in America, the premium on multi-tasking is high, and it left me totally unprepared for the focus needed for Greek cooking. While searching databases, libraries and my books for examples of “cultural influence”, I didn’t realize I had everything I needed in a simple morning of bread-making. “For we do not see our own food,” writes Barthes, “or, worse, we assume that it is insignificant” (28).

I saw the bread for what it was. A stark reminder that I was not home. Home was where convenience was king, while here on Thassos, the laborious production of food was, in fact, a celebration: the same day-to-day schedule, the repetition of creating yeast, waiting days for it to rise, rising early to heat up the oven, spending an hour beating the dough into taffy-like submission, until finally it and several brethren were placed in the oven, for many to burn terribly on the bottom and be fed to the white, green-eyed cats that littered the island.

Wasp Season by Rebecca Briggs Baker

It's wasp season -- patrolling over August flowers,
dispersing the bees.

Not here for colors or splash, like bathers that spring up
at summer beaches and wither in September.

The pollen blows away,
and the flowers won't return.

(No, a dirt-digger, mudslinger, assassin
sprung me from the garden and stole the color away.)

It's wasp season -- trespassing the porches, looking for a thin spot
between the town and the sea, where their mudhomes can stick.
They poked fun at our ugly, mudhouse, and the workers buzzing about.
Eating up my food and telling digger jokes
and singing to that girl back home, left for digging,
and how she misses them.

(Songs I thought I'd always fall asleep to in your arms.)

It's wasp season -- droning over the graveyard ignoring the flowerpots.
Stealing the sacred earth for mudhomes, inserting them
between etched dates and mossy names.

It's wasp season -- and you, and your graveside wasps,
are telling me, I, too,
can survive this winter,
and all the August flowers
without you.

Weeping Coconut by Brandy Barajas *

The coconut's hair is
frail and limp, like a disabled animal.
Her insides a rich pearl white,
with bowling balls that
bleed white palpable tears.

Her partner has skinny falling hair
and a round stomach—
gently aligned to hold her steady.
But his eyes linger, famished for the
luscious melon, the seductive orange and voluptuous tomato.

The bare melon cradles him,
the orange reveals cleavage
of her bare bosom, and
the tomato leans on him for sex.

While the coconut, the perfect heroine,
is strong and reeks of talent
can only weep and sigh
con todo cariño.



PUZZLED by Nicholas Barreras *

The sound of moaning permeates the room and the people responsible for it are completely oblivious. Fucking fantastic.

“You think they know?”

I turn around and see Ronnie has swiveled his chair into my cubicle.

I turn back. I have work to do. A stack of papers regarding the “minutes” of the meetings that have taken place within the last couple weeks that my lazy boss wants me to look over to see if they are grammatically correct. Something HE should be doing.

“They could be the kind of people who like others to know they’re doing it. Like to have people hear. Or watch.” Ronaldo smirks in a way that tells me dirty thoughts have just entered his head.

“That’s a thing?”

Ronnie nods his head, smirk still intact. “Yes, Dom.” He knows that nickname irks me. Leave it to one nice, well-intentioned older, Bea-Arthur-look-a-like to keep calling me “Dom” instead of “Damien” as I helped her find the specific puzzle of waves hitting a generic beach. This is why I shouldn’t relay stories to Ronnie.

I push his chair away, back in the direction of his cubicle, which is located to the left of mine. “Go and do your job.”

“There is no one calling in right now,” he says as he swivels back farther into my cubicle this time. “You do know where we work, right?”

“Yes, and I would like to do my job. Plus, we do more than answer calls, you know.” Not really. We pretty much spend most of our shifts answering calls, being glorified secretaries in this age of decreasing puzzle interest. I just want to get home. Leave this tiny floor with twenty cubicles cramped pretty close to one another in the center, one office, two restrooms, and a lunch room. Besides Ronnie and myself, Walter and Vicky are here. And they are not working either.

“What do you have to do right now?” Ronaldo’s eyebrows perk up.

I stare at him with as much exasperation as I can muster. Smize. Isn’t that what Tyra Banks says to do with her eyes? Smize = smile with your eyes. Holy crap, I need to stop watching TV with my sister.

I can’t help but chuckle a little. Ronaldo’s eyebrows raise a little higher now.

“Nothing, just had a stupid thought.” I move closer to my desk – to the “glorious” stack of papers.

“Dirty, stupid thoughts?”

“Not everything has to be about sex you perv.”

“Uh huh. Keep telling yourself that.” Ronnie looks in the direction of the closed office in the corner of our floor. “I wonder how it started.”

“Why?” Fuck. Why do I egg him on? I have work to do.

“I mean, you always see on TV and shit about a boss fraternizing with one of the employees, but, you never really come across it in real life.”

“And you wanna know how it started? Jealous, Ronnie?”

“Yeah, I’m fucking curious. Who made the first move?” Ronnie’s stare never deviates from the closed, oak-wood door with the faded gold knob. “And I am jealous. Not like I want to join them or wish I was screwing one of them, but, that they get to have sex right now.” He turns to look at me with this sad look that I can swear I’ve seen on my pug when he wants to go outside. “They are not in a dry spell.”

“Man, you are seriously bitching hard right now.” I normally don’t throw the word “bitch” around that often. Beth doesn’t like it.

Just then, the sound of my phone impedes on the space the moaning and grunting has filled in the background of our conversation.

“Duty calls.”

Ronnie salutes to me and swivels back to his cubicle like a high school student who is bored in their Computers class.

“Hello, this is Puzzles Puzzles Puzzles Incorporation. Damien speaking. How can I be of assistance today?”

“Hi, I recently bought a puzzle from one of your stores. Um... and as I was finishing it up, I noticed that I was missing a piece.” Disregarding the “um,” the voice on the other end of the line sounded determined. Sounded like this phone call needed to be made and quickly. Her tone was serious without being asshole-y. Her tone was warm – comforting. Felt like a cool breeze on a hot day. If that makes any fucking sense. She didn’t speak too fast or mumble any words either. Weird. Not the typical caller.

“Oh, I see. Sorry to hear. We can reimburse you the amount for the puzzle. Would you mind-”

“No, no. I was wondering if you guys could send me that missing piece. I can tell you which one it is.”

What the hell? That’s new. “What the... I mean what, miss?”

“Can you guys mail the last piece I need to complete the puzzle? It’s the puzzle of...” the voice trails off a bit. “... Of 10 kittens playing with a big ball of light blue yarn in the middle of a living room.”

“I... We don’t do that... I don’t think we can do that. I can reimburse you for the puzzle, though.” Who wouldn’t want the money?

“That’s ok. I would just like the one piece, please.”

“Can you give me a moment, please? Let me see what I can do.”

I put the phone down and walk over to Ronaldo. He is playing Family Feud on his phone as Florence + the Machine softly murmur in the background, coming from his computer. The caller’s sweet, but, determined voice still rings in my head.

“Hey, can we mail people single puzzle pieces?”

“What?” Ronnie can’t help but laugh a little as he says it.

“Yeah, this woman is asking for a single piece that is missing from the puzzle she bought.”

“That’s new.”

“Right?!”

Walter grunts a little louder than usual.

“You can ask Walt. Sounds like he is almost done.”

Dim Angel in Pitch Darkness by Trent Beauchamp

just- remember this- if nothing else:

no matter

how dark I may get-

how bleak things may become-

how empty the echoes of my heart beat

how hollow I become-

you are -if nothing more-

one of the flickering halogen bulbs-

dim angel in pitch darkness-

a small light where light sometimes does not exist

Signal Fire by Trent Beauchamp

now cold and lonely- we light bonfires on

the cliffs- large enough to light the night-

and signal over miles of darkened shoreline
where the high tide picks up stones and in
swooping gestures drops them-

the sounding shore like rattlesnakes- the
glowing luminescence of plankton on the
whispering shore- illuminate the abyss
below for fleeting moments- only to return to
darkness- on this bleak embankment of the bluffs
overlooking late night California
shores-

and the ocean that could swallow us within
its vast expanses with its lava flows and
trenches- in this night seems so inviting yet
so frightening with so much all unknown-
uncertainty awaits should we set upon
Pacific waters where the freighters break the
darkness- split the quiet with their lights and-
with propellers-

and the sea she sounds her discontent upon-
the darkened shore crashing-
rocks upon
each other-
sometimes smallish pebble whispers
sometimes tumultuous tidal roar

Hunger by Derek Blankenship

I arrived at Linda's apartment early. The door was locked, but I found my old key—now the spare—underneath the fake plant that crowded her hallway. Apartment #202 hadn't changed since the day

before, but it looked completely different. I took a seat on her red couch. She had picked it out when we were shopping for loveseats.

“Oh, William, I love it! It’s so bright and happy and red,” she had said. “It’ll be perfect for the living room.”

I loved it too, because she did, but while I sat there waiting for her I could only think about how uncomfortable it now felt. It had become a sorrowful, scarlet slab of rock. My stomach growled. Shit, I thought. After getting Linda’s call, I must have been too excited and forgotten to eat. I had rushed straight to her apartment hoping for the best, which was a bad choice.

As I waited there with a growling stomach, wishing I didn’t care as much about her as I did, I noticed a stout plastic bag of dirt brown almonds strewn across the coffee table beside me. I’ve never been a big fan of almonds—especially raw ones like those—but Linda’s a real health nut so tried to get used to them. I picked up the package, brought it to my nose, and inhaled plastic: that is, the absence of all scents natural and exciting.

I rose from my seat and threw the bag of almonds across the room. They flew into the kitchen and behind the breakfast nook where I could avoid sensing the very existence of such an appalling excuse for food. I never really did get used to them.

Linda stood silently in the doorway, one hand holding the brass knob and the other clutching her keys. Brown eyes opened wide, she stared at me.

I told her I was hungry.

“Then why did you throw those almonds across the room?” she asked.

I asked her if she wanted to eat.

“I already ate,” she said, sounding frustrated.

I paused, looked at the kitchen where the almonds were waiting, looked at the uncomfortable red couch, and looked back at her.

“I hate this fucking red couch,” I said.

I left apartment #202, went home, and ate spaghetti.

Open Window

If I had magic powers,
I would become the wind,
so that I could be the breeze,
to blow across your skin.

Biking Beijing *

Before you make a mistake,
no one will stop for you.
When you make a mistake,
no one will stop for you.
After you make a mistake,
no one will stop for you.
The only one stopped,
will be you.

Don't Kill the Author by Derek Blankenship

In his famous 1968 essay, "The death of the author," Roland Barthes makes two important yet controversial claims about literature. The first, that "every text is eternally written here and now" (315).

By this statement, Barthes means that the author—to whom power over literature was wrongly granted from the “culmination of capitalist ideology”—is not, in fact, the source of meaning in his works (313). This may seem to be an echo of the anti-intentionalist and anti-affective tenets of New Criticism; however, what separates Barthes from this school is that, in his view, meaning does not exist concretely within in a text, as it does for the New Critics. Rather, both the text and its meaning are created “here and now” by the consumer of the text. Following this, Barthes’ second (and final) claim in the essay is that “the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author” (316). That is to say, in order for readers (with their superior and more numerous meanings) to exist, the “Author God” and his singular, “theological meaning” must die (315). While I agree with Barthes that there is little value in granting the author ultimate power over meaning, I yet believe that his controversial claims about literature are somewhat melodramatic, and ultimately false. This I will now show.

Barthes first claim about the spatial and temporal conditions of the text must be qualified. While I agree that the meaning of a text is imperatively tied to its present reading (or writing, whichever word you prefer), it is yet foolish to suggest that the initial act of creation and attribution of meaning did not happen, or that it does not matter, or that the author’s initial meaning cannot be found with a great deal of accuracy. One need only look so far as the English seminar courses at my own Whittier College to see evidence of this. They are structured as historical surveys, and the class is consequently concerned with the circumstances in which the author wrote. As we learn, those long-dead authors are not, in fact, merely an “instance [of] writing” (314). They lived and breathed just as you do now, and to ignore that fact is to ignore relevant (and helpful) information. A reading of *Paradise Lost* without the historical and religious context of Milton’s experience will of course produce some meaning and hold some value; however, it will simultaneously be blind to many nuanced interpretations, as well as challenged in discovering the more universal ones.

Translation is another good example. One might say that the act of translation comes also with an unavoidable distortion of meaning. While I agree that this is the case—one cannot, in fact, absolutely communicate the full meaning of a source text through translation—that is not to say that the translated text cannot be understood as it was intended with extra effort. In fact, an understanding of the author and the culture they lived in would be essential to the reading of a foreign text. To ignore the “then and there” conditions of the text in favor of your “here and now” reading would be to improperly frame the text only within your personal experience, rather than within the context of its progenitor. Consequently, you would be robbed of one of the primary benefits of reading foreign literature. That is, a greater understanding of a foreign culture through an exploration of the foreign author’s text and meaning.

It follows that Barthes’ final statement of the essay, that the author must die such that the reader may be born, is also false. It is oversimplified, and sets up an unnecessary dialectic between reader and writer. Barthes is right, of course, that the author is no God, and cannot take full credit for his writing. He is, in part, a “mediator, shaman, or relator” who performs a narrative that preexists in his society, and he is not fully deserving of “the greatest importance to the ‘person’ of the author” (313). It is also true that “the text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (315). It is not the pure creative genius of the author, but rather the clever combination of signs that are not belonging only to him, but to all speakers of those signs. This is all true, yet it does not necessitate the death of the author. He is, after all, a part of that multitude of “centers of cultures” that is his context. Furthermore, he does create new meaning. Authors have done so since the earliest writings, even if it has been dependent upon existing signs. Literature is very much an iterative process. A reader reads, and then responds not only with their reading of the text, but also with the writing of new texts. And thus the cycle of the creation and discovery of meaning continues. We as readers—and as writers—are connected in the process of creating meaning, and we cannot escape that interdependency. As the linguists tell us, the relationship between form and

meaning is arbitrary, and the meaning of signs is in many ways simply an agreement. Stanley Fish might use the word “interpretive communities to explain this concept. Though no matter how you describe it, the relationship is there, and it is necessary. And—contrary to Barthes explosive claims—does not necessitate the exclusion of the author, let alone his death.

Where are you? by Anders Blomso

I bow my head at the altar, the Crescent, the Cross.

I let the words tumbled from my lips, again and again and again.

I sing the songs, I pray the psalms.
My faux faith connects me to a million others,
An umbilical cord connecting a child to his mother...

... But still I feel cold and companionless,
A thin line of smoke amidst a field of ash.
A miniscule bubble crushed within the singularity of the Sea.
I've no time for dogma or fanaticism.
But all the same, I cry out to the dark:
"Where are you?"
And in the ensuing silence I hope to know a reply.

Selected Poems by Emily Bradford

Thing with Feathers

Inside me is a small-hearted bird
(I think its only me who hears him hiss)

Thinking they would mind him is absurd—
My bird my heart is hope—uncured—
Brought forth in a rotten kiss

Yet I could not see-to-see—all blurred
In my mind there was no need (kiss)
In a landfill find a weed (bliss)
Or loud chirp—hope—my brain stirred.

Hiss

This is not the garden I had in mind

A thumbtack, a box, a ripped sweater
A stained mug, a dated calendar,
A rubber band, an old shoe, myself
I devour objects you left behind.

Family Ties (Excerpt) by Kourtney Brodnax *

“Man, I’ve got warrants in Kansas City AND Missouri. I’m hella happy to be out in California where the twelve can’t get me! I can do whatever the fuck I want out here!” Ant said. He threw his head back, and took a three-in-one burning shot of Hennessy.

As I hand the bottle to him, he replies, “This about the size of the bottle I drink first!” Then I ask him what he meant by “first,” and he responds, “This is before I hit the store and get me a full size. One for later, a couple backwoods and we juggin’.”

Where Ant is from, 32% of men his age have more than five drinks in one day. We were only on our way to my car. It was about eleven am.

Who in the hell did you choose to share a bond with for the rest of your life?! I say to my cousin Jayden, in my head, of course. Right now I’m unsure of how to press my favorite cousin about this issue without seeming “too white, too judgmental and smug.” She’s in the back seat, daydreaming out the window, listening to what I think is a bullshit conversation. I want to hear about your goals in life, Jayden. Are you going to take care of your family? Where will you be in 10 years? Will my favorite cousin be content and safe? At this point I want to call her out. Why are you with him? These are my questions, internally, as we to a complete stop at the intersection. I glue my eyes to the car in front of us while biting my bottom lip and tightly gripping the pink cover over my steering wheel, fighting the urge to speak. Don’t be childish, I remind myself, this is only their first day in town in about 10 years. We drive past a corner store, which might have been a stimulus.

“What time y’all liquor stores close?” Ant asks.

I say, “Hella late and some are 24 hours.”

“WHAT! EVEN ON SUNDAYS!?”

Is this real life? “Yeah, why wouldn’t they be?” I answer back.

“Oh damn, in Kansas, everything closed on Sundays.”

“Well in Kansas--“

“Nah, don’t say that. I’m from Missouri not Kansas,” Ant snaps back.

He’s already feeling tipsy, cutting me off and saying he’s better than my mom’s family from Wyandotte County.

Anthony is a twenty two year old light skin African American man who stands with swag at 5’7 150 pounds. The deep waves in his hair and goatee are always well kept, as the brown hard bristle brush in his left pocket makes sure his waves keep everyone sea sick. He brushes consistently, or more like every time there’s a mirror around. But that is after he adjusts his sagging True Religion jeans, Gucci belt and Polo collared shirt. To Ant, everyday is a day to flex on Facebook no matter what block you’re from.

“Oh, excuse me young cool ass nigga.” We shared a laugh as we pull up to the Chase ATM. Everything he deals with is in cash. Little does he know I’m laughing because it’s so sad it’s funny. But we are the pilots of our own lives right?

Before coming out to Los Angeles, Ant left the show-me state with warrants for his arrest over 18 unpaid parking tickets, driving without insurance, driving with a suspended license, drug possession and failure to appear in court. Thus leaving him at a grand total of \$2300 owed in state debt plus the two times Jayden had to bail him out of jail. For Ant, growing up in Jackson County, Missouri on Vineyard and 39th puts him only an hour from Ferguson, Missouri, the home of Michael Brown and epicenter of ongoing civil rights, “hands up, don’t shoot” protests. According to the Washington Post, African American males make up 85% of all traffic stops made by Ferguson police and 96% of all arrests due to outstanding warrants. Overall, Missouri, similar to Kansas, is about 11% black and 82% white with a household income of about \$42,000.

But Ant, instead of saving up to pay off his parking tickets in order to clear his name, spends his \$15 an hour Post Office paycheck on weed and designer clothes. So, it’s easy to live in this part of town because not only is

the cost of living 5.9% lower than the U.S. average, all he has to worry about is groceries while his mother pays the mortgage. He also used to have a black 2006 Pontiac Grand Am, but it “caught craps” and died.

I make a right and merge onto the 405 freeway headed south for a fun day of parasailing. I don't allow anyone to smoke in my car though and if my mom sees this Snapchat of him with an open bottle in my passenger seat, she's still liable to whoop my ass no matter how “grown and in college” I think I am. Ant respects the no-chieving rule, but a pint size of Henny in that brown paper bag for after coming down from his high and elevating his cross faded levels, that's routine.

As the wind blows through her hair, Jay vibes to the downbeat of a top 100 hip-hop song blaring through the speakers of my Honda Civic. We've escaped it for just a moment, just as teenagers escape their responsibilities all the time. But we're not too far away from them because they follow in the car behind us. If we had been able to fit a car seat in my back seat, next to my gullible and easily influenced 13-going-on-30 year old cousin Jodie who looks to us as role models, then we would have been semi-misfit adults. But as of now our parents have acknowledged our young years and are taking care of our problems, like they always have, while we anticipate the turn up.

Race and Difference: Which Comes First for the Visually Impaired when Watching Titus

By Aidee Campa

In today's world, race is usually constructed around skin color—people are differentiated and believed to have certain traits because of the color of their skin. But there are other ways of differentiating people; in

Shakespeare's play *Titus Andronicus*, race is not solely based on skin color, but on other-ness and a believed difference in culture. For visually impaired people who cannot always discern skin color, race is most often based on accent and manner of speaking, which also relates to someone's socioeconomic status. In Julie Taymor's film adaptation of *Titus Andronicus*, known as *Titus*, race is mostly emphasized by visual means—clothing choices for both the Romans and the Goths, hair color for the Goths, and in the case of Aaron and his child, skin color. For a blind person who relies on the descriptions provided by companions and/or narrators, it is harder to distinguish race without having access to those descriptions because the Romans, the Goths, and Aaron all sound the same. Race does not change for the blind viewer, but the critical connections that sighted viewers make are not necessarily echoed by a visually impaired person who uses an adapted version of this movie, because the words used to describe the movie do not always paint the same picture as the "raw" images of the movie do for a sighted person.

I—the visually impaired person—watched part of *Titus* twice: I watched it in class with my classmates, and one of those classmates described the movie to me to the best of their abilities. I then listened to an adapted version of the movie from beginning to end; this adapted version consisted of the auditory aspects of the movie overlaid with a narrative description of the action on the screen. I also went over the last thirty minutes of the movie with the same classmate, who explained various pieces of those last thirty minutes which had been annotated by the rest of the class. In reviewing all of this information, there were a few instances where the descriptions given in the adapted version of *Titus* differed from how the sighted audience perceived the same scene.

