

2018



TAPESTRIES

WEAVING THE THREADS OF CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

Each year the School of Arts & Letters hosts the Gunard Berry Carlson Creative Writing and Visual Arts Contest, a competition open to all Saint Francis undergraduates. Students may submit written entries of up to 3,000 words in the following categories: (1) fiction, (2) creative nonfiction, including personal narratives and memoirs, (3) essay writing, and (4) poetry, with a minimum of five poems per submission. Students also may submit works of visual art, such as photographs, sculptures, paintings (oil, water, and acrylic), sketches, and collages.

The contest begins in the late fall and ends in the early spring, during which time students may submit as many entries as they wish. Entries must be either e-mailed to Dr. Brennan Thomas at bthomas@francis.edu or personally delivered to Room 307 Scotus Hall before the announced contest deadline.

The 2017-2018 contest winners and honorable mentions were published in the seventh volume of Saint Francis University's literary and visual arts magazine, *Tapestries*. Opinions expressed in this magazine do not reflect those of the contest judges and magazine editors or those of the Saint Francis community.

For more information about the Gunard Berry Carlson Creative Writing and Visual Arts Contest, please contact:

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Tapestries

Weaving the Threads of Creativity and Innovation

Faculty Editor

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“Tough One to Crack” (1st Place Winner in the Visual Arts Category)

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Ms. Angela Balog, Instructor of Business Management

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Mr. Bradley Coffield, Assistant Information Services Librarian

Dr. Patrick Farabaugh, Associate Professor of Communication Arts

Dr. Erika Varner, Assistant Professor of Chemistry

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Mr. Charles Olson, Professor of Fine Arts

Contest Coordinator & Magazine Editor

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Contents

Writing

Author	Title	Page
Christopher Smolyn	<i>Vegetarian Inspiration: How Gandhi's Diet Inspired His Activism – 2nd Place Winner</i>	6
Anna Baughman	<i>10 Things I Hate About Man-Shrews – 3rd Place Winner</i>	11
Molly Fischer	<i>The House of Prejudice: Women Past Their Primes as Detriments to Society – 4th Place Winner</i>	18
Jack Weidner	<i>Blue</i>	25
Isaiah Holbrook	<i>Lost Soul</i>	27
Ashley Hill	<i>The Pearl of Africa</i>	35
Harry Olafsen	<i>What Happened on the Ground: My Experience Interning for the 2016 Clinton Campaign</i>	39
Kaitlyn Kitchen	<i>The Changing World of Technology: How Virtual Reality Will Transform Our Society</i>	46
Jarrold Piper	<i>Advertising and Ethics: A Renegade Relationship – 1st Place Winner</i>	55
Shay Boisvert	<i>Shall We Play</i>	64

Artwork

Artist	Title	Page
Brandon Fiume	<i>Steel Wheels</i>	10
Tessa Clouse	<i>Keep on Swimming</i>	17
Caroline Manley	<i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i>	24
Samantha Hegedus	<i>Frozen Waterfalls</i>	26
Luke Haskins	<i>Unoccupied</i>	34
Brandon Fiume	<i>The Crossing Sign</i>	38
Erin O'Neill	<i>Rush Hour</i>	45
Jillian Scott	<i>Phases of the Moon</i>	54
Rachel Kelly	<i>Concrete Jungle</i>	63
Samantha Hegedus	<i>Following Our Own Path</i>	73

Vegetarian Inspiration: How Gandhi's Diet Inspired His Activism by Christopher Smolyn

2nd Place Winner

“The real seat of taste was not on the tongue but the mind” (Gandhi 50)

The quote above illustrates the importance of vegetarianism to one of the most influential activists of the 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi. This paper asks the question, is it possible for a person like Gandhi to become enlightened from a vegetarian lifestyle? Ever since Gandhi was a child, vegetarianism was a tradition that was deeply rooted in his life. Gandhi's parents continually urged him to refrain from eating meat in his earlier years and throughout his life, he stuck to a vegetarian diet. Even when Gandhi left India for law school in England, he promised his mother he would remain a vegetarian. However, in a more Western environment like England, the idea of vegetarianism was quite farfetched, and few people openly practiced it. Gandhi was resolute in his promise to his mother to remain a vegetarian, acting as an initiator to help Gandhi find spiritual ideas and principles that would define him in his later years as an activist. This paper argues that Gandhi's vegetarian experience opened him to ideological ideas that molded him during his time in England, which would help him to become a revered activist.

When Gandhi first arrived in England, he wanted to assimilate to Western culture; after his attempt inevitably failed, he ended up finding solace in those who shared his same interests. Upon his completion of the Indian equivalent of high school, Gandhi's parents decided that it would be optimal for the young lad to attend school in England to further expand his knowledge and land a job with a law degree. He still “promised his mom that he would avoid wine, women, and meat,” but as Gandhi tried to digest the new culture, it challenged him to experience new things that he found skeptical (Parekh 3). To the chagrin of those he promised to remain loyal to, Gandhi found himself purchasing “a morning suit, a top hat, and silver headed cane” (Parekh 3). In his first couple of weeks in England, he truly tried to fit into the Western social fabric. However, his new endeavors drove him off course and he was not able to juggle his studies in turn. It was clear that this effort to assimilate was not going to work, so he decided to focus more on the “serious aspects” of life in England, which included sticking to the promise he made before he left (Parekh 3). Gandhi decided to take school much more seriously and started learning about British and European politics, but more importantly, he found a new group of companions in theosophists who would help him to derive intellectual ideas of his true passions.