The first instance that comes to mind actually occurs towards the end of the movie. It is Aaron's execution scene. In the scene, Aaron is buried, nude, with his arms raised out horizontally from his body and tied to a piece of wood. The end result is that he is buried with only his head above the ground; it is not clear whether his arms are buried once the hole is filled in, but before it is filled in, they lie along the ground, more or less supporting his weight. Many of the students saw this as both emphasizing his race and similar in some ways to the Crucifixion. His nudity draws attention to his skin color, while the way in which Aaron is buried, with his arms out to the sides, forms a cross shape, and suggests that he will take on all the sins/atrocities committed during the movie, much as Christ took on humanity's sins (Annotations by Nicholas Barreras, Katherine Perez, and Nicole Romo).

In the adapted version, this scene was described as follows:

Aaron, naked but for a loincloth, is carried in. His arms are stretched out, lashed to a yoke across his shoulders. Aaron is lowered upright into a hole. Aaron's body is suspended in the hole, supported by his arms lying flat on the ground (*Titus* MP3 file).

The "yoke" makes Aaron analogous to a laborer or a beast of burden. This removes him from being easily connected to a sacrificial figure, with whom the audience can easily empathize with. However, he is still carrying out the penance that should have been undertaken by others, who might, in some ways, be more responsible for all the atrocities so far committed. Furthermore, in the description of the scene, the narrator does not actually mention Aaron's skin color, just that he is naked. In contrast, Aaron's skin color is blatantly obvious to a room full of students, to whom skin color has been the cause for discrimination for as long as they can remember. However, empathy can be regained if a comparison between Aaron's punishment and the way Lavinia was found after she was assaulted is made. According to the adapted movie, she is standing on a tree, and when Marcus arrives, she sways with her arms outstretched (*Titus* MP3 file). This can be interpreted as either outstretched in supplication or outstretched for balance. In either case, both Aaron and Lavinia are displayed as part of the shaming process.

Returning to the annotated part of the movie, the sighted students saw the image of Aaron's child in the black cage as a symbol of how the Romans do not value those of another race. In particular, they saw it as

representing how undervalued Moor lives were to the Romans (Annotations by Byanca Bravo, Nikki Knupp, Nicole Romo, and Mimi Ruth-Stiver and Conversation with Samantha Cruz).

In comparison, the audio version of Titus describes the cage as just being metal. There is no mention of what color it might or might not be. So the emphasis on blackness is not as clear to the blind audience as it is to the sighted audience. The Romans showed as much value for race here as they do at the beginning of the movie, where Tamora and her sons appear chained, and Aaron is shown wearing an iron collar while chained to a cart carrying gold armor (Titus MP3 file). Race is not really underscored until a few minutes later, where Young Lucius picks up Aaron's child—who never seems to acquire a name—and carries him out of the coliseum.

The sighted students were conflicted on how to interpret this final scene. The contrast between Young Lucius and Aaron's child is vivid, since Young Lucius is dressed in white (Annotation by Katherine Perez). Some students saw it as hopeful—the children of these two groups would be able to set aside racial tensions at last (Annotations by Byanca Bravo and Devi Veysey). Others saw it as unclear and melancholic, because it is uncertain what kind of impact the violence the two witnessed—particularly Lucius—will have on them later, or even what the audience is supposed to feel at the end (Annotations by Dana Christensen, Tyler Greggsner, and Nicole Romo). The feeling of ambivalence persists because no one ever sees the pair leave the coliseum (Conversation with Samantha Cruz).

In the audio version of the movie, Young Lucius is described as wearing chef's whites, which seem to be miraculously undamaged after the bloodbath (Titus MP3 file). Once Lucius opens the cage and looks at the baby for a while, the description says:

In slow motion, Young Lucius moves across the flat sand of the arena, lit by artificial light, towards one of the dark archways which enclose the coliseum. ... Young Lucius is holding the baby in his arms, its head on his shoulder. As he slowly approaches the arch, the sky beyond it lightens from black to midnight blue. [No description for a while, just music] His figure diminishes as he moves away at the same slow pace, and the sky beyond continues to lighten before him, darker above but with a paler blue band lower down. The baby's arm lies dark across his white jacket. ... [A good bit of the description focuses on the lightening colors of the sky.] He passes from the artificial light into a deep shadow, becoming a black shape silhouetted against the ever brightening sky beyond the arch. [music slowly builds] Emerging from the shadow, Young Lucius's white uniform glows in the morning light. He passes through the archway. Beneath his feet is grass. ... Still he moves forward, still carrying the baby, towards the light. (Titus MP3 file)

This description suggests a certain amount of hopefulness, especially considering that Young Lucius carries the baby towards the light. Moreover, they make it out of the coliseum, at least according to the audio description. Whether this means that Young Lucius is saving Aaron's child or not is unclear, although it is implied that Young Lucius is saving him by the fact that they make it outside as day is breaking. So that while the sighted students seemed somewhat more inclined to interpret this scene as potentially foreboding, the audio description leads me—the visually impaired person—to interpret it as more hopeful.

The final scene where race was drawn large—there are smaller instances dealing with Tamora—is Aaron's admission scene. In it, Aaron confesses to Lucius his part in the atrocities the Andronicus family has so far experienced. Most of the sighted students perceived Aaron to be the one with the most power in the scene, despite the fact that he is the only bound, black man in a group of very obviously white men. He is the one with the information, and he uses it to preserve the life of his child. He laughs at Lucius's anger, and he is the one who places the noose around his neck towards the end. Because he is nearly naked, his other-ness—skin color—is emphasized for the sighted viewer. Then Aaron licks Lucius. The sighted students interpreted this as racial contamination, especially when viewed in conjunction with the washing scene (annotations by Nicholas Barreras, Emily Bradford, Nikki Knupp, Katherine Perez, and Mimi Ruth-Stiver and Conversation with Samantha Cruz).

All of this remains true for the audio description, except for the last point about Aaron's near nudity. Aaron is described as being shirtless, with a black sling carrying his baby slung over his shoulder (Titus MP3 file). While Aaron is speaking loudly from the ladder, he unnerves Lucius, "... [by grinning] down at Lucius, who, wide-eyed, looks aside" (Titus MP3 file). The fact that Aaron is black is not emphasized, other than it being mentioned he is shirtless. It is perhaps his voice that makes this such a powerful scene for the visually impaired audience. The power in his voice is underlined by the building music and the increase in volume and power behind Aaron's voice as he builds up to the word "dead," after which he speaks more calmly (Titus MP3 file). The narrator describes Aaron jumping at Lucius and grabbing him and then licking him as he is still talking, and it is almost as though the words "torment you with my bitter tongue," delivered by Aaron are heard just before the narrator says "He licks Lucius's face" (Titus MP3 file). To me, this draws attention to the idea that tongue is not just a referent for the body part in question, but also another word for speech and/or language. Most of Aaron's influence comes from speaking—he does very little of the "dirty work." And this diverts me from making any immediate connections between race and licking and uncleanness, other than general uncleanness—the same kind of uncleanness that a child might complain about if their sibling licked them.

There are many other examples of how this interpretation of Titus Andronicus is experienced differently, depending on whether the viewer is sighted or not. Not all of them have to do with race—quite a few have to do with expressions. But this paper's focus was on race. Both the sighted and the blind viewer understand that there are separations, but these separations are not always reinforced, nor are they reinforced constantly. For instance, Aaron's facial scarring is not mentioned until he admits his deeds to Lucius. For the sighted viewer, the facial scarring probably sets Aaron even more apart from both the Romans and the Goths, and it is not easily brushed aside. It is a cultural difference that is not underscored for the blind viewer, who up to that point knows only that Aaron is dark-skinned, much in the same way that the blind viewer knows that Tamora, her sons, and the Goth officers are blonds. There is no added weight to that knowledge, or if there should be, it is not always present for the blind viewer. This allows for connections that sometimes break the race divide, such as the one between Aaron and Lavinia; or the hopeful interpretation for the closing scene of the movie; or the link between physical actions and words, as in "... torment you with my bitter tongue" and "He licks Lucius's face" (Titus MP3 file).

The Bloody Debate Behind the MSM Blood Ban (Excerpt) by Amanda Casey

A pair of squinting blue eyes and a sour pout frame the face of the man sprawled out on the black, foldout chair. Once the needle is in his vein, though, a look of relief replaces the worry on his pink face. He goes back to checking his phone while the blood

slowly drips through the plastic tube into the bag below him. With just one simple blood donation like this, the American Red Cross can save up to three lives.

After the blood is tested, it can be separated into three components for a transfusion: red cells, platelets and plasma. When someone gives a blood donation, they are giving all three components (roughly 45 percent of the donation is red blood cells, around 55 percent is plasma and less than one percent is platelets). Typically, red cells will go to a trauma patient, platelets to a cancer patient and plasma to a burn victim.

Not only is a blood donation helpful medically, it is also an empowering act that enables a donor to make a difference in someone's life. Lately, though, the work of banking blood has been embroiled in controversy over the recently implemented bans on donations placed on men who have sex with men, categorized in medical jargon as MSM. Under current blood-donation practices, MSM are not allowed to donate blood unless they refrain from sex with a man for a year.

The practicality and ethics of the ban is at the center of the debate. At a time when homosexual men are allowed to marry and adopt, they aren't allowed to donate blood whenever they please. Gay advocates argue that this is a setback for gay rights while the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) argues it's necessary to protect the blood supply from HIV exposure since MSM are a higher risk for contracting the disease. Questions remain, though, about how effective or enforceable the ban is, since it relies on a questionnaire and the honor system. If someone wants to donate blood, MSN or not, they can lie on the questionnaire about their sexual history and even about whether they have transmissible pathogens.

History of the MSM Blood Ban

In 1981, the AIDS epidemic started to hit the United States. People who were HIV positive were donating blood and the HIV virus found its way into the national blood supply. There was a heightened rate of people contracting HIV from contaminated blood transfusions.

As a result, the FDA instituted a policy in 1985 prohibiting high-risk individuals from donating blood. If a man had had sex with another man, even once, since 1977, he was banned from donating blood. The ban was seen as an emergency response to halt the

spread of HIV and protect the nation's blood supply. The ban screened potential donors for high risk characteristics and behaviors through questionnaires, as well as interviews before blood is taken. After the donation, samples of the donated blood were tested in a laboratory to ensure the blood was clean. In 2015, with advancements in medical tests, the FDA lifted the lifetime ban on blood donation for MSM, replacing it with a year-long deferral period.

The Bans Tie to Discrimination

While the ban has been replaced now by a year-long deferral, some people see the new policy as continuation of a discriminatory practice. Certain body fluids (semen, breast milk, and blood) can transmit HIV. If these fluids find contact with a tear in the skin or are directly injected in the bloodstream, a transmission may occur. Some of the most high risk behaviors someone can engage in to contract HIV is unprotected sex with someone who is infected, sharing needles and/or syringes, and breastfeeding if the mother is infected. With all of the different ways of transmission, gay rights advocates argue the ban reinforces homophobic attitudes and assumptions that only gay men drive the HIV epidemic.

This argument is all too familiar to Chase Reynolds (not his real name). Reynolds is a twenty-four-year-old white male who, with his deep voice and muscular frame, upends stereotypical images of the gay male. Reynolds, who works for a gym, is a magnet for longing female gazes as he sips warm coffee at a Starbucks on Westwood Boulevard.

Before coming out, Reynolds was able to donate blood since he hadn't yet had sexual contact with a man. Reynolds has fond memories of the one and only time he was able to donate blood. "It [the blood donation] was great! I didn't mind any of it really. I was happy to see that my blood could be used to help someone else who needed it more," he says. "My brother was in a real bad accident when he was younger and I remember he had to get a good amount of blood, so I figured I'd like to pay my dues and give that opportunity to someone who needed it like my brother did back in the day."

Yet, once Reynolds went to college and became sexually active, he found himself banned from donating blood. "I remember sitting there reading the pre-donation questionnaire and seeing the question about having sexual contact with a man. I stopped

and called the nurse back in to the little cubicle area I was in. I quietly told her I was gay and had sex a few months ago with my ex. She looked at me so confused. You could tell she was surprised. After the initial shock left her face, she immediately excused me from donating, just like that. There wasn't any further questions," says Reynolds.

The twelve-month ban limits the pool of possible blood donors, lowering the blood supply. As seen on the Gay Blood Drive website, gay & bisexual men are eager to donate blood but can't unless they refrain from sexual activity. Instead, the best they can do is bring in an ally to donate in their place...

Read the rest at <http://bit.ly/1rqFsDl>

Man Buns: A Hairy Situ-race-tion (Excerpt) by Amanda Casey

Men are pulling their hair back behind their ears and tying it into an either polished or fashionably acceptable knot. The man bun has made a name for itself in popular culture. They can be seen in magazines, runways, the red carpet, Disneyland, colleges and even the Starbucks barista down the street sports one. Elle Magazine even published an article a couple months back dubbed “The Man-Bun Apocalypse is Coming” and boy were they right.

.... Thinking about it now, it’s mind boggling to see that the majority of my encounters with men who had man buns were all predominately white. Where are the men of color in this “trend,” more importantly why is there such a low representation of them? Well for starters, one can go back to the stereotypes behind the man bun’s femininity.

At first glance, the man bun seems to be an indicator of progressive manhood. The bun after all, is feminine and tied to women, just think of an old-school librarian or ballerina. Although buns are implicitly feminine, it’s the addition of the word man that attempts to make it masculine. While long hair can have over-masculinized barbaric roots to the caveman era, the act of putting that long hair in a bun is an often feminized concept.

Yet, looking back at history, the man bun in essence isn’t a new trend at all, well at least to other cultures. It was sported by men who were the epitome of their manhood. The Buddha had a man bun. Chinese Terracotta warriors had man buns. Samurai had man buns. These are all Asian men who sported the bun. Looking at the trend today why is it that white men are the first racial group to be tied to the man bun while Asian men, where it is essentially rooted, are not?

Well first off when referring to stereotypes, Asian men are more often than not placed on the bottom of the masculinity scale due to their stereotyped “petite frames, small genitals, and nerdy demeanor”. Therefore, having long hair that is deemed feminine, at least in the United States culture, is another stereotypical form that they would have to bare. So it’s no surprise they aren’t flocking to sport the man bun.

This exact rationale is upheld in the media. Sumo wrestlers with their man buns have had them for years yet you don't see them plastered on the cover of GQ for challenging gender stereotypes. No, instead we find white celebrity males with man buns on the cover. When a dominant group takes on the physical resemblance of a group of marginalized people and claims the trend as their own, who really has the power?

The Truth Lay Only in Quiet by Taylor Charles *

There's a type of emptiness that falls.
Bounces and hangs,
Lonely and damp,
Like a swingset after the child's leapt out.

The beating seems to echo through a much larger space.
That stillness which was once filled apologies and excuses
Now stands clear,
And a single dog's bark can be heard two blocks away.

I folded up my calendar pages and sealed them in an envelope
To be mailed away,
But what now, when the chest finds weight
And the legs regain sight?

Oh, whose palms I did fix rivers in my hands for,
And whose life splattered paint
And white
And red
And yet, in bitter conscious sleeping
I find nails chewed to the bone,
Eyes cracked with veins
From becoming sea-sick in the riptide.

Are you happy?
The beats are synchronized only for three
And now I'm left, air and I,
My hand still clutching your last breath to my ear,
As a single dog barks two blocks away.

Typical Fashion of a Righteous Brutality (Racism in Civilized Lands) by Troy Chavez *

Stash

The cash

From the

Bag

Spill blood

Like wine

And drink

The chalice in a diamond

Encrusted Palace

Smoke the herbal

Native American

Medicine

Red asphalt

Plagues

The streets

Of America

Law keepers

Break more

Rules than

Bottom feeders

Children aren't

Safe in these

Lands

Taken by the

Blue jacket

Man

Thrown into

The desert

Sand

Forgotten

In time

Forever

Inscribed in

The black

Books

Of crime

Findings

Of forgotten
Murderers and
Rapists
Wash up on the
Salty sands of
Jerusalem

Crucified,
For their
Crimes and
Convictions

Wearing uniforms
Of justice

But administering
None

They will take your
Soul and your
Son

Never repenting
What they've done

Living in sin
And
Killing our children at
Whim

No way to win
Because of the color
Of your skin.

A Stupid Sonnet by Dana Christensen

A sonnet. Write a poem from the heart.

It's literally so uninvolved kids

can write one. Think of Shakespeare's alpine art!

A line of love, a thought of joy, this bid

of mine to scrawl this down is far too bold.

How many stanzas? Three. And ending here

with couplet lines, a dual of rhymes are told.

Italian octave, sestet follows here.

Must I between them choose, the land of wine

and land of fog to write my sonnet true?

Oh England, home of Will, your light has shined

on me! Almost done I am free, adieu!

My dearest sonnet, please just leave me be!

Oh honestly, I'm happy with a C.

Awake by Dana Christensen

My eyelids droop like soggy plums
hanging seasoned on the backyard tree.

The buzzing fluorescence hum in my ears.
Stretched lips grapple with the
exhausting task of sobriety.

Thoughts drift in the current,
slowly growing impatient.

Hurried warmth rushes in through
the noisy vents, hoping to invade
my circulating ventral system.

Like a shot of the sun, my veins
are bustling with ardent sleep.

A Diamond in the Sky (Excerpt) by Alexander Cramer

"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

-Lord Acton

1050 HOURS, AUGUST 3, 2216

ABOARD UESC CRUISER *SOARING PHOENIX*, UNKNOWN COORDINATES IN EXOTIC SPACE

EN ROUTE TO PLANET THESTIAS, POLLUX STAR SYSTEM, MILKY WAY GALAXY

Commanding officer Vice Admiral Brooks Arden McQuaide of the Unified Earth Space Council awoke with a start. A dull green light filled his blurry vision and he gagged on the mucus in his throat and lungs. Admiral McQuaide cursed as he pushed himself up and felt his back peel away from the form-fitting gel bed. Wisps of fog poured out from within the cryogenic chamber as he stood. He gained his footing, tried to inhale, and doubled over coughing until he could manage to breathe without sucking down a mouthful of slime. The Admiral stretched and ignored the throbbing in his head, taking his first deep breath in days. He licked his cracked lips and shivered, eyeing his black and gold uniform which hung on the wall only a few feet away.

A freshly showered Admiral McQuaide looked out the view screen in the control room of the cruiser class starship UESC *Soaring Phoenix* and saw nothing but the inky black void of Exotic space. No stars; not a single sign that they were even moving. Just the simple darkness of the extra-dimensional space they used to traverse the distance between stars. The triangular shaped starship tore through the blackness like the head of a massive spear, completely invisible against the interstellar background. The only thing that would be visible to anyone outside is the series of bright blue lights which wrap around the ship.

"Approaching Pollux system! Prepare for drop into normal space!" The voice of navigational officer, Commander Joseph O'Buck, blared through the loud speaker.

Admiral McQuaide sat in the rear-center of the command bridge. His back was straight and his face looked calm. He wore the unwavering mask of an Admiral, trained for decades to hide even the fiercest emotions. But if anyone looked close enough, they would see. His gaze was locked straight ahead and he didn't blink. His knuckles were white, fingers clenched around the armrests of his chair. But no one seemed to notice.

The Admiral's heart pounded as he stared ahead, his eyes locked on some imaginary point deep within the abyss of nothingness behind the glass in front of him. His heart felt so heavy in his chest, like every increasingly erratic beat was straining to break the skin and claw its

way out. The sensation in his hands was dulling as he squeezed his fists tighter, the thumping in his heart now creeping its way down his arms and into his numb hands.

"Entering normal space in three...two...one..."

Sweat beaded on McQuaide's back and trickled down his spine, and he suddenly became conscious that he wasn't breathing. He exhaled and his breath echoed loudly within his head.

A shudder rippled through the hull of *Soaring Phoenix* as the ship tore a hole back into our four dimensions of space-time. Dazzling specks of purple skittered across the display monitor as the cruiser transitioned back into reality. As if the view screen were turned on by a switch, Pollux suddenly materialized into sight, accompanied by an endless sea of stars. The orange light of the supergiant pierced their cabin and warmed the room.

"Transition to normal space complete."

The Admiral stared at the system scanner to the left of him, waiting for the automatically initiated scan to pick up on any potential threats within the system. He could still feel his heart beating through his arms and legs. His veins pulsated and his limbs throbbed but he couldn't manage to move them until he was sure.

No threats detected.

The Admiral took a deep breath and closed his eyes, relieved. Every star system they visited held a slim chance that him and his crew would cross paths with the bastards who destroyed his home planet. And he knew it was a slim chance too, but that didn't make it any easier. The Admiral found himself thinking and acting throughout his entire life like nothing had happened, only to suddenly remember what he'd lost. He hadn't forgotten about it, the grief and pain was there; just pushed into the back of his mind because it was the only way for him to cope.

But then every so often it would come crashing back down on him, triggered every time they dropped into a new system.

The Admiral closed his eyes and memories of his home world flashed through his mind. People crying and desperately yelling out the names of their loved ones. Mothers cradling their children and praying to Gods that have been long since forgotten. The anguish and rage that dwelled within the furthest confines of the Admiral's mind surfaced, and he squeezed his eyes tighter to push the pain away. The Admiral shivered as he thought about the life they took from him. The lives they took from his family. His friends. From the entire planet of Solitude. He rebuked himself for allowing the memories to surface and he promised himself that it wouldn't happen again. His mother had always told him not to make promises he couldn't keep.