While Gandhi started to focus more on school and less on fitting in, he found himself in the constant presence of the London Vegetarian Society, a group he felt comfortable being around. This society derived their ideas from the Indian diet. Their interests represented a fascination for the Hindu diet. For example, they were intrigued by the idea

that “Indian soldiers fought perfectly well on a diet of lentil and beans” and even more importantly, the fact that Hindus showed “tender care . . . to dying or sick animals” rather than killing and eating them (Guha). Members of the society and Gandhi argued that vegetarianism showed a general “respect for all of God’s creations” (Guha). Like Gandhi’s diet, a majority of his ideas expressed universal respect for all living organisms. Gandhi always practiced what he preached and many considered him to be a man who “harbored no ill-will or hatred toward anyone but only love and forgiveness for all” (Majmudar 2). For Gandhi, moral respect for everything in the world meant that he would be able to reach enlightenment of the soul. One of Gandhi’s major ideas for reaching personal enlightenment was the psychological ideology of Swabhava, which “denotes the unique, unrepeatable, constitution of every individual as a microcosm” in a unified universe (Agha-Kazem-Shirazi). Swabhava is a term for a moral constitution, where a person internally derives their own personal enlightenment through finding a universal respect for all. Gandhi connected this idea of building Swabhava through his diet, by showing people that, in having this universal respect for these animals by simply not consuming them, they would gain moral respect for themselves as well. If everyone were able to see that vegetarianism was more about having respect for all living beings than just a proper diet, enlightenment would be reached with more ease. It is clear that Gandhi shared fundamental ideas with these people, which pushed him to spend more time sharing ideas that would shape his own activist ideas later in life.

The common interest in ideologies was appealing to Gandhi, who found himself in the constant presence of the London Vegetarian Society, which provided him with an initial platform that he would use to push his activist ideas. Gandhi started to learn more about the impact of vegetarian ideology by reading Henry Salt’s *Plea for Vegetarianism*, which hooked him into reading anything he could get his hands on. As he began to read more on vegetarianism, one of the readings that had a major impact on him was Dr. Anna Kingsford’s book *The Perfect Way to Diet*. Dr. Kingsford stated that she prescribed a vegetarian diet to all of her patients for its amazing curative components. Through Gandhi’s eyes, the curative component did not seem as important as moral motives that he had derived from the reading. According to Gandhi, his vegetarian diet had now “become a choice” because even though a vegetarian diet was good for the body, it was even better for the soul (Guha). Gandhi stated that Western civilization “neglected the soul, privileged the body, misunderstood nature and [limited] reasoning” (Parekh 79). In short, Gandhi preached that through vegetarianism, any person would be able to fix these issues. Inevitably, this literature even inspired him to open a branch in his locality so that he had more access to influence people who shared similar ideas. What became so appealing to Gandhi was that he now had a “place where he could fit in,” but most importantly, it gave him a cause that was more spiritually endowing than arguing court cases (Guha). The overarching theme of joining this group of outsiders allowed Gandhi to have a voice and continually generate ideas about certain aspects of life for which he had a burning passion. In addition, followers of Gandhi argued that it was in Britain where Gandhi “developed the

most” as a “young social activist and reformer” (Burgess 2). Gandhi became greatly involved in this vegetarian movement and would constantly be involved with “on the ground” campaigns to get people to become vegetarians (Burgess 5). One example was the time that Gandhi wrote a massive letter to all Indians in England urging them to follow his vegetarian example. The contents of this letter explained that vegetarianism was a “bridge that could unite the peoples of East and West,” creating a “cross-cultural solidarity based on a vegetarian diet” (Burgess 5). It was instances like this where Gandhi gained his followers and reputation that would make him one of the most cherished activists of the 20th century. It is clear that Gandhi’s activist ways derived from his diet provided a platform for him to convey the problems he wanted to fix in the world.