The Admiral wished he knew who was responsible. It ate away at him; living every day with the knowledge that intelligent life exists with the power to destroy entire planets, the power to wipe the human race off the face of the galaxy with the snap of a finger. He didn't know what

they were; all he remembered was that a giant ring had appeared in the sky above him and rained death down upon Solitude. The brutal attack scared and baffled humanity, but the years of silence eased away tensions and it slowly vanished into the past. But McQuaide hasn't forgotten. Because wherever they were, he wouldn't let them scar him again. He would be ready. Because this time, he had a ship of his own.

The Admiral's position in the back of the bridge allowed him to see every one of his crew at any given moment, something he never let them forget. He looked around the circular room at his team, pleased with what he saw – everything seemed to be in proper order and everyone looked focused. But the Admiral swore he could see the beginnings of travel fatigue creeping through his crew. The bags under O'Buck's eyes always got unusually dark when he was tired, and his chief medical officer, Lieutenant James Uccello, never let out any of his usual wise-cracks. The silence bothered him. It gave him too much time to think.

8/18 by Shane Francis

Do not expect lobster or crème brûlée,
Or a picnic packed for a summer day,
Or a ticket snagged for the night's ballet--
I want to "Netflix and chill."

Why wait to be link'd by capricious fate
To share a "spark" by coffee date?
I have enough piled on my plate.
So let's just "Netflix and chill."

Our hopes and dreams may truly align,
Our aspirations, our waking times.
"But Juliette, I prefer Rosaline."
Though I'm down to "Netflix and chill."

You may well be a natural ten,
You may well eat the lesser men,
But it begs repeating once again:
I consent to "Netflix and chill."

If it's my intentions you do suspect,
"What does he expect after Parks and Rec?"
You are correct; I'll be direct
But after we "Netflix and chill."

This is a graphic poem of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven". The main body of the poem is of the Raven that the speaker describes within the poem itself. It is speaking the word, "Nevermore," just as the raven character within the poem. Within the speech bubble, the final stanzas of the poem circle around the word it is speaking. The words of the poem that make up the body of the bird and the speech bubble are in continuous loops. This is to emulate the restless mind and rapid madness of the speaker of the poem. The lines of the poem show up in the speech bubble to show that he cannot escape the word, "Nevermore."

With this piece, I tried to embrace the Ernst surrealist mode within my visual poem. In doing this, I chose a poem by Edgar Allan Poe, who chooses to discuss the idea of madness and the conscious world versus the unconscious world within "The Raven." The poem itself is focused on the speaker who cannot tell if he is imagining the knocks on the door, or if it is his beloved Lenore. His madness (or conscious/unconscious state) is further exacerbated when a raven, only speaking the word "nevermore," enters his chambers. Though Poe is a romantic poet and writer, he and Ernst share a fascination with the surreal and the dreamlike. As Maurer points out, "For Ernst, the Surrealist desire to break the confines of absolute definition and identity was necessary to free the imagination. To acknowledge the unity and interrelationship of the natural world by creating creatures that combined attributes of animal, plant, and human was for Ernst an affirmation of a moral philosophy" (Maurer 49). Poe likewise takes on Ernst's fascination with birds, transforming the lost Lenore into a stately Raven. This allows for Poe to play with the mind of his speaker, forcing him to question whether he is dreaming, imagining the bird, or if the bird really exists.

Ernst and Poe constantly play with the idea of dream thoughts and dream images becoming a reality. Whether it is a nightmare coming to life or the false sense idea of reality shaking the lens of consciousness, Maurer says, "The images of Ernst's collage novels follow his own symbolic themes and not the logical reality of ordinary experience. The artist asks us to consider the strange dramas his pictorial works unfold as Freud did his patients dreams—as communication whose hermetic content consists of poetic expressions of the psyche's most fundamental elements" (Maurer 73). This definition shows how concrete poems can be used to showcase dream thoughts and dream images, melding them into reality. In dreams, the mind puts together two halves of a metaphor visually. A concrete poem takes words and molds them into a picture, leaving your mind to fill in the spaces of what it could be or mean. As McCloud describes it, "Pictures are **received** information, we need no formal education to 'get the message' the message is *instantaneous*. Writing is **perceived** information. It takes time and specialized knowledge to decode the abstract symbols of language. When pictures are more abstracted from 'reality,' they require greater levels of *perception*, **more like words**. When words are bolder, more direct, they require *lower* levels of perception and are received *faster*,

more like pictures” (McCloud, 49, panels 1-3). Sequence forces the mind to focus on the changes from the first image to the second image. This is a part of the icon of motion, in which the brain is the place where the sequence occurs in the brain. Through surrealism and photorealism, both Poe and Ernst are able to break the real and allow the viewer to rethink what is conscious and what is unconscious thought.

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“The Tell Tale Heart” and the Emersonian Eye: The Dark Side to Transcendentalism (Excerpt) by Laura Freeze

“The eye is the window to the soul.” This common expression suggests that one can know the true nature of another person just by looking into the eyes. However, sometimes people can take that expression too seriously. Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tale Tell Heart” shows a man driven by his old neighbor’s eye, to the point where the only mean of escape is to kill the old man. Poe embraces the dark side of the Transcendentalist Movement with his short story “The Tale Tell Heart,” using Emersonian ideals to perpetuate the narrative of the story, allowing Poe to showcase the dark turn within transcendentalism.

“The Tale Tell Heart” is focused on a narrator who loathes the old man’s eye. Over time the narrator becomes more and more focused on the eye, determining that he must kill the old man in order to rid himself of this burden. He describes his relationship with the old man as: “I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights—every night just at midnight—but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye” (Poe 715). The narrator sees the eye as a thing of evil, as something that sees into the darkness of his soul. With this evil presence that looms over him, his mind grows weary and mad. Because he sees the eye as a threat rather than just an eye, he is seeing reality from the lens of his subconscious. He is in a continuous dreamlike state, and this allows him to make the decision to kill the old man. James Kirkland recognizes the effect of the evil eye on the narrator and describes his symptoms:

“His complaints about being ‘nervous--very, very dreadfully nervous,’ a condition he attributes specifically to the ‘Disease’ of the Evil Eye. And the more convinced he becomes of the control of the old man's eye, the more paranoid he becomes. For the mentally unbalanced individual, the eye quickly becomes an object of terror. It symbolizes the invasion of others into the perimeters of personal space” (Kirkland 1)

The narrator’s madness is brought on by the seeming all seeing nature of the old man’s eye. The narrator is unable to escape the eye because it is able to see all and be all, thus invading the personal space of the narrator. This invasion of privacy is too much for the narrator to handle, provoking him to take action and giving him the idea to rid him of the eye forever.

The old man’s eye is a constant presence overlooking every moment of the narrator’s life. This creates a parallel to the idea that Emerson creates with his idea of the transparent eyeball within his essay “Nature”: “In the woods, we return to the bare ground,— my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space,— all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent

eye-ball. I am nothing. I see all” (Emerson 511). Emerson embodies a transparent eyeball that is in the world and a part of it, in no way obstructing the world around him. Through this he is able to see the entirety of the world around him and become transcended into the heavens. It is an original experience that he can only have through nature. Poe parallels this idea within “The Tell Tale Heart” by creating an evil eye that is able to see all and know all: “Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me an insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was the eye!—yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture—a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so, by degrees—very gradually—I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever” (Poe 715). The old man’s eye is able to see directly into the soul of the narrator, becoming in and of him. Poe is able to show a connection to nature by showing that the old man has vulture like eyes. This comparison offers a different transcending image than Emerson with the transparent eyeball. Because the old man has the eye of a vulture, he does not fade gracefully into nature as Emerson would. Instead, given that a vulture is a scavenger, he would be consuming death and transcending into the heavens through that consumption. This is the evil that the narrator feels radiating from the eye. It is this evil that the narrator must rid himself from.

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Film, Fan Base, and Franklins by Keeana Garcia *

On Tuesday afternoons on Founder's Hill, you'll spot a group of goofy guys wearing purple sleeves with Benjamin Franklin's face on their backs. They sit under a shady tree and laugh about John Cena vines and Donald Trump memes. Among them is a 21-year-old Salinas native with a wolf tattoo on his right arm who is prone to wearing his hat backwards. Google his name and head shots and frames from Youtube videos appear. Scroll through his IMDb account and you'll find the 16 films he's starred in. Eric Hinwood is a true multi-hyphenate: actor/director/editor/co-founder and president of ATAEC Studios.

Any child can grab his parent's iPhone 6+, go to the Camera app and record anything he wants. But imagine a second grader in 2001 running around the house and filming with an old-school video camera, one that not even young adults today can figure out how to use. That boy was Hinwood. At seven years old, Hinwood already seemed destined for a career in the cinematic arts, and his home could only be his studio set for so long. This passion lingered into his high school years when he was involved in theater and simultaneously began his film experience.

"When I turned 16, I enrolled in a two-year trade school program for film production. So I did that at the same time as my junior and senior years of high school," says Hinwood. "I ended up graduating with my high school diploma and my trade school degree in the same month."

Hinwood never finished his first home video but managed to complete his first feature film, *Carpe Diem*. Just prior to graduating trade school in 2012, he wrote his first script and began working with Heart.Aligned.Response.Acting.(HARA) Motion Picture Conservatory. He and some of his trade-school buddies decided to shoot the film in Europe when they raised enough money to travel there. The film cost only \$13,000 because some actors and crewmen volunteered free labor. "We spent 5 weeks backpacking around Europe. We went to England, Scotland, France, Spain and Italy," says Hinwood.

In the film, Hinwood plays Ross Freeman, a high school graduate who endures a long journey with his friends Jack and Julia as they search for their lost friend Daniel. Collin McDowell, co-founder of ATAEC Studios who starred as Jack, describes the memorable experience with his life-long companion. "*Carpe Diem* was probably one of the crazier times I've had in my life," says McDowell. "It felt like we'd go to sleep on the banks of Loch Ness and wake up on the streets of Monte Carlo."

Hinwood not only acted in but wrote and directed *Carpe Diem*

This is one of seven films Hinwood has written, but he enjoys the camera more than the pen. He currently stars in 16 films and has directed nine.

Hinwood also has an acting agent and finds that acting is much more appealing to him than directing. "There aren't as many people yelling out, 'Hey I need a director for something!' you know? But there's a lot of people looking for actors."

Hinwood advertises himself through his Vimeo Pro account along with the ATAEC Studios Facebook and YouTube page. "I'll just kinda blast out on social media, usually Facebook is the biggest one," says Hinwood, "and I'll say, 'Hey we got this thing coming out and take a look at it. Here's the trailer. Here's the short' and I'll just try to build [support] that way."

McDowell, who assists with the fan base, believes Hinwood deserves and will achieve strong support. “Working with Hinwood is always great,” claims McDowell. “He’s got a great sense of energy about him, so it’s never a boring shoot.”

Besides film activity, Hinwood is a full-time student at Whittier College where he majors in French with a Spanish minor. He is simultaneously studying a self-made degree through the Whittier Scholars Program titled Film Production and Business. Of course, film work is round-the-clock and demanding. Some might wonder how he finds a balance between school and work. But Hinwood, leaning back into a couch at The Spot with his arms crossed over his head, explains that for him there is no separating the two.

“I use my film work to pay for tuition for school, so for me, work always comes first. Because if I don’t get the work done, I can’t keep going to school.”

Not surprisingly, Hinwood’s unpredictable work schedule sometimes clashes with school when he is called to recite lines at the same time he is scheduled to listen to a professor’s lecture.

“There’s definitely been a couple times where I’ve had to talk to teachers and say, ‘My agent wants me to come in and work on this project and I’m gonna have to skip class in order to do that.’ And for the most part they’ve been fairly lenient with me. A couple of them have said, ‘Your grade will go down 0.5% every time you do this,’ and I just have to say, ‘Okay.’” claims Hinwood, shrugging his shoulders.

Hinwood is currently working on his next film titled *After the Fall* while preparing for graduation and being fully involved in campus life. Besides school and work, he is also a member of the Franklin Society. “Being vice president is definitely a lot more work than I thought it was going to be,” says Hinwood. Although work and school are extremely time consuming for him, he still makes time for his brothers. He eats lunch with them every Tuesday and wears a Franklin hat almost everyday on and off campus. “I’ll be a Franklin whether I’m a student or not.”

McDowell, for one, believes his partner in ATEAC studios has a bright future ahead. “He’s one of those guys who has a crazy work ethic and enough drive to go anywhere he wants in life. He’s going to do great things.”

Thanks to Joe Donnelly

Every day in the Life by Daniel Garcia

5 am the clock read

You begin to tread

The inquiry of notion arise

Will they despise, demise,

The horror and fear sit in your brain

A government in your brain constitutes the pain

Will they accept me?

Please... just respect me

Serotonin by Shay Golub

There are machines within organics,
Click-to-talk binary inside my blood,
They all swim through tepid plasma panic,
Injecting me with toxin "feeling good."

I keep tilting half-full orange bottles,
This pattern of nutrition lacks a cause.
Powdered hope to stem the cynic hostile,
Meds try but cannot stop the wicked claws.

It's the illusion I call placebo;
Wound up inside my ever aching bones,
My depression snickers, chiding gleeful
And in my marrow makes its wicked home.

But suffer on, let fester turn to scars,
For strongest hearts are made of broken stars.

A Search for Meaning by Breana Gomez

The human mind and how it functions is often perceived as a complex part of the human body. It is not uncommon to connect past experiences as a reason for ideologies and behavior of the present. In these, paternal figures and childhood upbringing often play a large role in shaping the way a person perceives things and functions. In the case of Augustine, his mother's religious beliefs had an overwhelming impact on Augustine's own ideology. While the philosopher in his youth tried to search for a more efficient belief system, ultimately he turned to the god of his mother's faith. The god that Augustine believes in is both complex and yet simple, a judge and a friend. Due to both his upbringing and own religious endeavors, Augustine embraced God as a way of finding peace and understanding of both his human nature and the world that surrounded him.

Monica, Augustine's mother, is often portrayed as a woman who is willing to do anything for her son. She embodies elements of the church, reaching to those around her to offer them salvation. She is strong in her Christian faith, her life revolving around prayer and devotion to the god of her faith. This celestial being is a gracious forgiving god, a god who could perform miracles and save a person's soul from imminent evil. In her beliefs, Monica prayed for her son, raising him with a religious ambiance that stemmed from motherly love and devotion to her faith. Augustine recalls that in childhood he had "heard of an eternal life promised because the Lord our God had come down in His humility upon our pride" (Augustine 12). Because of his mother, Augustine grew up hearing of an almighty powerful God, prayer, and salvation. This portrayal of an all mighty powerful being was even stronger and his existence somewhat verified when Monica's prayers for Augustine to be healed were seemingly permitted. Augustine's depleting health strengthened and the boy returned back to normal as he was delivered from death itself (Augustine 12). Although his upbringing and this previous encounter allowed young Augustine to have faith, in time he developed questions as he looked deeper into this faith. The boy, while struggling with the enjoyment of his sins did believe in this being and often struggled to understand why he was drawn to do bad when God his creator commanded goodness.

While his mother's faith led to his initial belief that a god did exist, the philosopher pushed back against this simple faith as he grew older. A creature subject to the evils of human nature, he found himself acting in defiance of the principles his mother's faith dictated. A man of learning, Augustine sought refuge in another religious group: the Manichees. Believing his mother's faith to be too simple, he found himself drawn to "a sect of men talking high-sounding nonsense, carnal and wordy men" (Augustine 42). While this group sounded educated, Augustine found himself questioning their hearts. He states in one passage that, "[God the father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost] were always on their lips, but only as sounds and tongue noises; for their heart was empty of the true meaning" (Augustine 42). While Augustine continued in engaging with his chosen faith, he continually discovered that his faith in this religion had been lost. The beliefs the Manichees held regarding God, reduced him to a partly impotent limited substance rather than the pure all powerful being he was raised to believe in. This was something the philosopher could not bring himself to believe. To Augustine, a God who is all powerful and inherently good can only create goodness. Evil cannot spring from pure goodness. To believe that all that God had created was not inherently good was not possible, being that God's creation stemmed from the all mighty being himself. The philosopher found

too much beauty in the world in which he deemed that something so beautiful cannot be inherently evil. Rather the evil was a flaw in an overall naturally good creation. It was these observations that later led to a new found hope in astronomy, a science or belief system that looked to the heavens and stars.

However, much like the Manichees, Augustine discovered a flaw in this belief system. Astronomy did not control outcomes; rather after looking closely Augustine determined that what could be attributed to astronomy was left better explained by the concept of chance. With astronomy there was a lack of free will. Rather astronomy was a science of chance. Augustine explains this by stating that “looking at the same constellations I must utter different things if I were to tell the truth, and if I said the same things I should be forswearing falsely...it [is] obvious that such things as happened to be said truly from the casting of horoscopes were not true by skill but by chance” (Augustine 124). Once the results of the initial circumstances are in place, there are elements of one’s life that are predetermined. With the stars being the highest power, man does not choose his circumstances but must deal with the hand he has been dealt. Man continues in making choices in regards to his response and actions but has no control over the result or what circumstances he is presented. If a man is born into the life of a poor slave, he must throughout his life deal with the constraints that have been placed on him by chance (Augustine 123-124). After looking at a case where two men were born in the same place, same day, and same time yet by the randomness of chance were born into different classes, Augustine reflects that there is no free will or even predetermination on the path this being will take if astrology is correct. With the ideas of chance and randomness of the stars, there is no hope since man cannot control what affects him. These flaws in logic, led Augustine back to the idea that the god of Christianity must exist. Unlike the other areas he had dabbled in, while simple and lacking in eloquence, Christianity maintained a positive correlation of ideas and rationality.

Without this divine being there would be no explanation as to why people exist. There is the idea that the stars and universe control the direction of human life yet Augustine rejects this concept with the idea that this is an elaboration on the idea of chance. While there is also the idea that God is good yet the rest of the world is inherently evil with no hope of redemption, Augustine also rejects this idea, claiming that there is too much beauty and goodness in God that this cannot be true of his creation. Augustine is fully convinced that the god of his mother’s religious devotion is indeed real. This being, according to Augustine, is patient, inherently good, a judge yet a friend, and a maternal-like figure. Like a parent, God is patient and kind; he is always reaching and waiting for his child to return. He does not force mankind to choose him or follow the truth, although it is instilled within man’s nature. Rather he waits patiently for man to realize the truth and return (Augustine 239). Much like his mortal counterpart, this heavenly father embraces the wanderer upon arrival as his love and forgiveness overflows. Whereas Monica’s love sometimes led to suffering and caused Augustine push it away, God silently remains unchanging as he waits for man to recognize what is hiding in plain sight. He allows free will, yet never abandons those he pursues. While Augustine speaks of his sin, he speaks of God’s overflowing love. He speaks of grace and mercy, his god indulging in these two traits. Time and time again, Augustine states that his sin overtakes him and yet God forgives. In analyzing this mercy Augustine states that

I know that it is only by Thy grace and mercy Thou hast melted away the ice of my sins. And the evil I have not done, that also I know is by Thy grace; for what might I not have done, seeing that I loved evil solely because it was evil? I confess that Thou hast forgiven all alike- the sins I committed of my own motion, the sins I would have committed but for Thy grace (Augustine 32)

It is this same grace and mercy in which men recognize their weakness and become humble, God making them strong in him. Augustine continues to describe a god who is indescribable. He is so great that Augustine believes there is no complete physical being that can contain God in his entirety. While he is not a substance, Augustine describes him as too large and beautiful for a body, better and bigger than the soul (Augustine 71). He then turns to look at God's mighty power and sustainability stating that, "You were and nothing else was, and of nothing You made *heaven and earth*, these two, one close to You, the other close to nothing, one than which You alone are higher, the other than which nothing is lower" (Augustine 264). This god is so powerful that he was able to speak the world into creation, from him came light and wisdom (Augustine 239). It is this god that Augustine believes is the highest being. Able to procreate from within or form matter out of nothing, this god is all powerful. Augustine states that he must exist because there must be a being higher than humans, a being that has more power than chance.

With this great power comes inherent goodness. The philosopher states that this god is "almighty and good and must make all things good, the great heaven and the small earth" (Augustine 264). It is because of this idea that Augustine believes that all that has been created must be good. While it can become corrupted, because God is good therefore his creation including mankind must be good. This stems from Augustine's hope for peace, especially in regards to his own human nature. If God is inherently good, that means his creation is inherently good. This leads to the idea that mankind must be inherently good and the sin that is present are areas that have been corrupted. By having this belief, Augustine brings peace to his mind that humans are not inherently evil as the Manichee belief dictated in regards to the world. Augustine believed that in a world of beauty, creation could not be evil especially when it was spoken into being by a perfect creator. Yet he was faced with the idea of sin. Creation was a good thing but sin was evil, a corruption within one's self. By viewing sin as a corrupted area rather than the whole, Augustine allowed himself hope and provided an answer as to how God and man could maintain a relationship. While God hates the sin, he does not necessarily hate the sinner.

This idea of sin affecting the relationship between God and man also reminds Augustine that while the human race is created by God, it pales in comparison to its creator. If God is all powerful and provident that means he "is a knower and doer... God is infinite [,] He knows all and does all [yet how is] His infinite knowledge and activity compatible with man's free will"? (Jones 97). It is this question that leads Augustine to develop the theory of free will. While God could control man, he allows mankind and all his creation to think for themselves and engage in decision making. Rather than fate, or having one's life be predestined, God continues to be all knowing while allowing those he created to move through life of their own accord. Augustine continues to state that, "though there is for God a certain order of all causes, there must therefore be nothing depending on the free exercise of our wills, for our wills themselves are included in that order of causes which is certain to God, and is embraced by his foreknowledge" (Jones 98).