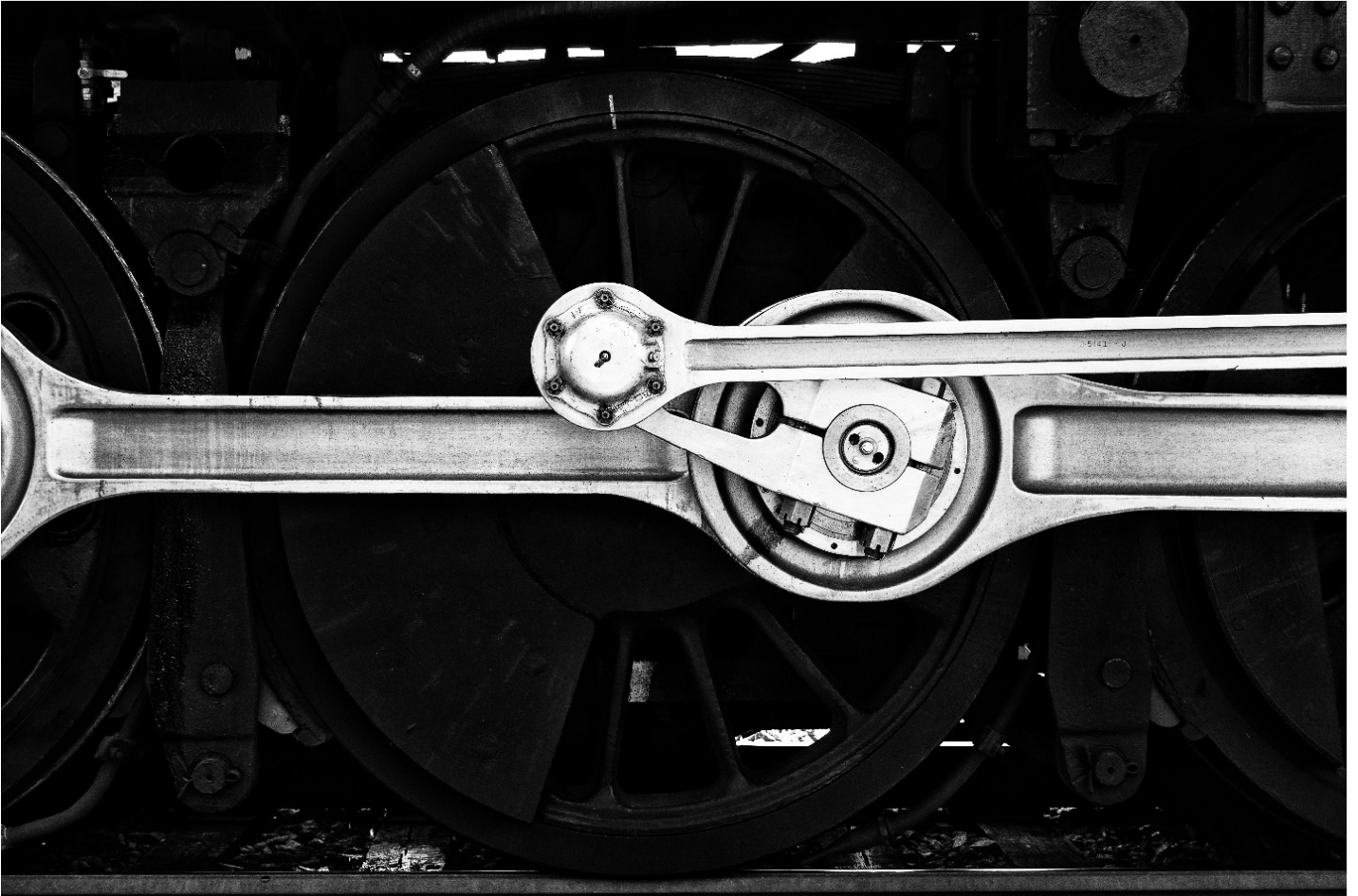
Gandhi’s diet was met with heavy discourse by many in England; however, in every instance, Gandhi was able to show how his diet taught him to overcome adversaries while sticking to his ideologies. One situation between Gandhi and an English doctor demonstrated how others tried to negatively influence Gandhi. As Gandhi wrote in his autobiography, according to the doctor, it was essential for anyone “in the cold climate of England (to consume) beef or mutton” in hopes of staying healthy (Guha). Of course, Gandhi debated with the doctor for a while until the doctor ultimately stated that he had to eat meat or he would die. To this Gandhi stated, “If it were God’s will that I should die, I must die,” but he was not going to break his solemn vow of being a vegetarian (Guha). This incident showed Gandhi’s hard-pressed stance of standing for civil resistance that he would later preach. At the beginning of his stint in England, his vegetarian ways created a “social clumsiness” that blocked him from attaining his goal to “become an English gentleman” (Sharma 32-33). His social awkwardness, for example, made him a lawyer that was “too shy to open his mouth” but eventually he found the important part of life was to not “seek learned advice for interpretation” (Parkeh 4; Sharma 34). Essentially, the difference between these two situations show how the golden rule of sticking his diet, an integral part of his character, actually kept him morally and spiritually separated from conforming to Western society, providing a spiritual platform for his activism to flourish as he saw through the materialistic concepts worshipped in England. Secondly, Gandhi reminisced a specific dinner with a friend where he was served a peculiar soup. Being the mindful person he was, he asked the waiter to come over and explain what exactly was in the soup, as he thought it might have meat in it. Upon this request, Gandhi’s mate exclaimed the he was “too clumsy for decent society” and that he had better leave the restaurant (Gandhi 50). Gandhi’s response was to simply leave and go eat at a vegetarian restaurant around the corner. This situation showed how Gandhi backed up his personal beliefs, even when someone close to him tried to challenge his views. Having this ability to firmly stand by his own beliefs was something that was critical to his rise in activism because many people tried to steer Gandhi from believing in his ideas that strayed from the social norm. It is clear that these two encounters involving Gandhi’s diet were “indicative of the long-term trajectory” of certain ideologies such as nationalism and social reform (Burgess). In a broader perspective, he would come to shape his philosophies from

vegetarian ideologies, leading to him becoming one of the most revered activists of all time.

Even though Gandhi felt out of place in England, it was something as simple as his diet that led him to find new people and most importantly, find himself. The London Vegetarian Society “was a shelter” that saved him from giving in to temptations of Western society (Guha). If Gandhi were to give into these temptations, he would have developed a “weak constitution” and would have “become a crank” (Gandhi and Desai 51). The Gandhi that everyone knows today would never exist. However, his vegetarian diet protected him from this and eventually aided him in the conquest for peace. It taught him a mutual respect for all of those around him and how to speak out for everything he truly believed in, both being major building blocks for most of his fundamental ideas. It is truly amazing how a dietary lifestyle had such a major effect on one person.

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Steel Wheels by Brandon Fiume

10 Things I Hate About Man-Shrews by Anna Baughman

3rd Place Winner

Women who are not afraid to voice their opinions, do not allow men to treat them badly, and stand up for themselves and others are commonly referred to as “bitches.” In the time of Shakespeare, these confident and unafraid women were referred to as “shrews.” According to the *Dictionary by Merriam-Webster*, a shrew is “an unpleasant, bad-tempered woman”; a bitch, “a malicious, spiteful, or overbearing woman.” Despite the substitution of select adjectives, one fact rings true: women are specifically designated for these words with unpleasant connotations. Women who fit such descriptions can be found in *The Taming of the Shrew*, written by William Shakespeare, and *10 Things I Hate About You*, directed by Gil Junger, as the latter is loosely based on the former. Katherine, the shrew, and Kat, the bitch, take their respective insults and make them something different: compliments. Both lead female characters take the personal qualities that turn people away and own them as powerful attributes. Moreover, the women use their strengths to tame the men opposite them. Therefore, in the words “shrew” and “bitch,” readers and viewers find strengths that enable such characters to control their destinies and their men, as shown in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *10 Things I Hate About You*.

Why did Shakespeare write the original play, which had heavy themes of gender inequality? Critic Sherri Thorne argues for Shakespeare’s objectivity, declaring, “Shakespeare does not support this violent treatment of women, nor does he walk through the streets of London campaigning for their better treatment” (53). Thorne believes that Shakespeare wrote this play to create a commentary on the relationships of men and women of his time and offers the following historical context for Shakespeare’s tale:

Religious leaders created contradictory views of women by simultaneously condemning Eve and revering the Virgin Mary. In the secular arena, Neoclassical scholars embraced the tenets of humanism, which proclaimed women inferior to men. The average couple, who lived during the Renaissance, incorporated bits and pieces of all the popular ideals, but the strong influence of the church and the embedded traditions of society supported a patriarchal position. Men exerted strong control over the women in their lives, and if these women resisted or complained, men labeled them shrews. Physically subdued, often a woman’s voice was her only weapon of defense, but her cries for help seldom reached sympathetic ears. (53)

Whether Shakespeare’s commentary was in support of or an argument against these patriarchal ideals is unclear. However, his choice of a comedy with such radical displays of gender oppression can be viewed as satirical, highlighting the hilarity of the preposterousness that these beliefs entailed. Thorne presumes that Shakespeare wrote this play to “[cajole] the audience into reconsidering its ideas about and its treatment of

women” (54). The exact reason Shakespeare wrote the story, though, will most likely never be known.

Despite this, the finished text inspired *10 Things I Hate About You* four hundred years later. The character names—Katherine and Bianca—and the use of Padua (as a city in *Taming* and a school in *10 Things*) are not where the similarities end. The characters of Katherine and Kat are strikingly similar in their lack of interest in marrying/dating, indifference to what others think of them, and bitterness toward their sisters. Also, the Biancas—the sisters—are both shallow, praised by any man who comes across them, and unable to marry/date until their older sisters do. Petruchio and Patrick—the lovers—are both changed in the end, moving from a focus on money and taming to love. Within these stories are characters commonly seen throughout literature, or archetypes. These kinds of characters have the same fundamental qualities. Critic Northrop Frye emphasizes the importance of archetypes when studying intertextual works, or works that mirror each other. Katherine and Kat are shrews: abrasive and terrifying women. The Biancas are the perfect princess characters. Themes of change, love, and acceptance are apparent in both.

Typically, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *10 Things I Hate About You* are regarded as anti-feminist texts. As the female characters are tamed or controlled by the men, the play and the movie are thought of as repressive. Erica Hateley, who does a gendered educational analysis on both of these stories, quotes Melissa Jones, who argues, “What the play teaches . . . is that social disruptors are sweetest when bullied into submission and silenced in a patriarchal embrace” (131). Because Katherine ends the play completely devoted to Petruchio—her new husband—it is deduced that she is giving into this patriarchal embrace. However, this is a very superficial reading of the story, which demands more thought and analysis.

Michael Friedman, when looking at the stories from a feminist point of view, offers that *10 Things I Hate About You* is a feminist version of *The Taming of the Shrew*. While this is a step in the right direction, there can still be a feminist reading of the play, which Friedman does not attempt. Monique Pittman has looked at the story from a reader-response perspective using multiple teenage interpretations—her students’—on the play compared to the movie. Her students thought that the characters in *10 Things I Hate About You* “were given more freedom to choose and decide for themselves” (144). Moreover, Rachel De Wachter offers that “directors have convincingly interpreted the play in many different, even contradictory, ways,” which adds the element of artistic license to this argument, showing that *The Taming of the Shrew* has been transformed in many ways throughout the years. While directors today may not find the original text to be feminist, they have the power to create a Katherine who is more *obviously* feminist. While I appreciate these attempts to understand Katherine’s submission, I argue that a feminist understanding of the original text is possible, but only if one can appropriate and empower the definition of a shrew.