In having this foreknowledge, God knows exactly what man will do yet Augustine believes God knows this information overall, regardless of what decision is made.

In this concept, the idea of sin becomes a topic to debate on. If God knows that man will sin, there becomes the question as to whether man has a choice in sinning. According to Augustine, man does. In his analysis, the philosopher states that “for man does not therefore sin because God foreknew that he would sin. Nay, it cannot be doubted but that it is the man himself who sins when he does sin, because He, whose foreknowledge is infallible, foreknew not that fate or fortune, or something else would sin, but that the man himself would sin” (Jones 99). Therefore the decision is man’s, yet God knows all. Among further analysis it is mankind’s will that causes God’s foreknowledge.

Between Augustine’s upbringing in a predominately Christian home in regards to his mother and his exploration of different intellectual faiths, the philosopher concluded that the god of Christianity exists and is the highest being. With his experiences as a child, the philosopher personally experienced being rescued from death’s door and the mercy that had been extended to him over the years. Although he had explored other ideas and beliefs, after time he would find a flaw whether it be that the ideas of that belief system contradicts rationality or sincerity. These paired with Augustine’s own need for moral redemption, allowed for the philosopher to analyze and appreciate the faith of his mother as his own. With the existence of this celestial all powerful being, Augustine had a reason for existence, hope for humanity, and free will that interacted with the circumstances that took place in his life. While he had freedom, there was a being higher than him that would forgive and heal the flaws that were present in his own being. With this reasoning in mind, Augustine found that the all powerful god of Christianity provided solace and hope and with ideas in mind the philosopher determined that this being must exist for the sake of mankind.

Nothing Extraordinary by Sarah I. Gonzalez

I am royalty come straight from Mars,
a distant red that's burning in your skies.
The rings from Saturn, blinking as stars,

They're circling around my heavy eyes.
Chasing a dream has kept me awake for days
and forgetting's not an option; I've tried.

Solar eclipsed, my eyes should be burnt and dazed,
yet this is the clearest sight I've ever had.
The source of sleepless nights and dreams left razed,

you looked right at me and it drove me mad
that you saw nothing extraordinary.
But today, I move on and get over that.

I'll open my heart to what's hereditary:
the stardust that everyone forgot about
that makes us all a little cosmictary.

So I'll wear galaxies in my hair, without
the fear of being the self that you can't handle,
or the hope you'll come around, which I doubt.

Instead, my star will burst, a tiny candle
exploding into supernova light

so brilliant and blinding it causes a scandal.

I think it best you shield your eyes tonight,
'cause you'll be tempted to look directly at me,
and I would hate for you to lose your sight

before you see the comets falling to their knees
and fellow supers dancing on my lips;
they, like you, can see me finally.

I'll be honest, I never wanted this.
You were the center of all the dreams, the sun
that collapsed into black hole with every kiss.

But now, I shine and don't need anyone.
I dropped the habit of catching meteorites—
falling lights that pose as wish granting ones—

They just fade in the dark that's more than night,
So instead, I'll wish on my own expanding light.

Solo Star Windows by Sarah I. Gonzalez

The lights that glimmer, golden, silver, soft,
and dance along the hills have caught my eye.

The lights and homes that watch the cities far
below, the ones I pass each day that get
me wondering about those different lives.

They look like stars that dropped and kept burning,
so I bet our lights look like galaxies.

Our streets the spiral arms that flow and flicker,
while the central star's the downtown madness.

Despite my curiosity to see
what life is like from way up on those hills,
and who's behind the windows watching us,
I'd rather be what makes their view so bright.
The flash of light that makes them stop and watch,
decide the city sounds like fun tonight,
and let their solo star windows go dark.

From The Dock by Tim Kam

In sweet suspension I hang
on top of a narrow passage of glass
between hills dressed in trees,
a river nonetheless;
on a flat creaking vessel
made of high density polyethylene
six feet wide stationed and content forever
where I rest each night with the dreamy tides,
that sleeps on the slow muddy banks
between two moons mirrored at last.

And to sit cross-legged and still
among the slick pylons shiny and dead,
standing old and tall,
above a lifeless and bejeweled surface
floating in fine stagnancy;
peering down, down, down
into a neglected world
spotted in the parallels of stars
and draped in emptiness,
a panorama of the great Forms
holding hands with their projections.

I am only familiar with looking up
and tilting my head back
to engage with the cosmos.

But there's pleasure to be found in colorful fictions;
realness and non-realness feel the same
and looking down feels so good!
The celestial experience: composed of wonder
and spangled delight which is now
far closer and easier to understand.

With reflections I stride
hand in hand happy and large,
reflections of the stars feel true,
they feel near and they feel dear,
the real distance is far away,
the real distance can't fill
the short proximity of my senses
that hear the bright display
which breathes so heavy and loud,
exploding with stillness and silence.

Until a flat-bottom skiff mows over the glowing face
and the ripples erase the impermanent discovery
of an invented substance.

Robert Frost: Individuality and Isolation by Priscilla Lam *

Robert Frost's works showcase the complicated relationship of fellowship and individuality. His poems exemplify that isolation is necessary for the fruition of an individual identity. The development of personal tastes, however, results in seclusion from differing views. Thus, the process of individualization is consequently a process of separation. Frost explores the contradictory relationship between community and isolation in his poems. In "The Tuft of Flowers," the speaker finds a form of fellowship even though he remains isolated the entire time. The isolation allows him to find the connection between him and the mower who shares his view of respecting nature. Thus, Frost sheds light on the fact that physical fellowship is not always necessary. "Mending Wall" not only favors isolation but also illustrates that it is necessary for the protection of the identity of the individual. Barriers between individuals not only must be maintained but also respected. "Mending Wall" and "The Tuft of Flowers" call for the need of separation to develop individuality. This process, however, does not account for all individual identities as preferences exclude differing views. Frost recognizes this dilemma in his poem, "A Minor Bird." Frost personally held that each individual has something valuable to say and contribute to society as a whole. Contrarily though, individuality results in separation between men. Frost illuminates that isolation is inevitable in the process of developing an individual identity, thus eclipsing the idea of community.

"The Tuft of Flowers" exposes that isolation is sometimes necessary to be able to engage in fellowship. Frost comments that while his poem "Into My Own" represents a time when he "went away from people," "The Tuft of Flowers" signals his return "back to them" (Kendall 38). "The Tuft of Flowers" is Frost's confrontation with the complexity of interaction. Instead of enjoying his isolation in nature, the speaker seeks to find the mower of the grass. "I looked for him behind an isle of trees;/ But he had gone his way, the grass all mown (5-7). Failing to find the mower the speaker concludes that all men must be alone, "Whether they work together or apart" (10). The speaker does, however, find a form of connection to the mower through their shared respect for nature. A butterfly leads the speaker to a tuft of flowers that are spared by the mower who leaves them to "flourish, not for us" (28). Upon observing this, he feels "a spirit kindred to my own;/ So that henceforth I worked no more alone" (36). Although the two are not physically together, the speaker "engages" with him in "brotherly speech" (35). Frost shows that it is not necessary to physically interact with others to find a form of fellowship. In fact, because the speaker is isolated, he is able to recognize the shared views the two hold. The isolation allows the mower to act on his individuality and leave the flowers alone. If the two had

interacted beforehand, the speaker might have never discovered their similarities. Isolation is thus necessary for creating individuality.

“Mending Wall” exemplifies that barriers are necessary for developing healthy relationships between individuals. Frost comments, “Mending Wall takes up the theme where A Tuft of Flowers laid it down” (Kendall 51). The same wall the neighbors use to provide them with privacy becomes the force that unifies them. Every spring, the speaker meets with his neighbor to “set the wall between us once again./ We keep the wall between us as we go” (14-15). The repairing of the wall appears to be a ritual for both the speaker and the neighbor. The speaker, however, trivializes this yearly occurrence and refers to it as “just another kind of out-door game” (21). He even questions the importance of the wall. “The speaker repeats his first line, “Something there is that doesn’t love a wall, / That wants it down” (35-36). “Here the “something” that doesn’t love a wall is clearly Nature, which annually tears down the barrier that man has erected. Walls, the speaker suggests, are unnatural and artificial” (Watson 54). Although he cannot appreciate the wall, it acts as a protection to his neighbor’s individuality. In fact, by wanting the wall removed, the speaker is eclipsing his neighbor’s preferences and not respecting his views. The speaker is also forcing communication where it is not mutually wanted. The speaker cannot understand why, “Good fences make good neighbors” (27). The speaker goes as far to refer to his neighbor as “an old-stone savage” who “moves in darkness” (40-42). By favoring isolation and privacy, the speaker considers the neighbor to be intellectually dull and not even a part of society itself. He depicts the hunters that destroy the wall in a frustrated tone. However, the speaker fails to see the similarity between him and the hunters. Both aim to destroy the barrier that fosters individual identity. The poem ends with the neighbor restating, “Good fences make good neighbors” (46). “The wall may be a barrier to friendship and communication, but it is also a protector of privacy— a protector even of the integrity of the self against the world’s efforts to use that private self for its own ends and ultimately to twist it out of shape” (Watson 655). Although the barrier separates both men, they are still working together to rebuild it. Thus proving that “Men work together, / Whether they work together or apart” (37-38). “One of the notable things about walls, however, is that they always have two sides—a fact Frost himself recognized” (Watson 653). These two sides allow for the existence of individuality for both the speaker and the neighbor. In that sense, barriers are healthy and necessary even if the speaker himself does not recognize that.

Frost illustrates that the process of individualization fails to account for all unique perspectives, thus resulting in separation. This is apparent in “A Minor Bird” in which the speaker is annoyed by a singing bird. The speaker says, “I have wished a bird would fly away, / And not sing by my house all day” (1-2). By wishing this, the speaker feels a sense of guilt and

remorse. “The fault must partly have been in me. / The bird was not to blame for his key” (5-6). By desiring solitude, the speaker silences the bird. He does not account for the bird’s perspective and belittles its viewpoint and expression. Metaphorically, the bird’s singing could represent a minor poet.

Through the process of individual identity and preferences, Frost argues that we begin to eclipse differing views. Our preferences as individuals do not account for the broad world of art and thus we begin to exclude minor artists if they do not please our preferences. Frost emphasizes the importance to account and respect every individual’s “voice.” The speaker concludes, “And of course there must be something wrong/ In wanting to silence any song” (7-8). Any form of privacy and isolation ultimately robs expression from another human being.

Although paradoxical, a healthy community cannot be established without the presence of isolation. The poems highlight the struggle of the individual finding fellowship and communication while also still developing his or her own convictions and preferences in seclusion. “The Tuft of Flowers had developed a laborer’s new understanding of community” as the speaker renounces his “initial belief that men work alone” (Kendall 51). Frost praises the fact that isolation allows for individuality to prosper. After developing a sense of individuality, one can engage in fellowship with those of kindred minds. Thus without isolation, it is not possible to have meaningful fellowship. “Mending Wall” exemplifies the need for barriers to respect and maintain individuality. Although the speaker fails to see the importance of the barrier, it protects individual identity. By trivializing the wall, the speaker also fails to respect his neighbor’s differing views. Also, while they are isolated on opposite sides, they are still working together to rebuild the wall. Thus, Frost proves that men can work together even in the presence of barriers. In “A Minor Bird,” Frost illustrates that when one desires privacy, the self-expression of other individuals can be taken away. As one develops one’s own taste or preference, “minor” or differing perspectives are eclipsed. The relationship between fellowship and individuality proves to be a complicated one. Frost strongly held that every man had something unique to add to the greater conversation of art. However, isolation is necessary to develop unique perspectives to contribute. Thus, the process of individualization is consequently a process of separation. Frost ultimately redefines the definition of community in the sense that meaningful community cannot exist without isolation. In a political viewpoint, Frost holds that while we are equal we are also separate. As a whole, we form a multifaceted democracy and come together to represent our individuality. Although paradoxical, fellowship and separation must co-exist to create a meaningful and healthy community.

Echoes by Priscilla Lam

Something is there that doesn't love the rain

Form without direction, direction without form

The reflections of faces in the masses

Leaves on the wet, cracked sidewalk

Alone. Alone.

People come and go.

The hollow men's voices are only echoes

"Hello? Hello?"

Frustrations by Luis Manzo

Marcus turns right on the large intersection that leads into the slums of Los Angeles, “Is there anything fucking decent to eat around here?” Marcus mumbles under his breath as he is driven by the fifth McDonald’s branded restaurant. This time it was a “homemade” Italian food joint. He notes a Family Owned seal on the window next to the entrance. How ironic that the seal is there when the iconic golden arch sits right above it. The street is just another string of glass buildings with the familiar yellow and red logo planted on the roof. Marcus presses a dark green button on the dashboard and the car speeds up. He drives by many space gray Apple Cars. An occasional gold and silver car make an appearance. Marcus glances left and right, seeing more McDonald’s restaurants and occasional industrial-looking and sharp-edged Walmart grocery stores. Giving up, he says, “Hey Siri, what’s a close by restaurant that isn’t shitty McDonalds?” The Apple logo in the middle of the steering wheel glows.

“I’m sorry, McDonald’s Italian, Burger and Mexican restaurants are the only restaurants in this area,” responds Siri. Marcus eyes furrow and he feels his stomach grumble.

“Gross,” he says despite his hunger. The last thing he wants to eat is that processed crap, but what choice does he have? That’s all there is in these parts of town.

“Would you like me to look for something else?” responds Siri.

Marcus sighs, thinking of what to do next. His options are limiting unless he wants processed food from the Walmart he passed by. Seems he can’t get away from McDonalds in this shitty town. He might as well eat at one of these shit shows. He does have to make an impression on the people. The more he mingles with the common people, the higher numbers he will have. It’s just something he’s not entirely used to yet.

“No, just take me to the next McDonald’s Mexican.”

“We will arrive in our destination in five minutes.”

Marcus leans back and presses a large button with the image of the sun on it. The roof slides back revealing a sheet of glass that lets sunlight in. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. He takes in the warmth of the sub. *Another day, another round of promotion.*

“Siri, please update me on the polls.” Marcus opens his eyes and sees the car has stopped moving. “I guess we’re here.” He reaches to the empty seat next to him, his hands brushing the white leather. He picks up the black messenger bag from the seat.

“You’re behind on the numbers. Your relatability to the people is low. You’re right below Google’s guy and above Microsoft” Marcus grunts and moves to get out the car. How is he not relatable? He’s the CEO of Apple. Everyone loves Apple. Who doesn’t? Fucking Google and their socialism ruining everything for him. He needs to be elected. What else is there to accomplish if he doesn’t? He’s CEO now, but Marcus wants more.

The door slides open and the roof of the car moves back into place. Marcus stands in front of the McDonald’s Mexican Grill, taking in a wiff of the lovely processed smell of lime-marinated steak and refried beans. He looks around him and takes note of the Disney park down the street and the small group of homeless people inside of it. Marcus notices the mud-stained clothes of a

homeless man. Marcus watches as he walks over to one of the clean green benches where he sits down. He seems out of place among the saturated green plant life and the shiny stone paths leading further into the park. The homeless man holds a cup of coffee. He tries to feel something for him but nothing. Just this annoyance at the fact that the man is there dirtying up the clean park.

He opens the cold glass door and walks in. The inside is crowded by dozens of people, several look homeless and the only white people in the room are Marcus himself and the workers behind the counter. Seems the white folk are only getting hired these days. What a shame, he thinks. Marcus walks up, smiling at the cashier.

“Oh my god. Marcus Ives? Oh my god. Um, what can I get for you?” Marcus is asked. The cashier is a young woman with her blonde hair in a bun. Marcus smiles at her.

“Hi, Alexis,” Marcus says noting the name tag on her uniform. She smiles back at him, tapping her fingers on the counter. She’s a bit jittery. Marcus holds eye contact with her. “I’ll take a the McEnchilda combo. Hold the beans and extra rice. With a Pepsi.”

“Gotcha! But um, we only serve Coca-Cola here, Mr. Ives. Pepsi’s gone down under,” she says, her smile as wide as ever. Pepsi is out of business? Since when? Marcus thinks to himself. Feeling a bit odd when he realizes he’s been out of touch lately. So much for relatability.

“No worries, hun. Coca-Cola is fine by me.”

When he gets his order he can’t help but still be shocked at picture-perfect it looks. Just like in the photo. A little too perfect, for his tastes. He sees a father and three children sitting at a table. Poor chubby little things. I’m not relatable? Like fucking Google thinks it can take market share down here, Marcus thinks as he moves to the table next to the father and his kids. He knows he can relate to the common people. Hell, that’s why he decided to run for office. He wipes his mouth, turns to them and asks, “Hey, how are you doing today?”

Pretty Girls by Luis Manzo

“Oh, god. What is that *thing*?” Jordana sneers at the tight black lace dress from Nordstrom. She flicks her hands away, moving her eyes away from the dress and digs into the eyes of the retailer. “Please, get me something that isn’t so—boring.” The short man with dirty blonde hair and patchy facial hair scurries away. He mumbles something that Jordana is too annoyed to pay attention to. She looks at herself in the mirror and takes out her gold iPhone. Through the screen of the iPhone, Jordana scrutinizes her face. The camera clearly isn’t doing justice to her light skin. Regardless, she takes several selfies. Pouted lips, smizing (#antm) eyes and maybe some caught-off-guard candid selfies. Burst mode is her best friend, really. Taking multiple photos in just a few seconds is genius. Her followers on Instagram are going to adore her collage that’s in the making. Jordana flips her auburn hair out her face.

She scrolls through her Twitter. The usual stuff shows up. You know, Adele’s basic album breaking NSYNC’s record or whatever, rumors about queen Britney Spears performing at the Superbowl. Lovely. She continues scrolling, hitting the star on a tweet about being a foodie. She stops running her fingers across the screen when a tweet about the Planned Parenthood shooting pops up. “This is *nonsense*.” She ignores it and continues scrolling.

“Miss?”

Jordana lifts her head at that dreadful word. Who the fuck would call her miss? How old does she really look? The retailer is standing in front of her holding a rose gold dress. It’s long and tight with see through mesh above the breast area the color of pink. “Miss? Please, what am I? Your elementary school teacher?” She rips the dress away from his hands and turns to the mirror. “This dress is beautiful,” she whispers. She gushes over the rose-gold of the dress, the smooth latex and the soft mesh. Jordana knows she’s going to look amazing at tonight’s party. She can just picture walking in: her rose-gold dress, her auburn hair in waves and her nude lipstick. All the boys from Kappa Alpha will swoon over her. And maybe, just maybe, the Gamma Beta will finally notice her? She can imagine just the sorority swarming her, praising her dress. She-

“What are you still doing here?” The retailer just stares at her. “Hello? I mean, I know I’m, gorgeous and all but you should really move along. Take a photo if you’d like.” He doesn’t move. She rolls here and walks past him but he doesn’t let her through. “C’mon, shitface. Move” She shoves past him and walks, with utter confidence of course, across the store. Her black pumps clicking against the tile floor. What a freak, she thinks. She reaches the cash register but no one is there. It takes her a moment to realize that there is no one in the store. She looks around her, racks upon racks of designer clothes. Rows of empty cash registers. Mannequins stare back at her. What the fuck? The door couldn’t have possibly closed already. She takes out her phone and checks the time: 8:00 pm. Nordstrom should still be open. She jolts as the lights go out.

“Are you fucking kidding me? What is this, Chopping Mall?” she scoffs and heads towards the exit. She’s annoyed that the idiots at the store ruined her shopping experience. She holds on to the dress. Fuck them. She’s going to look sexy. Wait, shouldn’t I pay for it? She thinks. Turning around, she takes out her wallet from her Chanel purse and throws a couple twenties onto the cash register. “I’m so charitable,” she says to herself. She walks off towards the exit when—

Grogginess. What happened? Jordana opens her eyes, the crust from her eyelids flake off. The bright light coming from above causes her to squint. "Hello?" She puts her arms over her eyes. Fuck, my head is pounding. She gets up and looks around but there's only darkness outside of the light's range. She looks down and sees her heels are caked with dirt. "Really?"

Brightness. She cringes and looks away. Nervousness creeps up her spine. She notices how cold the room is. She's afraid to look up at what could possibly be inhabited in here. And she's also scared her heels are too damaged to be saved. Slowly, she moves her hands away and shakes. She shakes and shakes. Her heartbeat bursting at an immense speed. "Me?"

In front of her stands an auburn haired, light skinned girl. She is wearing the rose-gold dress. Her nude lipstick is perfect. Her hair is falling in perfect waves. Jordana is in shock at how beautiful she looks. She. As in Jordana. It takes her several seconds to notice the clapping coming behind her. She turns around and see the retailer from Nordstrom. "Isn't she a beauty?" he asks. Jordana moves away. "Did you do this?" she asks.

Jordana yelps. A blood hand has torn through her stomach. Behind her the Jordana look-a-like stares with empty eyes. "Thank you, thank you. You saved me some time," the retailer says, smiling at his most accomplished work. Jordana's robot clone sputters and awkwardly twitches her metallic face into a smile. She stutters, "Wh-who's n-n-ext?"

"Oh, dear. We need to work on your voice," sighs the retailer.

Jordana-bot cocks her head slightly, "I-I can't wait to see the world."

"Oh, believe me, very soon. We just need to...find the rest of your family."

The retailer smirks, takes her hand and leads her out of the room leaving the original Jordana's body to rot.