The feminist, though apparent in both *Taming of the Shrew* and *10 Things I Hate About You*, is represented differently in each. In the former, the feminist is subtle: Katherine is tamed in the end but only because she has *allowed* herself to be tamed. The latter shows an obviously strong woman in Kat, who finds love but is not necessarily tamed by the one she loves. In fact, she, like Katherine, seems to tame her supposed tamer. Both women embody the stereotypical feminist, as they are screaming, man-hating, and blunt characters. Katherine is commonly referred to as a “fiend from hell” and “Curst Katarina,” while Kat is called a “bitter, self-righteous hag” and “heinous bitch.” These adjectives are typically used when describing feminists, or “femi-nazis” as they are affectionately nicknamed by society.

Critic Josephine Donovan determines that in Western culture “female stereotypes symbolize either the spiritual or the material, the good or evil” (228). Using stereotypes about feminists, Shakespeare and Junger create characters who are openly perceived as evil. What makes these characters feminist is not their negative qualities, but their ownership of these qualities as foundations of their strength. Though men try to use these qualities to lessen the value of these women, it is not always successful. For instance, when Petruchio first mentions Katherine to her father, he says, “Pray, have you not a daughter / Call'd Katharina, fair and virtuous?,” to which her father, Baptista, replies, “I have a daughter, sir, called Katharina” (2.1.42-43). The insinuation here is that Katherine is not beautiful or virtuous. However, Baptista’s children *are* described as “two fair daughters” (2.1.44). Her beauty is one thing the patriarchy cannot take from her, despite its attempts to do so. The same applies to her virtue, which is firmly intact. In addition to these positive qualities is Katherine’s intelligence. Katherine, after being starved, denied sleep, and abused mentally, seems to have an awakening in her knowledge of herself. This is more clearly seen in live versions of the play, rather than the written word. For this purpose, I watched the movie adaptation of the play from 1983, which shows a thoughtful Katherine as Petruchio attempts to convince her to say that the sun is the moon. Though she originally disagrees with this obvious fallacy, she takes a moment to consider her options. Petruchio will not take her home for her sister Bianca’s wedding unless she agrees with everything he says. There is a clear moment of revelation that results in Katherine agreeing with Petruchio. From this moment on, Katherine listens to and agrees with Petruchio explicitly. Here, we see Katherine *allowing* herself to be tamed, a true feminist act. Though Katherine undoubtedly has the ability to continue to be a shrew, she wisely decides to stay alive and live a peaceful life. Kat, though similar in personality, presents a different case. She starts the movie with a peaceful life. As an overt, rather than covert, feminist, Kat does not believe in living to please others. On the contrary, she lives for herself and does not let anyone influence her decisions. After Patrick comes into her life, she attends a party and prom, both of which are completely out of character for her. However, in the end, she is the same Kat she always was. In a way, Kat tames herself; she allows herself to be the young woman she was meant to be, her own awakening in knowledge of herself.

Though the women are seen as tamed, the men, too, go through a taming process. While Katherine and Petruchio finish their story as a married couple, Kat and Patrick end as a couple dating in high school. The couple is together and believed to be entering a happily-ever-after life when the movie ends, as many Hollywood films do. This assumed fairy-tale ending leaves viewers to believe that Kat and Patrick eventually end up married, as Katherine and Petruchio do. These two men, now husbands, have been tamed in the most obvious way: they are married. Marriage is the ultimate form of taming for men, who are commonly afflicted with commitment issues. Petruchio starts out in *The Taming of the Shrew* searching for money in the form of a dowry. He finds, marries, and “tames” Katherine. However, by the end, he is no longer concerned with the money (granted, he already has it); instead, he is as in love with Katherine as she is with him. Granted, Petruchio is an abusive husband for the majority of the play but becomes caring and loving at the end. Furthermore, the idea of a woman taming a man is subtly shown in Katherine’s sister Bianca throughout the story. Bianca has the ability to make any man fall in love with her. It is clear that these men would do anything for Bianca, proven when men wear disguises to try to win her over. One, Hortensio, has his friend, Petruchio, marry her sister, who we know is described in primarily awful adjectives. Hortensio, a bitter and unpleasant man, puts aside years of friendship for his love of Bianca, showing Bianca’s power over men and, thus, representing the tamed man-shrew.

Perhaps more obvious is Patrick, a stereotypical bad boy. He often is seen smoking, skipping class, and hanging out in pool halls with less-than-reputable company. When courting Kat, the first thing he learns about her is her hatred of smoking. Thus, we see Patrick smoking only once more. Patrick and Kat have one class together, which he walks into—and directly out of—in one of the first scenes. In the end, when Kat is reading a sonnet written by her to Patrick, he is in this very class. In other words, Kat has inspired him to attend class. Additionally, Patrick appears less and less with his disreputable friends, who represent his past debauchery. In fact, he is seen more with Cameron (Bianca’s love interest) and his friend Michael, two of the most innocent characters in the film, as the story progresses. Moreover, Patrick begins courting Kat because he is paid to do so. In the end, he does not want to take the money anymore. Instead, he uses the money he already has to buy Kat a guitar and hire her favorite band to play at prom. Technically speaking, Kat remains a static character throughout the story, and Patrick is the protagonist. Patrick evolves into what every woman wants, a tamed man-shrew.

The image of the bad girl evolves from *The Taming of the Shrew*, written in the 1500s, to *10 Things I Hate About You*, produced in the 1990s. In Shakespeare’s time, being a shrew was disgraceful. Women were typically beautiful, silent, obedient, and innocent; essentially, they were dolls. While Bianca fits this description quite well, Katherine clearly does not. In fact, a man tells Katherine’s father that she is too “rough” for him and tells her she would be more likely to find a husband if she were “milder and gentler” (1.1.55, 61). Clearly, Bianca was a more desirable woman, while Katherine was atypical. She was likely a surprising character in this time, and the shock value Katherine offered undoubtedly

added to the comedy. In 1999, *10 Things I Hate About You* featured Kat, who represented a more contemporary type of woman. She preaches about feminism and the importance of women often throughout the movie. Had Katherine done this in her role, it would have been out of place, and it is clear that Kat is out of place in her setting, if not in her historical context. The other students are all obsessed with popularity and sex, while Kat abhors these things. When Kat is first seen in her car, the song "Bad Reputation" by Joan Jett is playing. The title alone proves that Kat does not fit in with her fellow classmates. Automatically, this makes people think she is a bitch; her own sister even calls her a bitch when criticizing her for not fraternizing with her peers. While Katherine is an obvious shrew in the way she acts, both in what she says and what she does physically, Kat is a more realistic and toned-down shrew. Despite this, both have attributes that make them the stereotypical bad girl. Arielle Pardes explores the evolution of the word *bitch*, which I think applies to both of these stories. "[Bitch is] the original insult," Pardes begins her analysis; "It needs no introduction, no following; it works as a standalone slur for just about any scenario" (par. 1). When originally used, *bitch* was a highly offensive insult. However, Pardes notes that later "'Bitch' it seemed, was turning its face toward feminism," and it was (par. 8). Nowadays, people think of a bitch as a strong, independent woman. This is because of women like Katherine and Kat, who are unapologetically themselves, good or bad.

Not only has the shrew evolved, but the taming has also changed. As mentioned before, Patrick is clearly tamed in *10 Things I Hate About You*, which embodies the evolution in taming. The definition of taming clearly altered from 1590 to 1999. In Shakespeare's time, the taming was literal: Petruchio stops feeding Katherine and does not allow her to sleep, making her listen to what he says. Like a blinded bird, she obeys everything he tells her to do: "My falcon now is sharp and passing empty; / And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged, / for then she never looks upon her lure" (4.1.125-26). In the case of Kat and Patrick, the taming is less recognizable. At the end of the movie, when Patrick and Kat are making up, he cuts her off with a kiss every time she tries to speak. Erica Hateley observes the action in this part of the movie, saying, "This moment of silencing should be disturbing, whether viewed with Shakespeare's play in mind or not" (132). Her interpretation of this scene is that Patrick is taming and silencing Kat. However, if this is the taming of the shrew in *10 Things I Hate About You*, it is quite a mild and farfetched subduing, as Kat in the rest of the film does not let Patrick talk over her or say anything inappropriate. The belief that this behavior would suddenly stop does not follow the pattern of the movie or its characters. Patrick likes Kat's sharp tongue and witty repertoire; he would not want to tame that out of her. While it is safe to assume that the couple ends up happily-ever-after, it is also safe to assume that Kat begins to talk once more when the camera is turned off. The viewers know Kat would not let Patrick have the last word. Therefore, the question remains, how is Kat tamed? And it can be argued that she never is.

Katherine and Kat are two strong female characters; in other words, they are two shrews and bitches, two women who know their own minds and are not afraid to show it. They take these descriptors and let them become their identities. Despite their oppressors, who come in the form of men in love, they prevail as strong, smart, and independent characters. They redefine the original conceptions of a shrew or a bitch, creating forces to be reckoned with. The apparent feminism that accompanies this appropriation invents an interesting and refreshing archetype: the woman who is not afraid to be herself, in spite of society's opinions of what that might mean.

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Keep on Swimming by Tessa Clouse

The House of Prejudice: Women Past Their Primes as Detriments to Society by Molly Fischer

4th Place Winner

While what is culturally and socially accepted of a woman has changed through time, the expectation of marriage has stayed relatively constant. Although these two authors come from different countries, England and America, respectively, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, a plain Charlotte Lucas settles into a convenient marriage with William Collins; nearly 100 years later, in Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth*, Lily Bart ultimately kills herself after being manipulated in the high society battle for marriage in which she engages. Though these stories may seem vastly different to the casual reader, they actually contain a few key similarities that bring them together. The most common connection between these novels, which is remarked by Morris Dickstein, matches *The House of Mirth's* beginning—a “social comedy about the marriage market”—to the “wicked irony” of *Pride and Prejudice*. However, the most important, and as yet unexplored, similarity is that both women meet their fate due to the pressures society places on young women to marry well.