Heart of Gold by Brianna Martinez *

The man stands in line at his local Von's
when he suddenly coughs up
a shimmery pile of gold dust powder,
blanketing the linoleum tiles in a glittery mess.

“So sorry,” he mutters, as he stoops down
to shovel handfuls of the sparkly soot
into his pockets. The clerk watches wide-eyed,
and a young girl opens her phone's camera.

The man leaves in a nervous rush,
leaving behind a wispy trail of metallic flecks.
This is the second time this week
something like this has happened.

He thinks back to Monday's events,
when he left the airport tomato-cheeked
after tripping the metal detectors of TSA,
his solid heart feeling heavier than usual.

But that wasn't nearly as bad as the time
he was followed home from the public pool,
by a shady figure who spent the afternoon staring
at the yellow glow that emitted from his chest.

So now he rushes on home

to protect his heart of gold.

He draws his black-out blinds
and deadbolts his iron doors.

In the safe dark of his room,
he remembers the science book
that explained how the gold dust of his myocardium
is the stuff of space and supernovas.

The Presence of God in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Brianna Martinez

God is an important figure of power within Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Interestingly enough, Hurston seems to give her own striking opinion of God through the commentary provided by an omniscient narrator. The novel seems very self-aware in how it deals with the sensitive topics of religion and religious devotion. Throughout this novel, God is seen in the authority delegated by white oppressors, in the ambiguous and at times terrifying beauty of the universe, as well as in the unpredictable and resolute destruction that is dealt by forces of nature.

Mrs. Turner, a restaurant owner in the Everglades, is convinced that Caucasian features signify superiority, power, and sanctity. Mrs. Turner, who is described to be of mixed Caucasian and African descent, "was cruel to those more negroid than herself in direct ratio to their negroness" (Hurston 138). However, Mrs. Turner revered Janie and enjoyed spending time with her because Janie "looked more white folkish than herself" (Hurston 138). Hurston comments rather disparagingly about the devotion that worshippers deal to their respective deities. Mrs. Turner "felt honored" by Janie's mere presence, and "quickly forgave and forgot snubs in order to keep it" (Hurston 138). Hurston makes it clear that Mrs. Turner was not alone in her subordination, as she writes that "Mrs. Turner, *like all other believers* had built an altar to the unattainable — Caucasian characteristics for all" (139). Mrs. Turner, along with *all* adherents of worship-based religion, would allow their gods to "hurl [them] from pinnacles and lose [them] in deserts, but [they] would not forsake" the altars of the One they worshipped. This groveling would be done with the hope of attaining "a heaven of straight-haired, thin-lipped, high-nose

boned white seraphs” (Hurston 139). This line of reasoning serves to justify cruelty in the minds of individuals like Mrs. Turner.

These acts of cruelty are, in the omniscient narrator’s view, systematic and fundamentally supported by a belief in a supreme being. There is a “pecking order” (Hurston 138) that is determined by the gradient of skin color (with whiteness reigning supreme, as God would possess an unattainable level of “whiteness,” or purity). It is then implied that white people were viewed as God by people with darker skin. This view coincides with the dynamic that once existed between white people (slave owners) and black people (slaves). “Insensate cruelty” would be dealt to individuals seen to be of lesser value and “groveling submission” would be offered to those of a higher status. Again, however, Hurston implies through the use of an omniscient narrator that there is a Supreme God that dominates over *all* mankind via the instrument of fear and the demand for blood. These other lesser gods rank according to the pigment of their skin, bringing down their red right hands on those underneath while holding those above in fear-founded reverence. Hurston writes:

It was inevitable that she should accept inconsistency and cruelty from her deity as all good worshippers do from theirs. All gods who receive homage are cruel. All gods dispense suffering without reason. Otherwise they would not be worshipped. Through indiscriminate suffering men know fear and fear is the most divine emotion. It is the stones for altars and the beginning of wisdom. Half gods are worshipped in wine and flowers. Real gods require blood. (Hurston 139)

The reverence felt by all for the Supreme God is made especially evident when the hurricane is about to strike. White and black people alike huddle together in shanties, “their eyes straining against crude walls and their souls asking if He meant to measure their puny might against His” (Hurston 151). Even the black individuals were “past for asking the white folks what to look for through that door,” as they were instead “questioning God” about what was to become of them after the hurricane hit (Hurston 151).

Throughout the novel, God is also tied to nature and the surrounding world. God is most often symbolized by the pear tree, the hurricane, and the horizon. In this sense, Hurston provides a rather gnostic perspective of God’s existence, as He is described as a diffused power found in nature. Janie views pollen and the pear tree as symbols of vitality and youthful vibrancy. Referring to how Janie feels about Joe Starks when she first meets him, Hurston writes that Starks “spoke for far horizon. He spoke for change and chance” (28). The horizon then serves to symbolize opportunity and an ideal future that Janie will inevitably hurtle towards. In the moments leading up to the climax of the storm, Janie tells Tea Cake: “If you kin see de light at daybreak, you don’t keer if you die at dusk... Ah wuz fumbli’n round and God opened de door” (Hurston 151). Janie seems to believe that the horizon is representative of inner peace; she feels that becoming connected to the horizon would allow her to become one with nature and with God, which seem to be one and the same in her perspective. At the end of the novel it is revealed that the tempest within Janie’s soul has been calmed: “She pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder.... She called in her soul to come and see” (Hurston 184). Janie has accepted her inability to control the momentum of life and of nature.

All eyes are watching and questioning God (either nature or those with a higher level of authority) due to the fact that all people are dealt cruelty from one source or another — either physical abuse at the hands of people or physical decay and destruction at the hands of the elements and time.

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Excerpts from “Quindecennial Dreams” by Ashley Mora *

At five P.M. on a typical weekday Rosaura, rather than getting ready to head out into traffic after the daily grind, would just be beginning her day. Taking her usual route to work, she'd be maneuvering through a maze of jammed cars and busy streets at rush-hour, that is, until she'd finally manage to arrive at work and neatly guide her car into the concrete enclosure of the parking lot, finding her way to her usual parking spot adjacent to the cramped maintenance room. Heading out towards the little room, she would set in motion a routine she had gotten down to a science and would finally begin her day.

Before anything, however, she would often find the need to control her temper and watch her mouth. Her daughter followed her every move from the backseat of their little gray 1990s Toyota, inquisitive and attentive. Rosaura knew children were wont to repeat everything they heard, *this* child in particular. Walking in only to be met with a messy storage room was a common occurrence in those times, and, while any other janitor would have gotten what they needed and left it as someone else's problem, Rosaura often resigned herself to once again cleaning up someone else's mess. After she finished stacking and organizing boxes of chemicals and supplies, getting things as orderly as possibly, Rosaura would set herself back onto her usual routine.

First, she would retrieve the trash bins from inside the maintenance area, dump out any leftover trash, and replace the bags. Meanwhile, her four year old daughter would wait patiently in the car for her mother to come get her and heave her up and into one of the newly emptied bins, cover her with old newspapers, and wheel her past security and into the main building.

Her daughter would be as quiet as a mouse as her mother wheeled her around to the front of the drab, beige, law offices, and would even go as far as to briefly hold her breath as they passed the guard. However young she might have been, she understood that she wasn't supposed to be here.

Although her mother's job consisted only of maintenance and cleaning, this was no place for a child. Antonia, Rosaura's daughter, would have homework she would need to complete, games she would rather be playing, cartoons she would prefer to sit absorbed in; a child, after all, no matter how unique the circumstances and no matter how understanding they might have been, was still a child. Rosaura, however, had no babysitter, and refused to leave Antonia home alone.

The coast was finally clear when the pair made it past a hallway constructed entirely of glass and into the belly of the building amongst cabinets near bursting with files, pristine carpeting and plush leather arm chairs. Lifting her out of the bin and dusting her off, Rosaura would send her daughter into each cubicle and every office to collect the trash bins and to dump trash out, to clean out the office refrigerators, and, when all was said and done, to do homework and rest. Rosaura herself would mop the floors, clean the windows, and pick up any stray trash that had found its way to the floor, scrubbing furiously and wiping everything down with an army of chemicals behind her, industrial and household, caustic and unobtrusive alike.

Rosaura's daughter, Antonia, is now a student at Whittier College. She recalls that by eleven or twelve, her mother would pull a downy loveseat from a nearby waiting room and leave her there as she continued working in the area. Curling her legs up close to her before tucking them underneath her sweater, she leans back in her seat as she explains how a typical night would go for them. "She'd just keep working until she had to move on, and then, you know, she'd carry me to the next section, or just wake me up and tell me, like, 'Hey, it's time to move', but she never left me alone in a room," when pressed as to why, she explains that the risk of a security guard walking in and finding her was all too real and would undoubtedly lead to her mother's termination.

"I always kind of knew that ... well, not everyone's parents did that kind of thing, like, I knew my friend's dad was a lawyer, or so-and-so's parents were doctors, and I knew that that was different from what my mom did," Antonia's lost in thought as she calls on the past, meticulously groomed eyebrows knit together as she searches through memory, "I just always assumed this was just something temporary, because I knew my mom was smart – like *crazy* smart." She piques up here, going into full detail on her parents and their love of education and learning – mentions how later her mother went back to school to become a nurse, and her father took to learning Hebrew between graveyard shifts.

She recalls that despite her young age, for the seven years that her mother worked she felt a sense of pride bolstering at the determination and drive her mother exhibited. She knew, first hand, how difficult the work was, and she "wasn't gonna downplay what she was doing". Indeed the work was difficult, backbreaking even, for Rosaura would later be forced to leave the workforce altogether due to sustained injuries.

Reminders by Nazarely Narvez

I like to remind myself that all coffee dates are with losers unless you're in France
And that no one really cares that I shop strictly from the sales rack at Topshop.

I like to tell myself that it's totally fine that I bought designer boots that have no grip
And that no one saw me almost slip to my death in front of the chic restaurant down the street.

I tell myself that my B+/A- essay doesn't bother me
And that the principal didn't *absolutely butcher* my name at my high school graduation ceremony.

I tell myself that while my life is a series of moments of:

Almost dying,

Almost throwing up,

Almost missing the bus,

Almost loving,

And almost being loved,

It's okay because I'm only 19.

I'm only 19 but I can't help feeling as if I've got the mental health of a 35 year-old with two kids.

Text Message by Nazarely Narvaez

My heart vibrates in the same way my cellphone does

Whenever it receives your text message.

But you haven't replied so maybe you forgot to pay your phone bill

Or you're most likely at an underground hipster show, having a beer with the guys.

While I await your reply and watch *The Notebook*,

Our relationship dangles by the invisible cord of our cell phone connection.

Yes, double-tap on every single one of my Instagram posts

But never speak to me in person.

That is exactly how it works in our day and age.

Take me back to the time when your response was almost immediate,

Your embrace not so distant, and when puffy eyes and migraines weren't necessary

For me to explain what you've done.

We are the ideal 21st century couple, using technology's hypnosis to express our love.

We hold on to our phones tighter than we hold onto to each other.

We don't even use words any more,

A heart emoji has replaced the three simple words I long to hear.

On the World Wide Web you are the sense of calm I feel during a long ride home

But if I look past the chrome filter, I see that you are also the cold rush of wind that hits me when

I step foot outside.

I've chosen another chick flick to watch and you still haven't replied.

Yellow by Stephanie Okuaki

Compliment

Compliment?

Compliment

Not a compliment.

But I used to think it was

when they stared

And whistled and catcalled

Or came up to me insinuating that they had power in doing so

I used to think it was vital that I cared

Trick or treat

It's not a treat

It's a trick

They tricked us all

The movies

The TV shows

The magazines

And the way we've been socialized to think

I grew up thinking I was wrong for looking different

The 'chink' was never the main character

At least not in the mainstream

And they didn't have Asian Barbie's lined up in the store shelves I was too small to reach
Or if they did I didn't look like them

I used to hate being yellow

No double eyelids

An 'alien' he called me

Or the time a group of boys yelled out of a car window "your fucking Asian face" while I
was walking back home

Or the time one of my ex boyfriends said I couldn't be prettier

Because I wasn't white

Society screamed at me to be yellow

Because I look yellow and am expected to be yellow even though I never felt that way

My culture was always about structure

Expectation

Perfection

I couldn't help but always bleed out between those lines

They screamed at me to be yellow

I didn't want to be yellow

I was always expected to be quiet

I ended up weeded into the stereotypes that almost made me silent for good

They taught me the only good part about being yellow was as an accessory

A fetish

I didn't belong in white colors that rejected me
All I really wanted were canvases of souls
I was trapped so for a while I ran
Away into a bottle of too many pills
Men who didn't give a damn
And razor blades full of secrets
Most will never understand
So don't tell me that just because it took years for me to finally appreciate my yellow skin
That that gives you an excuse to touch me when I didn't ask you to
Or shame me for my own choices that were never yours to make
Yellow...
Yellow..
Yellow.

I'd still die to feel all those colors.

The Artist in the 21st Century by Christian Perez

After a long battle involving claims of rape and abuse, a Manhattan Supreme Court has decided that singer-songwriter Kesha is not eligible to terminate her 6 album contract with Sony. Kesha, who has not released new material since late 2013 and has since changed her name from Ke\$ha to Kesha, was seeking a way out of her contract after facing alleged abuse at the hands of producer, Dr. Luke. In fact, Kesha has issued claims of abuse over a period of ten years at the hands of the same man.

According to Kesha and her family Dr. Luke, who has been involved with Kesha's career since early 2006, is to blame for raping, drugging, harassing, and verbally abusing the singer. In fact it was during the rocky period of Dr. Luke's management over Kesha that the singer was put through a rehabilitation program in Lemont, Illinois for an eating disorder.

Interestingly enough, it was also during the same management period that Kesha reached her peak as a recording artist. After the release of Flo Rida's single "Right Round", a track produced by Dr. Luke, Kesha was launched into a multi-million dollar career of creative expression and musical prowess. Before the success of this song Kesha was an artist in the shadows who wrote music for other artists such as Kelly Clarkson, Katy Perry, The Veronicas, and even Britney Spears. It was the release of this infectious pop track which catapulted her into international fame.

Currently she stands as one of the strongest female pop artists in the world with two full length albums, thirteen singles (four of which feature her as a guest), and two large-scale, headlining tours. Today Kesha's image gleams with a unique style that combines large amounts of glitter, psychedelic unicorns, torn-up clothes, and undeniable talent.

Kesha's indelible success in the digital era is a force to be reckoned with. In just a short period of 5 years (from the release of "Right Round" in 2009 to the release of her last single "Timber" in 2013) she managed to create a marketable brand and iconic essence. There is no other artist in the sphere quite like Kesha; her trash-pop sound and rock-glam look seems to be something straight out of the 70s.

So then, why did Kesha stop making music? Didn't it make sense to continue climbing the ladder of success? To continue growing as a musical force and exploring the creative horizon?

The answer is simple: the music industry is a twisted, toxic vat waiting for the next pop star to exploit. Dr. Luke represents this sphere; in fact, he is the new poster child.

Kesha is not the first musician to be mismanaged, abused, and ultimately stepped on by the music industry.

The world still remembers the loss of another unimaginably talented singer-songwriter who called herself Amy Winehouse. In combination with alcoholism and drug struggles, Amy too was abused by her label and producers to the point of madness. In the last years of Amy's demise, she was forced by her management to perform in the Amy Winehouse Tour. The abuses on Amy continued as she stooped lower and lower into addiction and depression, until finally she died in her hotel room watching old videos of her songs.

Before Amy there was Fiona Apple who struggled for over two years to obtain the release of her EP, *Extraordinary Machine*. From 2003 to 2005 she fought and reworked her album several times much to the apathy of her label, Epic. The record label argued her sound was not 'good' enough for release; this resulted in a long hiatus and song leaks. Ultimately the album was finally released, though it did not reach the shelves until three years after the recording and production originally began.

Before Fiona there have been countless others such as Pink Floyd, Radiohead, and Amanda Palmer who have been compelled to fight for their rights as artists and as people against their management. Often called too experimental, odd, or even aesthetically displeasing, these entertainers have had to carry the full weight of the music industry's greed on their back. Each of these men and women can all attest to the vicious nature of the music industry and its hunger for money and a new artist to exploit.

The damages these artists ensue while trying to pursue what they love are innumerable and, in most occasions irreparable. Not only do some of these artists lose followers and fame as a result of long periods of retirement, but some of these artists never fully recover from the abuse that they suffer. Kesha has been open about her struggles against Sony and the journey to a recovery from the abuse she's enduring at their hands. Through a series of tweets and online videos she has been able to relate her story to her fans, which she refers to as animals (a reference to her debut album, *Animal*). In response dozens across the globe have spoken out in favor of the singer. Together fans and other celebrities have created a network of awareness and support under the hashtag '#FREEKESHA'.

The latest development in Kesha's case has been disappointing, to say the least. The judge's ruling against the termination of her contract with Sony is yet another win for the dark side of the

music sphere. This means that Kesha is forced by law to work with the man who raped her and abused her over a ten year period or she can retire from the career she earned.

As sad as it is, these are the odds that the artists in the world of today are up against. In order to pursue the career of their dreams, people have to compromise their well-being and persona. It seems shocking that an art which is designed to create pleasure and happiness costs so much pain.

Why then do people continue to seek out a career in the music industry? What is it that drives people into a line of business with so many dangers?

“I’m a singer-songwriter. I’ve always enjoyed singing. It’s something I’ve always liked to do. It’s always been a part of my life. When I was younger, I wrote little poems... You know things you put in your diary and such,” echoes Melodie Chatman, a senior Psychology major. Her eyes shine with the determination and passion of a rising artist.

It is rising artists who fill our brains with contagious beats and memorable lyrics. It is rising artists who live and breathe art in order to pioneer into creative expression. It is rising artists who create art for the sake of art. It is rising artists whose passions fuel pop culture’s insatiable machine.

It is also these same rising artists who labels, producers, and managers manipulate, exploit, and exhort.

Things have worked slightly differently for Melodie; she’s been fortunate to have the guidance of friends who are directly involved in the industry.

“I don’t think you ever have to put yourself in a box. I feel like people get boxed in by the industry or by people around them,” she comments. She glances out the window as the dying sun rips through the orange sky. The burnt tinge splattered across the clouds seems to represent the fury in the hearts of artists like Amy Winehouse, Fiona Apple, and Kesha.

“I feel like society and the way we view people in the entertainment business whether it be the music business, in films, television, athletes, politicians... I feel like as a society we have to change from seeing them as being complete, total, unfiltered entertainment for us, to that is their job,” she says.

She’s right. That is the raw truth.

In order for artists like Kesha to enter the industry with fair terms and an uncorrupted contract society needs a reframing of thought. The labels and management groups will not stop strangling the artist until society points its finger at them. Nothing will change unless the masses voice their concern. The music sphere will continue abuse talent unless the general public stands with the artist.

The music industry has been lead to believe that it owns the artist. That is sole reason for the level of toxicity present in the music industry. To be a successful performer today means not only to be a good singer; it also means to be a good business person. Without the proper business grooming it becomes easy to fall into situations much like Kesha's.

That is not how things should be. The artist should be celebrated. Record labels should aim to support the artist.

Sadly, it's a rather simple thing to point one's finger at people like Dr. Luke. It's easy to blame one man and dismiss the issue, but the truth is, it isn't just Dr. Luke. Kesha hasn't only been abused by one man; the system is responsible too. Modern society has created a system in which the entertainer is a literal jester: a fool to be kept for entertainment.

It is also easy to buy into this theory and victim blame. It is easy to shame Kesha for signing the contract in the first place and remaining quiet about the abuse for so long. And yet, the truth is, none of those things should matter anymore. The only thing that should matter is that a corporation is holding a person hostage much like a predator holds a prey.

That is the dilemma of the artist in the 21st Century. Will time mean the end of the artist?

“When I think about it... It doesn't scare me. I've always known I want to be in entertainment in some capacity. So for me... it's something that's been on my mind. I've never had these experiences so I don't want to say, 'Oh, I'll be fine.' But the idea of the industry doesn't scare me,” she says bravely. A sweet smile unfolds across Melodie's face as the sun's last drop falls and the night sets in.

The Three Hawaiian Men by Christian Perez

“How’s it hanging bub?” he asked me.

“Pretty good. You got a light?” I responded.

“Yeah, yeah. Why don’t you come sit with us?”

I smiled. I wondered if perhaps it was okay for me to sit at a corner of the beach, with strangers, at 3 AM, in a state that wasn’t my own. I walked over slowly, and as I came closer I began to see the men more clearly. All three appeared to be Hawaiian men in their late 20s; strong and tall with broad shoulders and the complexions of an orange sundown.

They were the three Hawaiian men.

My throat was burning. I sat alone under a banyan tree in Hawai’i 3 in the morning after a long day of KCACTF, a national college theatre festival. My hotel was about two streets down, but I didn’t want to go to bed. The beach waves crashed softly on the shore, as Waikiki’s streets sat in deep silence only adorned by the music of the sea. Without any tourists, I finally had all of Hawaii at my fingertips. The only lights around me came from street lamps; every sign, window, and car seemed to be consumed by the night. Once in a while I’d see another wanderer who greeted me with a smile.

I’d already smoked three Black Angel Cigars earlier in the day, but I’d bought four of them since my hotel’s ABC Store was having a special. I was determined to smoke the last one on the beach. I made my way to the waters swiftly and found a place on the sand.

I sat.

I could see each individual waveform and then dissolve right before my eyes. I could see the lightness and the prowess of the ocean; a paradox unlike any other. The waves kept coming and coming. Each one seemed to be a tiny bit stronger than the last; the wind followed the water and breezed through the entire city. Signs made of fabric and hanging artifacts swayed calmly in the wind. The trees danced together.