The work of feminist critics Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar explores two variations of female writers: those who “immobilize themselves with suffocating tight-laces in the glass coffins of patriarchy” or those who “are tempted to destroy themselves by doing fiery and suicidal tarantellas out of the looking glass” (44). They assert that there is a middle ground for female writers who push the limits of the patriarchy without aggressively peddling any political or feminist messages. This middle ground is where Austen and Wharton lie. Both writers address social issues that affect women, yet do not inherently antagonize their male characters.

Despite having the more optimistic of the two stories, it is worth noting that Austen had poor luck in her romantic life. In her youth, she had been described as “the prettiest, silliest, most affected, husband-hunting butterfly” by neighbor Mary Russell Mitford, though this may have been due to a hostile relationship rather than Austen's genuine characteristics (qtd. in Austen-Leigh 84). Throughout her life, Austen seemed to be more invested in her writing than in her relationships. Regardless, Austen had a few significant romances in her life. The most significant was with Tom Lefroy, with whom she became acquainted at numerous balls during the winter of 1795-96. In a letter to her sister Cassandra, she writes of an expected proposal, but it is not difficult to ascertain that no such proposal happened. This seemed to disappoint the young Austen; however, she was not entirely heartbroken (Austen-Leigh 87-89).

This relationship is comparable to that of Jane Bennet and Charles Bingley. While Jane herself does not necessarily expect a proposal, her family, and readers, are led to

believe that Bingley intends to propose. Thus, when he instead travels to London, the characters within *Pride and Prejudice*, and readers alike, are shocked. This reaction is likely akin to how Austen and her family presumably felt after she did not receive an offer of marriage. Both women were nearing the end of their primes; this suggests that, though not receiving an offer is not necessarily detrimental, they are approaching a time when it will become so. Austen, then, after her own unsuccessful romance, was able to channel the failure into Jane. Despite the fact that Jane is given a happy ending and eventually marries Bingley, she still faces the chance of becoming an ineligible bachelorette. Though Austen was able to support herself through her novels, it is plausible to believe that she feared herself an ineligible bachelorette after her unsuccessful romance.

Wharton, on the other hand, did marry in her life. However, her marriage was not based upon love and affection (as exemplified in *Pride and Prejudice* and sought out in *The House of Mirth*), but upon necessity. Her mother had accelerated her debut into society due to financial troubles, yet this did nothing for a young Wharton, who was shy in the company of potential suitors. Despite this, she had one serious suitor, Henry Leyden Stevens, to whom it was reported that she was engaged in 1882. However, this engagement was broken due to Wharton's ambition, which Stevens found "a grievous fault" (Lewis qtd. in Benstock 14). This failed relationship seemed to discourage Wharton from her literary aspirations. In fact, the "lesson" she learned from this—that young women must hide their ambitions if they wish to marry well—can be seen in *The House of Mirth*, in that none of the young women appear to be well-read, in spite of Wharton's obvious intelligence (Benstock 14).

Regardless of this failed relationship, she was soon enough married to Edward Wharton. This marriage was a comfortable one. This twenty-eight-year marriage was mostly of a platonic nature, as Shari Benstock reports that "the couple did not maintain sexual relations" (10). Wharton's reason for entering this marriage was probably due to societal pressure as well as pressure from her family; she had been out in society for four years when she originally met her husband—coupled with the reputation she earned from her relationship with Stevens—and a better match did not seem likely. From her experience of being pressured into marriage, Wharton could easily find inspiration for the character of Lily Bart. Unlike Lily, though, Wharton married early, and could therefore not entirely relate to Lily's desperation at the age of twenty-nine.

Clearly, both women faced societal pressures involving marriage that influenced them so much that their novels focused, at least partially, on this pressure. Their young female characters' reasons for staying single despite this pressure vary, though: Lily stays single because she desires a marriage both financially advantageous and grounded in true affection (something Wharton was not awarded), and Austen's characters stay single because, as far as readers can tell, none of them receive any offers. The only rejected marriage proposals in *Pride and Prejudice* come from Elizabeth, the headstrong protagonist, who rejects Collins because she does not love him; thus, he turns his affection elsewhere, to Charlotte Lucas. Elizabeth similarly refuses Darcy, initially because she

desires affection, and he does not give her what she needs. However, she is the only character in the novel to refuse someone, and it is not difficult to believe she would be the only character to refuse another on these grounds.

There is a discernable similarity between Lily and Elizabeth, given that both women believe a marriage should be based in love rather than convenience—a notion that is clearly founded upon the opinions of Wharton and Austen. The most important distinction between the two protagonists remains that Elizabeth is granted a happy ending, wherein Lily is not. Elizabeth is granted this conclusion despite seeking out genuine love. In stark contrast, Lily is given a tragic conclusion because she is unable to reach a compromise between finding genuine love and finding a wealthy husband. Clearly, Lily did not follow in Elizabeth's steps and fall in love, then later remember that one's husband is incredibly wealthy. Of course, Elizabeth's method is highly unorthodox. By including the trials of Charlotte, Austen reminds readers that, while it is ideal to find a love like that shared between Elizabeth and Darcy, it is much more realistic to expect a comfortable marriage.