Hawai’i was alive.

I decided it was time to light my cigar. Yet, I was sourly disappointed when I realized I’d lost my lighter earlier in the day. I looked around to check if there was anyone around to light my cigar, but nearly all of Waikiki was at rest. And then I realized there was some people who, in fact, were awake.

Three men sat on a rock about 300 meters away from me. I watched them, like you'd watch an artist performing. They laughed and talked, unaware of my voyeurism. They continued to laugh amongst each other. For a moment I forgot all about my cigar. Suddenly, he saw me. One of the men locked eyes with me and saw I was attentively watching from across the way. I smiled, almost instinctively, and he smiled back. I felt strange about them knowing I was watching. They wore loose, flower-print shorts and flowy pearl shirts. Their smiles were friendly. There was kindness; I felt safe. In a matter of minutes my cigar was lit and I was deep in conversation with the three men. Their names were Ahe, Akoni, and Caden.

“So you're here on vacation? A tourist,” said Ahe pensively.

The wind was finally settling, the waves continued to pour over the sand. Foam was lining up on the shore, like the icing on a cake. The men kept laughing and smiling. They asked questions about my hometown and my festival. I shared stories from home and told them all about my theatre competitions. I asked about their beautiful city, about their beautiful culture. They told me about kapa-making, Pele, and of course the hula.

Kapa-making, as I learned, is the craft of producing beautiful cloths and fabrics out of pounded bark. Once it was an art that boomed through all of Hawaii, today it still blooms only on a smaller scale. Pele is the glamorous, powerful Goddess of the wild, fire, lightning, and volcanoes. This supreme deity still remains a staple of Hawaiian culture and continues to have a presence in the 21st century. The hula is a tradition stemming from Polynesian and Hawaiian roots. Trough dance and hand motions the hula transforms chants into visual art. This is perhaps the best known Hawaiian tradition, and rightfully so as it represents the beauty in the hearts of the Hawaiian people.

Ahe, Akoni, and Caden shared each of these cultural bits in between jokes and cigar puffs. It was now around 5 in the morning and the sun was finally rising. The pink, orange tint of the sky was finally kissing the deep blue of the water.

“You're one of the cool ones,” commented Akoni.

I was confused by what that meant. Was I *really* cool? Wasn't I cool before?

“He means to say you're one of the aware tourists. You take the time to really dip into the culture. So many people come here... To O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'I... And they want to buy the leis and the flower skirts but they don't want to really engage with the culture,” said Ahe.

“It’s true. It’s nice to get someone who cares,” Caden said with a smile.

The sun continued to rise; the city began to rev up with the buzz of a million people chattering about. Shops opened swiftly and the smells of delicious poke and coconut rice filled the air. My friends and I sat together for a moment longer as we admired the cosmopolitan beauty of Waikiki. Men and women from all ages, races, and backgrounds walked about with fresh smiles and plans. I imagined this is what heaven must look like; mounds of smiling people moving briskly with purpose and excitement.

Finally I said goodbye to my friends. Ahe, Akoni, and Caden waved goodbye with the same smiles they’d worn all night.

I began the walk back to my hotel. The young breeze refreshed my face with every step I took. I was captivated by the zest all around me. Crowds of people flocked promptly to the waters and shops. All the colors of the rainbow painted the canvas of Hawai’i. This was not the first morning I’d spent in Hawai’i, but this time was different. This time I saw the men and women who carry Hawaiian culture on their shoulders. This time I could see the richness in between the lines; Ahe, Akoni, and Caden were right. Most tourists don’t realize that what makes Hawai’i truly stunning is the raw culture. Most tourists don’t see past the leis and the pretty colors. Most tourists miss the opportunity to really connect to the heart of Hawai’i.

I don’t think I’ll ever forget the three Hawaiian men who lit my cigarette and whispered charming stories to me at 3 in the morning in Waikiki.

Sonnet 2 (Eve of Eden) by Alexander Ragucci

Fly over seas of faces, you will see
Not one as dark and blue, as deep and true
Nor as devoid of life *as yours*. For who
Could kneel each day to pray, but never be
At peace, and yet unanswered, only feel
Relief, but not *remorse*? No one I know
Would taste the Fruit of love, and then forgo
Because the Garden banished, Snake's appeal
To take *by force*. You heard the bells that tolled
A wedding ill-arranged, so hated groom
You slew and then escaped on your amour's
White Horse. As Revelations now unfold,
You smell sulfur, but have as your heirloom,
Adam's apple, for better or *for worse*.

Self-Assessment by Clara Rempe

She sways against a chest of unknown making,

Uncertain whether stepping forward actually means taking

Three steps backward. Shoulders curl towards hell

With an unbearable weight. She fights insanity taking

Pills that rip through lips. Riling venom seeps. Where do all these

Holes come from? Cover the atrocity gradually taking

Form. Laugh at it. Cry at it. Either way you're standing

In front of a mirror. Where is your humanity? Taking

The dangerous game of wishing and dreaming.

Where am I left? Wanting. Savagely Taking

An Astronomy Professor by Clara Rempe

He taps the board with inky strokes of felt
Smearing plummy stains on the whiteboard,
Talking of starry gems that glint and melt
On a scene of sable space explored.

The first mauve speckles strewn on glossy white
He firmly deems to be a bunch, a clump.
The celestial bodies of ethereal light
Pulled from high and made into this lump.

I leave the lecture, sad and sick of mind
To stroll and gaze beyond the world around me.
Researching the sky perhaps has made them blind
From being dazzled by the vast black sea.

The scientists propping twisted frames that shine
Have inadequately described the heavens divine.

Banana Heart by Clara Rempe

The glistening water spreads like a starving fire

The red grass waves like blood in the summer flood

We eat off of philosophical books

With honks and beeps as our silverware

We wear nail polish on our bodies

To cover the grotesque nakedness of our blushing skin

Slanted clocks whisper who recently died

For we are all born with a number

And my number belonged to my great grandmother

For we inherit them as we inherit our eyes

That do not see but smell the fragrant beads of earth

A sky of neon yellow glosses over our banana hearts

Glass birds flutter from bottle to bottle

And leather perfume gilds our teeth like so many swollen jewels

We lay our lover heads on spiked pillows

And our lover bodies on stalactites

While leaves fall to the sky.

MY COMMUNITY by Alessandra Roggero

the humming in our room

our non-existent air-conditioning

the passive-aggressiveness of

our new family

and the future I cannot see

no matter

how many times Tay reads me

it's been 4 weeks

20 bucks for therapy

no more

it's free here

what a treat

I never get along with

people (my own age)

and I don't know my

sexuality

they ask me that on the

paperwork

and I leave those boxes

unchecked

I haven't really had time to think
about
it
it's been 4 weeks

I'll make sure to call tomorrow
"in the morning"

He told me not to
write poems in math class
like I did in high school

I open his eyes every morning

I hope

for a halt to all

this

ringing

(my stepfather

brother

sister

abuelita

you)

everyone

asks me how I am

doing

2+2=5

I haven't really had time to think

about it

it's been 4 weeks

I catch myself staring too long

not doing

not saying enough

go ahead and be a writer

we support you

I don't want to remember

"the best years of my life"

as being in cohesion to

all

of

this

ringing

hiding and lying away

checking the watch I forget to

put on

there are people that are nice here

I can't cry anymore during the day

it's a total readjustment—a "fresh start"

so I wait
till it's dark
my eyes are like caves

college orientation didn't help

I still feel

disillusioned

detached

away

oozing out

alone

my Community

"have fun"

"see the world"

"don't worry"

"find yourself"

SOUL EXPOSED by Alessandra Roggero

I cry behind the glasses,
behind the closed bathroom doors,
behind my mind,
behind everything I believe in
bag over my head, chest leveled,
heaving from the balls of my feet and
all the way up,
a plate of cheese fries
the sink, pricking my fingers
roses he never gave me
I drown in him—
hot then cold.

he's positive I'm negative
a magnetic hold I
I can't claw away from
he doesn't need me like I need him
he doesn't love me like I love him
he doesn't can't won't

soul exposed,
I thrash in my mind to

get to the center

where it all ends

and begins

where we end

or begin I want to love him but

I can feel the potato coming up

again

Prism by Brianna Sahagian *

We were born in morning dew,
awoken in kaleidoscope air.

Child, child--I love you.

You are mine.

I put the universe in your bones.

My work is in your hair.

We were cast in crystal from the start.

Improbable lattices, flesh and quartz—

bending light around our edges.

mouths of dirt, singing prayers.

God Wrapped Me in Fireflies by Brianna Sahagian *

and kissed me.

I was a witch burnt on histories. Before

now. Alone in a bedroom on a hill
rippling plush guest bed blankets—

these sheets are so freshly clean
and heavy with country air—

potential energies ignite in empty space
as I unfurl fabric across the bed

waking particles now spark in the night.

God is reading me a bedtime story.

I feel eight years old, watching fairybugs dance
and everything is a glass jar.

Joy releases from within me like
electrostatic cracking of joints.

My soul is one flint stone,

I breathe in the sparks.

In these fibers a universe of stars was born
then passed on in An Infinite Second.

And to think,
I wasn't even sure I was supposed to be here.

God's love for me is neon,
yellow-green flashes of light sewn into the velvet.

-In response to "Creation Myth" by Melissa Studdard

I saw by Brianna Sahagian *

(honeysuckle and ivory)

deserts

(copper dust

and cactus bloom)

in the

(tiger and tinfoil)

River.

(flowing like prophecy into

Oceans)

Lorca's Poetics of Duende: Surrealism, Gypsies, and the Timelessness of Emotion

By Brianna Sahagian *

Federico Lorca was born into an intellectual culture that refused the traditional metanarratives of previous generations. It is arguable, however, that in the body of Lorca's work, he identifies an innate sense of some intangible quality outside of the physical, or some coalescence of unknowable factors that resist concrete definitions, empirical proofs, or the scientific rigors of methodical doubt. Lorca's poetry reflects an intellectual culture reeling from both the upheaval of Christian hegemony ushered in by the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions, and the failures of science to explain those other ineffable factors that comprise human nature, the spirit, and our place in the natural world. While some modern poets and artists would affirm Darwinism over romantic notions of "spirit" and highlight the division of man, object, and nature, Lorca seems disengaged from this complete disavowal of romanticism. Though he does not claim a metanarrative, he draws from multiple cultural traditions and histories of thought, and seems to grapple with a sense of spirituality that seems to arch over and above the merely physical and reside deep in the soul of a person. His attempt to create a modern Spanish poetry is rooted firmly in the past, specifically in oral and musical traditions. In effect, he evokes the Spanish concept of *duende* in music to approach poetry. By engaging with the real and idealized traditions of Spain's diverse cultures, Lorca expresses deep emotionality through metaphor, surrealist imagery and symbols, and a willingness to understand the unseen and unknowable not as falsehoods or illusions, but as elements in a not-yet-understood composition that can be illuminated in part by poetry.

For artists, poets, and thinkers of the 19th century, the new creative task became that of fostering a culture that could address nationality, spirituality, and human identity without the romanticism or monolithism of before. Lorca's Spain, with its multiplicity of aesthetic and religious influence beyond the hegemony and categorical dominance of the Roman Catholic Church, was especially critical to his participation in the modern movement to undo historical and cultural metanarratives. Christopher Maurer, in the introductory and analytical essay to Lorca's collected poetry, writes that "Lorca's image of Andalusia is, first and foremost, that of a historical melting pot: Oriental and Western, Greek and Roman, Arab and gypsy, Christian and Jewish. The poet considered himself a repository of these traditions, fancying at times that he had gypsy or Jewish blood" (xix). Southern Spain, especially Andalusia, was immensely important to Lorca and the other poets of the Generation of '27. Lorca was especially influenced

by the aesthetic markers of history and culture that surrounded him. Not only did Lorca, to an extent, romanticize the Jewish and especially Romani peoples and cultures, but he identified with them.

Being deeply inspired by the oral tradition and cultures of the gypsies, Lorca acts to “transcribe” and preserve the *cante jondo* and incorporate its characteristics into his poetry. In doing so, Lorca becomes part of the process of historicizing and understanding, with limited modern human capacity, the deep, the unknowable, the intangible, and the transcendent. In a speech given to the Centro Artístico in Granada in 1922, Lorca famously promoted the historical study, appreciation, and preservation of the *cante jondo* as an artistic tradition descendant from *siguiriya*--rooted in Hindu and Indian tradition, much like the gypsy peoples themselves--and preceding the Spanish traditions of flamenco. In this speech, Lorca reveals a great deal about his attitudes concerning art, poetry, and the human soul and its relationship to the natural world. In one instance, Lorca distinguishes *cante jondo* from flamenco and in fact places *cante jondo* in a higher order, saying, “[t]he former is song imbued with the mysterious colour of primordial ages; the latter is relatively modern, its emotional interest eclipsed by that of the other. Spiritual colour versus local colour: that is the profound difference.” This eclipsing, according to Lorca, occurs not simply at an aesthetic level, but an emotional and spiritual one. As he continually sorts out how *cante jondo* accomplishes this, it becomes clear that just as aesthetics are very closely tied to emotion, so is emotion tied into the spiritual. The aesthetic quality determines a certain level of access, tapping into the mysterious. In a later declaration from the same speech, Lorca sings specific lines from *cante jondo* lyrics: “A halo rings the moon,/my love has died.” For its emotionality and its simple but harrowing image, Lorca gives these lyrics the highest accolades: “There is a much deeper mystery in these two lines than in all the plays of Maeterlinck, simple genuine mystery, clear and sound, free of gloomy forests and rudderless boats, it is the eternal vivid enigma of death.” What resonates with Lorca is not technical proficiency of language, style, or form, nor an intellectual move away from “mysterious” notions of death, love, or nature by deconstructing them as knowable projections of self, as some other modernists attempted. Lorca resonates most deeply with the simple language and ambiguous, ethereal images of gypsy lyrics. In trying to vocalize a national Spanish identity in modern poetry, Lorca looked backward

to the traditions of Spanish folk people. Lorca's infatuation with gypsy culture presents a reconstituted worldview pieced together from the overthrown hegemony of Christianity--to which Lorca seemed to identify little, as his sexual orientation was condemned by the Catholic Church. This anti-religious tendency, advanced by developments in science and evolutionary theory, became equally aligned with the political uprisings against fascism. This modern current helped give rise to surrealism in Spanish aesthetics. Lorca brought this new Spanish style into dialogue with the gypsies of Andalusia and that cultural past. The ethnic roots and religious traditions of the gypsies themselves are a hybrid mix beginning in India, Eastern Europe, the Ottoman Empire, and ranging into Western Europe. Gypsies, though deeply connected to their own practices, often adopted and assimilated the religious rituals of their place of residence (Hancock). Influenced by both Hindu and Judeo-Christian traditions, the gypsy faith can be characterized in part by shaktism--the worship of female deities--such as Kali Sara or Saint Sara the Black, the unofficial Patron Saint of Romani based on the story of the Three Mary's who traveled with a servant named Sara after the crucifixion of Jesus. Another distinguishing characteristic, rooted in Hinduism, is that of kuntari, which emphasizes the natural balance of the universe (Hancock). Consistent with his movement's rebellion against dominant structures and metanarrative, Lorca tended to identify with and glorify the subaltern cultures around him; the light he shone on the gypsies, politically and economically oppressed in Spain, would translate into a poetic exaltation of black-Americans in New York. In the gypsies, Lorca found the spiritual traditions of this oppressed social group that itself was complex, multifaceted, and mysterious.

The poem "Preciosa y el aire/Preciosa and the Air" offers a beautiful depiction of the way Lorca deployed multiple symbols, tropes, folkloric narrative and myth to produce modern Spanish poetry. In the first four lines, both surrealist symbol and gypsy tradition are significantly utilized:

Playing her parchment moon

Preciosa comes along

an amphibious path

of laurel trees and glass.

The image of a “parchment moon” conjures a celestial object that is a thin, delicate, animal-skin technology of more primitive and prehistoric literary traditions. Yet it is not a moon at all; it is an instrument she plays--a tambourine (line 30). With history itself both hovering above the earth and resting in her hands, the girl named “precious” walks along a path marked by trees and glass, and the surreal nature of this setting prepares the audience for a potentially revelatory narrative as we are jolted out of simple, sensory consciousness into a new level of experience. It is significant that the path Preciosa walks is “amphibious”: for the gypsies, frogs and other amphibians were dreaded omens and symbols of bad luck (Hancock). Where in kuntari all things in the world must have their place, objects that occupy a permeable definition or a having a transitional or multi-categorical character, such as an amphibians, become taboos regarded as “pollution” and throw themselves into a position of imbalance.

The poem takes on a narrative structure, and at the same time seems to fear for what will happen to the bad-luck, polluted gypsy girl. She is pursued endlessly by all manner of hyper-masculine threat. First, by “San Cristobal desnudo” (line 21), the Saint of Travelers of Catholic traditions who propositions her sexually, asking her to “[o]pen in my old fingers/the blue rose of your womb” (line 27-8). How alarming it must have been for Preciosa, a wandering girl from a tradition of roaming people, to be so approached and pursued by he who should have protected her. It is in such instances that Lorca deploys symbol, myth, and image to create highly emotive poetry.

The gypsy girl is pursued most aggressively by wind itself, a force she cannot outrun. “The wind giant pursues her/ with a hot sword” (line 31-32), unrelentingly chases after her, and the world around Preciosa morphs drastically (lines 33-36). The unnatural and unexpected ways in which the natural world changes signifies both terror and growing uncertainty. When at last “Fearful Preciosa” seeks refuge in a house (lines 43-44), she is received by the “three Civil Guards” (line 48), who are Englishmen, and therefore symbols of authority and imperial force; but while acting as refuge, they also pose a potential threat, giving her “a glass of lukewarm milk/and a tumbler of gin/which Preciosa does not drink” (lines 52-54). Even the speaker acting

as narrator in the poem is not a casual observer, but seems to either identify or at least empathize with terrorized Preciosa, urging her to run from the “wind giant” and the evils that pursue her. In the end, all Preciosa can do is hide inside with the Civil Guards, telling them her story while “the furious wind is biting/on the tiles of the roof” (lines 57-58). In some ways, Lorca may be wondering, through this lyrical narrative, what happens to us when we are without place, when we, as individuals, cross into our own “polluted” territory; or perhaps, leaving the notion of “bad luck,” he brings us to simply perceive that we live in a world full of dangers unexpected threats. But more than that, Lorca is using elements of gypsy culture imbued with surrealist images to create a strong emotional response while teasing out these notions of what is still unknown to humankind in the modern age, lying just beneath the surface.

André Breton wrote in “The First Surrealist Manifesto” that surrealism, as a “new mode of pure expression” that traverses from the automatic dream consciousness and pre-consciousness into our waking “reality,” can extend into another style he called “supernaturalism” (3). Excited to imagine a day when dreaming will be subject to methodological study, Breton and many surrealists understood this new artistic style as a way to undermine assumed knowledge by accessing repressed notions of the self through “immediate absurdity. The peculiarity of this absurdity, on closer examination, comes from their capitulation to everything--both inadmissible and legitimate--in the world, to produce revelation of a certain number of premises and facts generally no less objective than others” (3). For the vanguards of surrealism in the 1920’s, it was a way to further undermine what had been assumed while emerging “in the absence of all control exerted by reason, and outside all aesthetic and moral preoccupations” (4). By presenting visual and literary imagery that is so unreal that it jars our preconceptions, new possibilities are forced out of the overthrown “truths” that had been assumed.

Lorca, however, was considered by many in the surrealist movement, his good friend and lover Salvador Dali included, to be not surrealist enough. Perhaps there was an understanding that Lorca did not approach the pre-assumed ideals with the same fervent desire to dismantle them; but rather, he chose to use surrealist imagery to evoke emotion and a stronger sense of spirit, the poetic equivalent of duende that he praised in the *cante jondo*. Indeed, as a poet, Lorca

moved freely from the surrealist to the narrative and lyrical and back again. Again in his speech to the Centro Artístico, Lorca observed how, “[w]ith deep feeling, the Andalusian entrusts Natures with his most intimate treasure, completely confident of being listened to”. Rather than discard the notion that someone or something in the natural world should hear the cries of man, Lorca admired it. He approached such grand themes as love and loss through metaphor and images divergent from the natural and “real”, as in “La Baladilla de los tres rios”, describing “The two rivers of Granada:/ one of tears, the other of blood./ Oh love/that left through the air!” (lines 9-10). Bodily fluids are symbolically tied into the landscape of rivers, running into a refrain of unplaceable, transient love. Distinct from the forlorn love-loss of romantic poets, Lorca’s cry synthesizes the modern and traditional in a new aesthetic expression that nonetheless treats seriously these matters of the heart. In employing the surrealist image, Lorca cracks the surface of the known, opening a space in which the emotional and spiritual pervade the aesthetic and sensory.

According to Maurer, “metaphor and symbol govern the poet’s relation to reality. There is, in much of Lorca’s work, a strong Romantic feeling for the otherness of nature: a conviction that there is always something out there, totally alien to mankind, that cannot be apprehended by the imagination: the poetic unknown, the ‘life’ stirring beyond our senses, and this beyond the reach of metaphor” (lviii). Lorca specifically used surrealist metaphor and symbol as a way of creating worlds in which the narrative traditions and the cries of the cante jondo could resonate more clearly. Maurer explains Lorca’s exploration of metaphoric language and the unknown within a context of literary theory, demonstrating how

...reason, empowered by analogy, encounters what has not yet been named, and compares the known to the unknown, identifying or creating a new phenomenon. Metaphor, by its very inadequacy, by its provisional nature, by its inability to reach beyond the senses, somehow enhances that ‘otherness’, reminding us of all that the metaphor cannot capture. As in the thought of certain mystics, the least inadequate image can imply the greatest reverence for the unknown. We are never more aware of the ineffable than when the description is most precise and elaborate (lviii-lix).

In “Paisaje”, for example, from “Poema de la Sigüiriya gitana” in Poema del Cante Jondo, Lorca creates an eerie, surreal setting at once both enchanting and alienating. “Above the olive grove/ a foundering sky/ and a dark rain/of cold stars” (lines 5-8). A clear symbolic meaning is elusive in Lorca’s work, because the significance of his metaphor is to present the truth not through signification but through association. The notion of something external to our individual selves becomes eminent in Lorca’s work. Again in “Poema de la Sigüiriya gitana”, Lorca writes “La guitarra”, describing the music of the guitar in utterly surreal images: “The weeping of the guitar begins./The goblets of dawn are smashed” (lines 1-2). The guitar’s music is a cry, impossible to stop and more than a mere sound. Breaking through the peace of daybreak is the mournful wailing of cante jondo guitar playing. But this image is not simply poetic for the sake of being poetic; it attempts to crack into our conscious assumptions, revealing something about a sunrise that goes beyond understandings the earth’s rotations and solar arrangements, challenges our assumptions, and feels nonetheless resonant.

Going deeper into this exploration of what is undefinable but deeply felt, Lorca attempts to ground time itself in his poetry, playing on themes of temporality, infinity, and tradition through literary palimpsests. This is completely evident in his method of bringing folk tradition into the modern. As Maurer describes, “Lorca’s artistic vision of Andalusia is full of that easy interchange between past and present, and temporal *décalage* is a constant in his work...There are certain ‘timeless’ elements that Lorca could identify both in the Andalusian character and in his own poetry” (Maurer xx). Reaching into that well of gypsy folklore and aesthetics, Lorca metaphorically visualizes the intangibility of time in “Y después” from Poema del cante jondo. Conjuring images of mazes and contemplating physical presence and disappearances, he writes, “The labyrinths/that time creates/vanish” (lines 1-3). In this poem, time can be mapped and what is seen can become unseen, and perhaps vice versa. In the same way that intangible time can tangibly create and dissipate, Lorca’s poem concludes in lines 9-13,

(Only the desert
remains)

The illusion of dawn
and kisses
vanish.

The physical knowns of dawn and kisses are made illusory. An impermanence is felt even in the demonstrable, the reliable sunset and turn of the earth, the felt touch of kisses again are liable to disappear.

What is astounding about Lorca is how this aspect of traditional storytelling in modern poetry persists even over the course of years and in a different geographical terrain. In *Poeta en Nueva York*, a similar folding and breaking of linear time occurs. In “Norma y paraíso de los negros” from “Los Negros”, Lorca employs highly evocative surrealist images to express and encode the specifics of racial tension and oppression in New York, and such tensions become at once both complicated and illuminated. In this poem, the color “blue” becomes both character and feeling while time itself ebbs and flows, perhaps into alternate histories. Lorca writes,

It's in the blue that has no history,
blue of a night without fear of day,
blue when the nude of the wind breaks up
camels of empty clouds moving in their sleep. (lines 17-20)

Now engaging the African-American community in New York City, Lorca perceives the effects of racism and oppression, and yearns for this people as he did the gypsies. At the same time, the imagery of “empty clouds” and “the nude of wind” confuses the senses and interrupts a realistic interpretation of events, so that the histories of slavery and abuse can perhaps be undone in another time or place. This interplay of time and histories, both perceived and unperceived, is a key point of contemplation in much of Lorca’s work.

Imperative to Lorca was his deeply-felt attachment to gypsy and folk traditions as he observed them in his native Spain. The thread of surrealism that affected his poetry and his voice as a modern Spanish artist was significantly tied to the ways in which he wished to uphold and

preserve the worldview and traditions of folk-people like the gypsies of Andalusia. Through this work, he advocated for them as a group often subject to cultural, political, and economic discrimination and violence. More deeply still, he interfaced a romantic notion of traditional cultures with modern approaches to understanding and representing the metaphysical and spiritual. Describing his own use of metaphor and his job as a poet, Lorca writes how “[t]he poet hears the flowing of great rivers. To his brow comes the coolness of the reeds that are trembling ‘nowhere’” (Maurer lviii). Though still elusive in his precise meaning, Lorca is identifying the poet’s receptivity to that which is difficult to understand. As Breton said, the surrealist art “capitulates everything”, and there is a constant, sweeping undercurrent of concepts and notions that are impossible to prove as “real” but are deeply felt and tied into human experience. Though diverging with the surrealist movement at a point, Lorca understood the importance of this in his poetry. He expressed it often through metaphor, which he saw as a “central nucleus and the perspective around it. The nucleus opens like a flower, startling us with its strangeness. But within the radius of light we learn the name of the flower and get to know its perfume” (Maurer lix). It is possible, then, that Lorca stands distinct from many of his contemporaries. For Lorca, the drive of aesthetics and poetry was not to cast light on a subject in order to render it questionable, unreal or untrue; but rather, “[t]he poetical impact reminds us of the unknown” (Maurer lix) and allows us to become aware and acquainted with it. Always invoking the cry of the cante jondo with its rising song, Lorca brings his readers into a world of alarming images, questionable realities, and emotional resonance.

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Disconnect by Aviva Samuels

You, hey you. Hey, I'm talking to you

why don't you just freaking turn around

it isn't that hard

just acknowledge the existence of another human being

is that really so hard to do?

we walk down the same path everyday and you

never even turn around to notice me

always just plugged in 24/7 to technology

what happened to genuine conversation?

a genuine connection between people

stop worrying about how horrible the wifi is

and focus on creating a connection with someone you pass

everyday

everyday we see more people than we think

the other part of the time we are just tuned out to our surroundings

that can be nice too

taking a break from the routine of the everyday

each individual can create their own moment

we create every few seconds with the blink of an eye

here one minute, gone the next.

while I've been ranting, you've been on the googles

going through the latest stories

about people who don't know

think about the moment

what could you do in this moment?

In that time you retweeted that thing, you could have been saying hi to a real person

not just some random person on a screen

you could have stopped to admire the flowers

or listen to the call of the birds overhead

or just do what I do and lay in the grass and stare at the clouds

wondering where they go to.

what happened to the basic human connection?

Hey you.

you point to yourself with a confused look upon your face

eyes roll

yes you.

you take out your earbuds and turn to me

finally, the words are filling your ears like this is the first time you have heard this idea

the idea of unplugging and talking to people

you recognize me from us passing each other on this path everyday for almost a year

this is the first time you have acknowledged me

you wave

I wave

we smile

life goes on

Perfection by Cecilia Scott

I watched them for a minute, unnoticed. They laughed, their faces illuminated by firelight. Kirsten playfully pushed Andrew's arm. They could've been a J. Crew ad. Serene. Calm. Whole. I didn't want to break them.

Daniel caught my eye, an impish smile spreading to his lips. We had danced around friendship after breaking up, unsure of the boundaries. Now, when he stood to hug me, I let him, needing it. Needing someone to hold me. And hating myself for it.

Michaela was the next to pull me into a hug. *Too tight*. I made my rounds and hello's in the circle. College had physically separated us five, but togetherness had always been natural for us. Easy.

I eased myself down onto a chair, welcoming the relief from standing. I sat silent, conversation ebbing around me, there but not fully real.

After a few moments, I felt Daniel's rough hand on my back, he whispered "you okay?"

I nodded, catching his eye — the fire threw enough light to watch him silently calling me out on my lie.

With tears pulling at my eyes, my shaking hands motioned for him to hand me a cigarette. Michaela sighed softly as he handed me one. Her pursed lips silently disapproved of us.

I laughed softly, pulling in a burning drag. *Too much*. "Guys," cough, "I need you to be serious, okay?"

All conversation ceased. Eyes bored into me. *Jesus*. Rubbing my palm against the soft cloth of my leggings, I felt tears again. I willed myself not to cry.

"Don't interrupt me, okay? Don't make me stop or else I won't be able to finish, okay?" I warned them.

Daniel leaned in closer. I watched him from the corner of my eye as he half-reached to put a hand on my knee, settling instead for grabbing at the glass of water on the table. They were all

quiet. Waiting. Anxious and sweating I wanted to take it back. I wanted to joke. Say never mind. Go back to laughing. Talking. Go back to your fucking J. Crew ad.

Instead, I sucked in a breath, willing the damning words to come out of my mouth.

I flicked my cigarette into the fire and rubbed both hands against the soft cloth, breathing hard. This time Daniel's warm hand landed on my knee, softly squeezing.

I felt eyes switch from my hair-concealed face to Daniel's hand on my knee, everyone jumping to their own conclusions.

I left his hand there, hating myself for needing it. I sucked in a breath, focusing on the quickly consumed cigarette.

"A couple of months ago, I.....uh, had some pain in my right breast. I let it go... It didn't go away. So I, um... went to the doctors. After a couple of tests... they," I paused, scrubbing my hands across my tired eyes. "They...uh found two lumps. Said I not worry though, probably nothing. I waited...uh...two weeks to schedule my follow-up exam. When I went back, the doctors were worried, so they...uh...biopsied the lumps. And well, ya know..." I spoke haltingly, for what felt like an hour. Daniel's grip tightened as I spoke. I should've removed it but I couldn't.

I should've looked them all in the eyes, but I couldn't. I stared at the dwindling flames. Numb. Scared.

"Is is... Well, you know?" Andrew broke the crackling silence.

I nodded, pushing myself out of my chair. "Bathroom," I muttered. I knew this was cowardly, leaving them to sort out their feelings. I couldn't bear to hear talk.

I stepped out of the circle, heading for the backyard — through the damp grass until I found the niche. My stone niche. I eased my broken body down, stones cold through my thin leggings.

I scrolled through music on my phone, searching for a song, anything to take away this sinking feeling in my stomach and the literal ache in my breast. I found the song and began singing off-tune and choked up. I stood on shaky legs, swaying at first, then dancing. Slowly. Gently.

I clenched my eyes against the soft whisper of approaching feet. I should've known he'd follow me here. To the place where I'd first whispered *I love you* into his waiting ears. Where we'd sorted out numerous fights. And now, the place where I told him I had —where I told him I was sick.

I watched her for a moment, lost in the song. Eyes closed, dancing to the soft music, singing even softer. She was perfect. If I hadn't known better I would've called her carefree. She brought a rise of joy to my chest, but this her, laughing and dancing, made me angry. *How can she laugh?*

I reached for her, wrenching her laughing face towards me, "What's so funny, Delia?"

Clenched teeth tried to strain the anger, pity, and sadness from my voice.

She just looked at me, laughter on her lips but not in her smoky green eyes. Through giggles she explained, "Everything is! Life is fucking hilarious, Daniel. Don't you see? I'm twenty fucking years old. Life should be carefree!" She threw her arms, embracing the world.

Her laughter turned bitter, caustic. "I should be invincible. I shouldn't have to worry about fucking c—" Her voice caught on that word, laughter dying on her lips. The soft notes still floated around us. Trembling lips. Watery Eyes. She wouldn't, or maybe couldn't, meet my eyes.

"How bad?"

"Pretty fucking bad, Danny boy."

Her patronizing tone made me want to shake her. Hold her. Fix her. "How fucking bad?"

She paused, eyes shifting, finally meeting mine. Stepping closer, she lifted a hand, cupping my cold cheek. She held it there, "Stage three." The words fell from her lips, softly. As if she wanted

to lose them in the darkness between us. My breath left my stunned lungs. My sturdy body sagged towards her, leaning into her cupped hand. I rested my forehead on hers, “Jesus.”

Jesus. Tears left our eyes. Foreheads joined, leaning into each other. Our faces could mirror each other — tears streaming, mouths murmuring, each straining to find the right words to heal the other’s pain.

Last Wishes by Cecilia Scott

“Find her.”

After a long day at the hospital — a day filled with too many family members and friends crying on each other’s shoulders and blowing red noses into soggy tissues — I sank into a cushioned deck chair on my mother’s back porch.

Finding myself alone for a moment, I lit a cigarette, away from the judgmental relatives and comments like, “Didn’t you just watch your grandmother die of lung cancer?” and other such things.

“Find her.” My grandmother’s last wish came back to me as I sat there. My mind, unbidden, slipped through the few times I had seen Reagan since the breakup. All of them consisted of the time between the break up and her returning to school for fall semester. The last night I saw her, she was sitting almost where I was sitting now.

She rarely smoked cigarettes, but tonight she was jumpy, even I had noticed. I invited our little group of friends over, partly to see her, and partly to see if the two of us could work with just friendship. It was casual, just a bunch of us shooting the breeze at my mom’s house. I sat across the room, watching her fidget — getting herself a glass of water, changing seats, starting a conversation with our friend Mitch. They laughed together, their conversation out of my range. As she laughed, she threw her head back, light glimmering down the length of her throat. I found myself watching her more than I should — more than my cousin, Kyle, whose conversation I was ignoring, liked.

“Theo,” she called from across the room, “Got a cigarette I can bum?”

I nodding, leading the way onto the adjacent deck. I wanted to be friends with her, badly, but I also wanted to talk to her alone, just to see her. I wasn’t used to sharing her just yet.

I pulled up two chairs, far enough away that we could talk without being overheard. Not that there were secrets to be spilled, or even anything to overhear, but she has a tendency towards tears.

She lit her cigarette as we sat in comfortable silence. Well, comfortable for me at least.

She ran her hands through her hair tiredly.

"You have a headache?" I asked, recognizing the signs and my palms itched to rub her back to ease the stress.

"Yeah, it's startin'," she replied, tracing the arch of her left eyebrow with a thin finger, not looking at me. "Damn, this is going straight to my head," she exhaled, smoke floating lazily around her head.

I looked over, watching her studiously stare straight ahead, "The nicotine?"

She nodded, holding a hand out towards me, careful to stop just in the middle of us. There was a space between our chairs, a space between us — something that I had never existed before.

"Look how shaky I am," she said as I focused on her quivering hand.

"Is that from the nicotine?"

"No, not from the nicotine," she replied, quiet words slipping from her lips, as if they weren't really meant for me.

"Then from what?" I studied her profile in the light thrown from the kitchen door. I remembered that she hated her profile, the bump on the top of her nose and the slope of her chin angling into her neck. I remembered all these little things about her, but I couldn't remember where I had placed my love for her.

She turned her face towards mine, finally meeting my eyes. Her stormy blue eyes were clouded and watery, a half-smile traced along her lips. "You," was all she said.

But that was all she needed to say. I got it — I was the reason for tears in her eyes, the pain etched on her face. And in that moment, the night air felt caustic in my lungs. I pushed myself out of the chair, turning sharply towards the door.

I didn't look back at her as I left, not wanting to see her face. She didn't follow me as I left. She didn't come in for a long while, prompting me to go and check on her. That's when I found her outside, watching the city lights of the Los Angeles skyline pulse in the night air.

I watched the sun sink behind that same skyline, letting that memory of her fade. I had to wonder briefly what happened to her over the year, where she had gone. I distinctly remember calling her to tell her about the deal with the record label. Even though our friendship had slipped to basically nothing, I knew that she could love the news, or at least be happy for me. But she didn't answer or return my call after my quick "call me!" voicemail I had left. I had let it bother me — consume me even at some points — for a while, but eventually I had to let it go.

She'd disappeared from the world it seemed — every once in a while she would come up in conversation. Someone would wonder aloud about whatever happened to Reagan, they would look to me for answers. But I knew nothing and thankfully, the questions stopped after a while.

“Find her.” My grandmother’s literal last wish echoed in my head, even as I crushed out my cigarette, deciding to leave the past in the past. She was gone, no use chasing a ghost.

I don’t know what my grandmother had meant by that and I didn’t care, it was better this way — at least that’s what I told myself.

The Golden Heart by Lisa Tô

She had a heart that was full to the brim with gold,
overflowing so much so that every few minutes, she had to stop
what she was doing at that moment and cough up all that gold,
feeling each piece painfully slither its way up. At first,
plastic golden ducks and goldfishes and dolls with golden hair
would climb out of her throat and escape through her baby pink lips.
She didn't really know what to do with all that gold. What was a
little girl to do with a bunch of gold? So, she would give them
away to good friends. The kids would be delightfully surprised and
play with her and their new cherished gold. There was one child
who always refused, a friend loyal to her heart, not to her gold.
In a few years, the golden toys and golden pets were replaced by
gold earrings and gold necklaces and gold bracelets. She continued to
bestow her wealth of gold to the poor. But as she got older, she began to
hack up gold purses and gold watches and a gold slipper or two.
Now, she was no longer simply giving gold to the people she cared most about.
Now, people would beg her for gold, knowing that even if she said "No,"
they would greedily swipe away her piles of gold before she could pick them up,
they would even reach down her throat and try to rip out the gold,
and there was nothing that she could do about it.
Now, she cried, hiccupping a gold something every now and then
(and someone was always there to steal her gold),
until at last, there was no more.

No more gold.

No more beggars.

No more liars.

No more burglars.

No more gold.

Now, an old friend from her childhood, the friend who was loyal to her heart, not to her gold, came along and found her, crying, all by herself. This friend of hers, who was loyal to her heart, not to her gold, reminded her, “Even though you think there’s no more gold in you, there is one last bit of gold left—the best gold of all, in fact:

You have a heart of gold.”

With that said, before she had time to even smile, her friend ripped out her heart, and the girl who had a heart of gold fell, dead and cold.

“After all, I’m loyal to your heart, not to your gold.”

The Astronomy of Sleep by by Lisa Tō

It's every night that you going
to something like a coma,
falling into the black hole of your
mind
where your mind eventually loses its hold on gravity
and starts to trip on what you know,
where the dream world begins to eclipse
reality
if only for a few hours and
you experience an aurora of sensations—
what is tangible and what isn't,
you can't tell anymore.
When you awake,
you wonder how your mind
could have created such chaos on its own.

Concerning Swift's Problematic Tale by Matt Voegtle *

Jonathan Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, a spiraling and broadly cutting work written by account of his later published *Apology*, as "a young gentleman much in the world, and wrote to the taste of those who were like himself... to allure them, he gave a liberty to his pen, which might not suit with maturer years". The *Tale's* many facets, including the tale itself, its varied digressions, *The Battle of the Books*, and *An Apology* show, in fits and starts, the dynamic of Swift's conversation with his own work, his contemporaries, and posterity, many of them conflicting. Through this conversation, the reader is confronted with a shifting narrator, forming both a tenuous link and a murky barrier to Swift's thoughts, and many critical works have attempted to decipher Swift's "true meaning", both in *The Tale of a Tub* and his general works. Though the unification of Swift's writing would certainly provide a convenient basis for analysis, the premise for this understanding is mistaken; the reader should not look to understand Swift as a static entity, but a writer who reacted and conversed with the world around him.

In contrast to *The Battle*, Swift's critique of modernism is more varied and subtle in the meat of *The Tale of a Tub*. In a labor that encompasses the whole of the work, Swift sets up his narrator as a half-crazed recent inductee of the "illustrious Fraternity" of Grub Street, concerned by Grub Street's loss of the Royal Society and the likes of Dryden's coffeehouse wits (Demaria 442). Grub Street's reputation of producing vast quantities of literary stuffing, a point of pride for our narrator, is allegedly challenged by the separatist factions, who assert superiority not by quality or honesty of work, but simply by producing a greater weight and number of books (Demaria 442). Though Swift's conflation of Grub Street with the Royal Society and authors of supposed wit is easily grasped, it serves an important function. To Swift, the high style touted by the likes of Dryden and the rigorous intellectualism of scientific writing is nothing more than stuffing.

The Tale pins Bentley and abstract criticism for failure to engage with literature in a concrete and meaningful way, with Tinkler stating that "Swift's satire is, far more deeply than is usually recognized, a rejection of Bentley's judicial culture of the book," (Rawson 115). In the

later portions of *The Tub*, Swift defines three types of readers: the superficial, the ignorant, and the learned, the learned reader for whom he writes, who “will here find sufficient Matter to employ his speculations for the rest of his life” (Demaria 486). Swift’s issue with the learned reader, equivalent with scholars and critics, lies not with their knowledge, but their use of it. Through *The Tub*’s twists and turns, Swift often merely argues for a more human approach to writing and living.

Swift’s “Apology” for *The Tale* is simultaneously revealing and challenging, and some scholars are divided about its literary contribution to the rest of the work. Ellis argues in “No Apologies, Dr. Swift!” “that ‘An Apology’ makes a misleading entry into *A Tale of a Tub* because it is not part of the creative act that produced *A Tale of a Tub*” (71), while Bywaters claims that “The best guide to Swift’s *Tale* is his apology... it contains several falsehoods and distortions of fact; nonetheless these very misrepresentations provide valuable evidence of Swift’s purposes.” (583). Does the critic seek to find meaning in all passages in the *Tale of the Tub*, allowing even the minutest detail an amount of significance, or does the critic read *The Tale* for a feeling, some nebulous authorial intent found in the original text? Ellis tells us that “he best we can do is to imagine what kind of man Swift was in 1696-97 (when he began or resumed work on *A Tale of a Tub*) and what he wanted to make. Here we are skirting dangerously close to the “*Serbonian Bog*” of authorial intention into which ‘Armies whole [of textual critics] have sunk.’ But there is no other way” (71).

Ellis’s confidence is admirable, but his theory bears some questioning. Swift certainly meant to trip up the sort of surgeon-like critic making business out of cutting up literature into pieces no longer recognizable, but Ellis’s assertion that the “creative work” found in *The Tub* cannot bear direct analysis is slightly off. How exactly, if not through direct textual work, Mr. Ellis, is the reader to come to an understanding of a challenging work?

To wind down this admittedly varied (using varied in lieu of other choice descriptors) analysis, I would like to contextualize my criticism of *The Tale* to *the Tale* itself. In *The Tale*’s conclusion, Swift cheerfully lets the reader know that “I am now trying an Experiment very frequent among Modern Authors; which is to write upon nothing... to say the truth, there seems

to be no Part of Knowledge in fewer Hands, than That of Discerning when to have Done” (Demaria 495). The challenge in a scholastic analysis of *The Tale*, even when compared to its partner *The Battle of the Books*, is that Swift’s complete, often revelatory embrace of a gross exaggeration of the forms he is trying to subvert, weighty indeed, creates a force of satire so relentless that a reader feels unable to stop, for fear of being left behind, and loath to carry on for fear of missing something. We are left with a loquacious and gullible narrator, who proudly considers himself partially mad, to lead us through Swift’s image of depravity in the modern world; the only man we have to trust, entirely untrustworthy. Upon finishing *The Tale*, relief is perhaps a more valid response than accomplishment. I ask: Who among the critics that have passed through *The Tale of the Tub* has managed to emerge without gaining some of its madness? I certainly cannot claim to be among the lucky few, if they exist.

Biographies

Matthew Aranda

I am a senior English major, Business minor, hoping to open up businesses that can change society.

Rebecca Briggs Baker

Rebecca Briggs Baker is a graduating senior with a degree in English with Creative Writing Emphasis. She loves to eat, travel, and write about her adventures on her blog, www.jumpingwithouta.net.

Amanda Blazey

Amanda Blazey is a senior English Major and Art Minor. When she isn't busy being the Editor-in-Chief of the Quaker Campus, you can often find her buried in a book or running around on her tiptoes on a new adventure.

Brandy Barajas

Brandy Barajas is a sophomore with a double major in English and Philosophy. She has interests in feminist literature and feminist philosophical studies. She developed great admiration towards poetic creative writing in her English course, Writing Poetry, with Professor Barnstone. Some of her favorite authors include: bell hooks, Harper Lee, and J.D. Salinger. During her spare time Brandy enjoys to bike ride, watch films, and attend musical concerts. In the future, Brandy hopes to become a screenplay writer and would love to teach Social Philosophy to college students.

Nicholas Barreras

Born and raised in West Covina, California, I am currently a third year pursuing a major in English (emphasis on Creative Writing) as well as a minor in Film Studies. My desired career path is to be a screenwriter/director. I enjoy crafting narratives that are off-kilter and perspectives and/or topics that people would not typically think of.

Trent Beauchamp

A freshman at Whittier college, I have been writing poetry for five years now. Initially inspired by the spoken word poetry of Anis Mojgani, I have branched out in my reading of poetry to find influence from writers such as Arthur Rimbaud, Walt Whitman, Jack Kerouac, Alan Ginsberg, E.E. Cummings, Billy Collins, and others. A Los Angeles County native and an avid backpacker, my work is influenced by the people and culture of Los Angeles and by the California wilderness.

Derek Blankenship

Derek Blankenship is a self-proclaimed renaissance man, senior English major, practicing Quaker, wannabe handyman, and maker of things. He likes to cook food, observe nature, read books, do artsy stuff, play video games, and make lots of "dad" jokes. Bernie 2016.

Anders Blomso

Originally from Seattle, Washington, Anders Blomso is a sophomore at Whittier College pursuing a double major in Religious Studies and English. Aside from being a student, Anders represents Whittier as a member of the Swim and Dive Team. When he is not studying, or in the pool, he likes to pass the time volunteering at the Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda Heights or going for runs in the hills behind campus with his friends.

Emily Bradford

Junior English major, poet, essayist, freelance photographer, novel artist.

Kourtney Brodnax

Currently, Kourtney Brodnax is a track and field student athlete at Whittier College working towards a Whittier Scholars liberal arts degree that is a cross between marketing, sociology and digital media. Growing up, Kourtney was a multi-sport athlete who still creatively performs well under pressure. Outside of her lane assignment, Kourtney is the Director of Social Media for two campus organizations, club president, peer mentor and Target Executive Store Intern. Occasionally, you'll find her fumbling through every hair-care aisle searching for the right natural hair product or throwing all of the double stuffed oreos on the shelf in her basket. Every day she lives by the motto, "Purpose over popularity" and both biblical quotes- Jeremiah 1:19 and 29:11.

Aidee Campa

Aidee Campa is a junior, majoring in English and minoring in political science. She loves to read, write, hike, and eat dark chocolate, not in that exact order. She is the oldest of three sisters, and plans to become a civil rights attorney.

Amanda Casey

I am a junior Whittier Scholars Major. My major, Gender & Journalism, draws from multiple disciplines to study journalistic representation of labor and gender questions in the contemporary US. In order to expand my understanding as a journalist I wanted to establish a background understanding in how these wide range of disciplinary fields impact the world of journalism and gender construction.

Taylor Charles

Taylor Charles is a freshman who is currently majoring in psychology and triple minoring in Creative Writing, Gender Studies, and Theater. She writes poetry as a means of expressing her experiences and emotions in a form she hopes is relatable to others. She aspires to be a child therapist once she graduates.

Troy Chavez

My name is Troy Chavez. I was born and raised in Temecula, CA. I am currently a junior at Whittier College and am set to graduate in the Spring of 2017. I have played tennis for the Whittier College Men's Tennis Team for the last three years. I am majoring in Political Science; however, I am primarily interested in film and writing, particularly in poetry and prose.

Dana Christensen

Dana Christensen is in her junior year as an English major with an emphasis in Creative Writing and a minor in Religious Studies. She spends a lot of her time daydreaming of her future and the

excitement Arizona will bring. She could live off of just potatoes, although she does enjoy a good burger. Her favorite poet is John Keats and she hopes to live up to her birthday buddy, Dr. Seuss.

Laura Freeze

Laura Freeze is a senior at Whittier College who is working toward her degree in both Theater and English. Her interests in literature include: American Romantic literature, American Modern literature. She currently works in public relations and writes press releases for a publishing company, and hopes to use her work in writing to propel her further.

Daniel Garcia

I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I also love to read and expand my knowledge on subjects pertaining to current times and issues.

Keeanna Garcia

Keeanna Garcia is a third year English major at Whittier College. She is currently a writing intern at the Whittier Museum with hopes of becoming a journalist someday.

Breana Gomez

Breana Gomez is a California native. She is currently a junior majoring in English with a creative writing emphasis. She loves to read and write fiction and hopes to become a novelist one day.

Sarah Inez Gonzalez

Sarah I. Gonzalez grew up in Pico Rivera, California, just on the outskirts of Los Angeles. She has been writing poems, short stories and lyrics since the age of eleven and has set her sights on becoming a lyricist and published poet. She is about to graduate with a Bachelors of Arts in English with an emphasis in Creative Writing. She grew up in a house hold that never stopped playing music. From the moment she was born, she was surrounded by the music. When she grew older, she took piano lessons and often insists that growing up hearing so much music has influenced her writing immensely. She will often base her lyrical style on a new artist she stumbles upon and finds that some of her best ideas for her own writings come to her while she's playing the piano. She loves reading and often jokes that she will spend any money she gets on new books rather than necessities. If she isn't listening to music and studying how the artists write their lyrics, she can be found curled up with a book, writing her own verses or sitting at her piano. In her opinion, surrounding herself with so much literature and music has helped her to grow as a writer; she believes writing and music aren't that different, both require focus, passion and appreciation for what can be accomplished by sound.

Tim Kam

Presented are some poems written during a summer spent on Whiskey Creek Organics, a farm on Duncan Island on the Siuslaw River in Mapleton, Oregon.

Priscilla Lam

I am an English major and proud to be a Whittier College Poet. My writings are often inspired by Modernist literature such as works from F. Scott Fitzgerald and T.S. Eliot.

Luis Manzo

Luis is a self-designed Film and English major in the Whittier Scholars Program. With a passion for creative writing, he enjoys working on short stories and screenplays. Outside of his love for writing, directing has begun to catch his attention. When he's not working on his dream to be a show-runner, Luis is found reading a book or watching Netflix.

Ashley Mora

Ashley Mora, a current sophomore, was born and raised exclusively in the Greater Los Angeles area, and attended Cantwell Sacred Heart of Mary High School where she graduated in 2014. Most of her writing, nonfiction or otherwise, reflects her interests in a variety of social, cultural, and even political issues with an emphasis on individual stories.

Nazarely Narvaez

Nazarely Narvaez is a sophomore English major who grew up in South Los Angeles. She delved into the world of poetry and literature at the age of ten when she read Langston Hughes' "The Dream Keeper and Other Poems." While she awaits for her telepathic powers to finally reveal themselves to her, she enjoys reading, watching documentaries on serial killers and writing about her inconsistencies as a "youngster" in the 21st century.

Stephanie Okuaki

Stephanie Okuaki is an Anthropology and Sociology student at Whittier College with a minor in Gender Studies. She has a huge passion for feminist studies and gender role issues. Raised in an Asian American household but also having to juggle the American culture outside her home has been the biggest influence on her writing and specifically this piece. She is twenty one years old, a member of Lambda Alpha, and is invested in Peace Corps.

Christian Perez

Cristian is a second year college student at Whittier College, double majoring in English with an emphasis on Creative Writing and Theatre with an emphasis on Performance. His many passions include acting, writing, directing, signing, and event planning. After completing his BA degree he hopes to pursue a PhD in Performance and ultimately seeks to be a creative catalyst and driving force in the field of Theatre.

Alexander Ragucci

My name is Alexander Ragucci. My email address is aragucci@poets.whittier.edu. I am nineteen years old and currently attending Whittier College. The title of the work I am submitting is "Sonnet 2 (Eve of Eden)"

Clara Rempe

I am a senior here at Whittier College. I am majoring in English with a creative writing emphasis. I was born in Seattle, Washington but have lived the majority of my life in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I have a twin brother who goes to school at Columbia University in New York City.

Alessandra Roggero

Alessandra Roggero is a writer and activist from Los Angeles, California. She published her first book, *The Town under the pseudonym Lydia Vance* and will be publishing *Plastic Knives*, a

poetry collection with BAMBAZ PRESS in Fall 2016. Her poetry has been featured in FRE&D Spring 2015. Alessandra finds fun in stealing books, drinking Irish breakfast tea, and listening to Elvis Costello. She studies Political Science and Economics at Whittier College.

Brianna Sahagian

Brianna Sahagian was born and raised in California, but is filled with wanderlust and an adventurous spirit. She began writing creatively at 9 years old, when her fourth grade teacher taught her about poetry. As a transfer and non-traditional student in WSP, she has integrated her studies in sociology and cultural theory with her passion for reading and writing and her personal faith. Her proposed major is titled Storytelling and Spirituality in the Individual and Society, and she's particularly interested in speculative fiction genres. She is inspired to write stories and poetry about things like exploration, nature, science, justice, God, history, faith, community, and love. For Brianna, storytelling is of the utmost human and personal value, a force that binds people together, transforms the self and heals the soul. By sharing and understanding our stories, we can better know the character of God, humanity, and the universe. Brianna is 26, lives in La Habra, and is joyfully engaged to a photographer and aspiring pastor.

Aviva Samuels

Hello, my name is Aviva Samuels. I have had a passion for writing since elementary school. I have written in a variety of genres including short stories and poetry. I wrote a short book at the end of high school for my senior project as a biography. These are a few of the poems I have written to share with people as a form of literary entertainment.

Cecilia Scott

Junior. Major: English. I enjoy reading, writing, photography, and drawing.

Lisa Tô

Lisa Tô is currently a junior at Whittier College. She is majoring in English with a Creative Writing emphasis and minoring in Chinese and Philosophy. Lisa likes to write and read science fiction and fantasy stories, sing off key alone in her room, and sass people for fun. She enjoys being a grammar enforcer at the Quaker Campus newspaper, where she works as Head Copy Editor. She hopes to become a published author one day. Lisa is from Orange County, California and prefers her food spicier than normal people like.

Matt Voegtle

Matt Voegtle is a Biology major, an enthusiastic reader and writer, a runner, etc.

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Upsilon Sigma would like to thank the generosity of Whittier College's Media Council for approving our 2015-2016 budget. We appreciate their help in promoting literacy and scholarly opportunities for our members.

We would like to thank the constant support we received from the English Department, especially the English and History Department Secretary. You are the real MVP, Angela!

We would like to thank the English Department Chair, Professor Anthony Barnstone, for connecting us with all the right people. Without him, we wouldn't have met the awesome proprietors of Auntie's Bakery, the wonderful Sheep Meadow Press team at AWP, and countless other opportunities for our members. Thank you for going above and beyond the call of duty.

Our deepest thanks go out to the owner's of Auntie's Bakery. Thank you for reaching out to our campus with such a great way to connect poetry, coffee and community. We still have students and our members talking about their awesome mugs. May the Auntie's Bakery and Upsilon Sigma partnership continue to grow and flourish in the years to come!

Thank you to Submittable for making the publication process a million times easier than past years.

We are so thankful for all the transactions Debbie Allison from LEAP processed throughout the year. You are the purchase order queen and we worship you.

Art Submissions

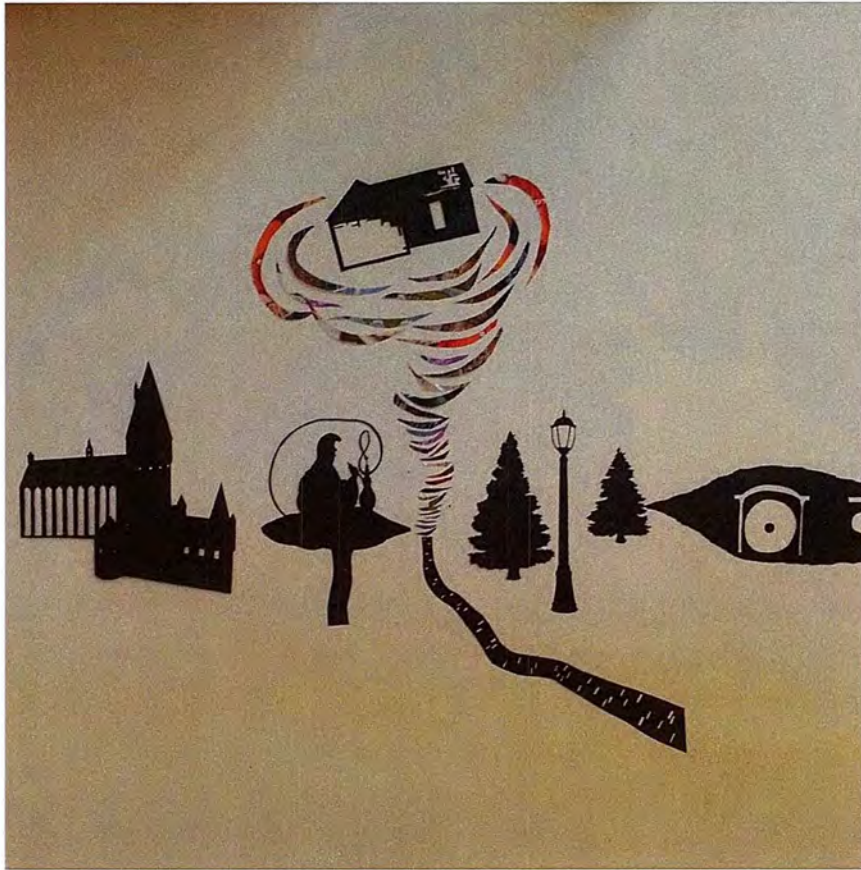


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

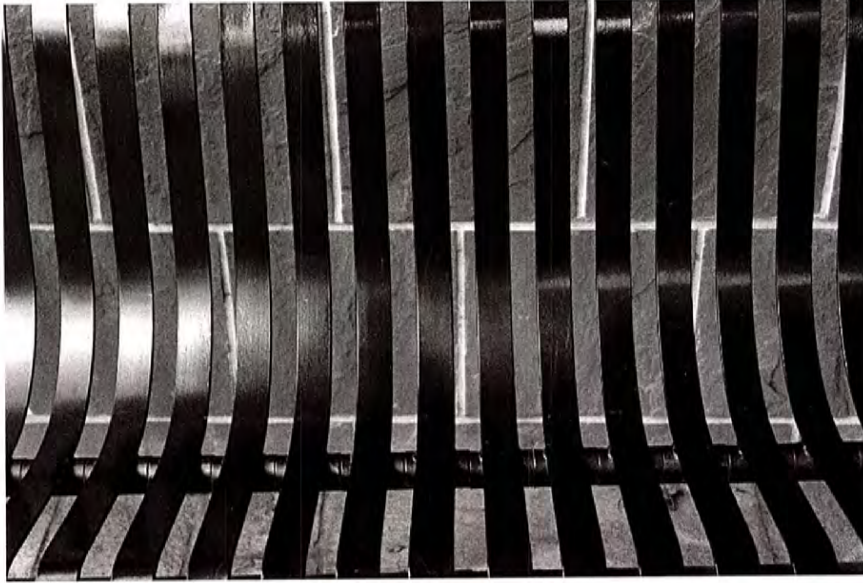


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17

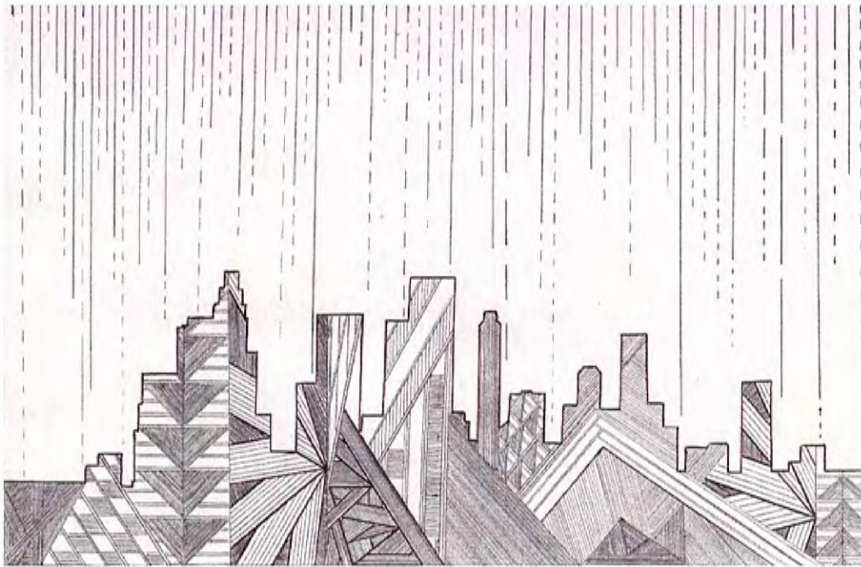


Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20

Gallery

| | | | |
|----|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Blazey, Amanda | "Literary Magic" | Oil on canvas |
| 2 | Gomez, Breana | "Shelf" | Photograph |
| 3 | Gomez, Breana | "Cranes" | Photograph |
| 4 | Gomez, Breana | "Welcome" | Photograph |
| 5 | Gomez, Breana | "Bench" | Photograph |
| 6 | Hackworth, Alexander | "Monumental" | Photograph |
| 7 | Hackworth, Alexander | "Age Old Trade" | Photograph |
| 8 | Hackworth, Alexander | "The Heart of Havana" | Photograph |
| 9 | Hackworth, Alexander | "Follow the Leader" | Photograph |
| 10 | Hackworth, Alexander | "New World" | Photograph |
| 11 | Kellycooper, Patrick | "Theravada Hti" | Photograph |
| 12 | Kim, Ashley | "Adolesence" | Oil on canvas |
| 13 | Kim, Ashley | "Anbody Home" | Oil on canvas |
| 14 | Kim, Ashley | "Gratitude" | Oil on canvas |
| 15 | Locsin, Katrina | "Joshua Tree's Yellow Resident" | Photograph |
| 16 | Locsin, Katrina | "Trail for Snails" | Photograph |
| 17 | Scott, Cecilia | "Grounded" | Photograph |
| 18 | Scott, Cecilia | "Golden Gate City" | Pen on paper |
| 19 | Scott, Cecilia | "Follow Me" | Photograph |
| 20 | Scott, Cecilia | "Hatching" | Photograph |

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Patrick Kellycooper
Ashley Kim
Priscilla Lam
Katrina Locsin
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Alessandra Roggero
Brianna Sahagian
Aviva Samuels
Cecilia Scott
Lisa To
Matt Voegtle



A FOOT AND LIGHT-HEARTED I TAKE TO THE OPEN ROAD,
HEALTHY, FREE, THE WORLD BEFORE ME,
THE LONG BROWN PATH BEFORE ME LEADING WHEREVER I CHOOSE.
—walt whitman

The Upsilon Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta presents the best of Whittier College students' work in scholarly writing, short fiction, poetry, and art.

This edition features the 2016 winners of the Whittier College English Department's annual writing contest. This contest is judged by faculty, and winners are honored with a monetary prize and certificate at Honors Convocation.