Lily is in a position much like Charlotte. Both women are far beyond their prime marriage age (Lily is twenty-nine and Charlotte is twenty-seven) and facing the looming threat that, if they do not marry soon, they will become burdens on their families. As aforementioned, Lily does not marry by her own choice. She receives multiple offers yet never believes any to be adequate economically. While this could be marked as a criticism of Lily's (and as an extension, the upper class's) inherent materialism, it is instead a criticism of women's only role in society: to get married. Lily *does* reject many offers, particularly from Selden, because they will not provide for her financial habits, but this is not a flaw on her behalf. This is a flaw on the way she was raised. Society taught Lily that she must find a husband who will support her financially, lest she become a burden on her family and friends. However, Lily herself knows that she could never be happy in a loveless marriage. It is the clash between what society has taught Lily and Lily's human needs that inevitably kills her.

Charlotte faces a much different dilemma. In no way is she seen to be materialistic; in fact, the only true reference we get to her financial situation is the implication that, as an unmarried twenty-seven-year-old, she has become a burden on her family. Unlike Lily, she is not beautiful and likely received no offers of marriage before Collins. Thus, when she receives an offer from him, she can see no alternative. She is not a desirable guest for others and she will very likely not receive another offer. She is content to settle for Collins because she has very low expectations: "I am not romantic, you know. I never was," she explains; "I ask only a comfortable home; and, considering Mr. Collins's character, connections, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state" (Austen 125). In actuality, she is offered no alternatives, much like many women of the period.

Regardless of Charlotte's own opinion on her marriage, Elizabeth is clearly shaken by this union. She, much like modern-day readers who are accustomed to tales of love

rather than convenience, cannot see why a woman such as Charlotte would sell herself short to be with a man like Collins. While Elizabeth *should* understand the necessity of Charlotte's decision, given the distinct concern of her mother as well as the anxiety of her sister Jane, she cannot get a clear grasp on the decision. As Melinda Moe notes, "[Elizabeth] sees Charlotte 'sacrifice every better feeling' for a protective establishment, erected like scaffolding around an emotional core that (Elizabeth wishes) would remain essentially critical of her husband" (1086). She hears Charlotte's explanation yet still cannot understand why a woman would want to make that sacrifice—a thought that presumably came straight from Austen herself, who chose never to marry. However, Austen does not include this plotline to criticize women who choose to settle in a comfortable marriage; she includes it to criticize the *society* that forces women to settle in a comfortable marriage. Had Charlotte been able to work or provide for herself in any way, she would not have to settle for a marriage in which she rarely speaks to her husband. Though Jane and Elizabeth are allowed advantageous marriages, the unknown fate of Mary and Kitty Bennet's romantic endeavors leads readers to wonder whether they will have to settle for a comfortable marriage. Neither girl has the personality to match Elizabeth's, and despite their elder sisters' advantageous marriages, they still must face the reputation that comes with their younger sister's ruin. It is plausible to believe that at least one of them will eventually need to settle into a comfortable marriage and presumably face the same criticism from Elizabeth that Charlotte did.

The type of social criticism that Lily faced, on the other hand, was influenced by her decision to stay single. She placed herself in compromising situations—most notably, straight into the middle of the tumultuous marriage of the Dorsets. Her reputation ruined, she refuses to compromise her morals or sacrifice her one true love. Despite her upstanding morals, perhaps greater than any others exemplified in *The House of Mirth*, Lily is ultimately the one who suffers. This is a bitter acknowledgement that the upper class has no moral compass. While women like Nettie Struthers are allowed to be "ruined" yet come back from it, Lily's "ruin" quite literally destroys her. And though she has her experience in the working class, it is not what she is accustomed to: "She was so evidently the victim of the civilization which had produced her, that the links of her bracelet seemed like manacles chaining her to her fate" (Wharton 29). She attempted to escape her fate as an ineligible upper-class bachelorette, but her efforts were futile. There was simply no way for a woman like Lily to win in this society: she could not sacrifice herself in order to make an advantageous marriage, but she was incapable of supporting herself without one.

Lily's ultimate fate is, once again, her suicide. The events of the novel may lead readers to the assumption that, had Selden proposed to Lily just a moment sooner, she would have been saved from her fate. However, this is not true. As previously stated, Lily believes herself above all offers of marriage, yet she is not willing to give up her materialistic life in order to support herself on a single woman's salary. She views herself as being the center of attention, and Selden only adds to this perception, as Hermione Lee notes:

Whenever Selden has a scene without Lily, someone is talking to him about her. She is always being gossiped about, whether by her disapproving aunt, or by the men who fancy her, or by the women who are trying to help or obstruct her. And she wants to be on view. Selden tells her that 'it's part of your cleverness to be able to produce premeditated effects extemporaneously.' She does not want to be alone in a picturesque natural setting; she wants someone to come and admire her in it: 'The combination of a handsome girl and a romantic scene struck her as too good to be wasted.' Wharton fills this book with the language of the spectacle, drawn from the visual arts and the theatre, from house decoration and architecture. Lily is variously seen as, or presents herself as, a framed painting, a performance, a collector's item, an actress, a model, a clothes-horse, a statue, a dryad or a jewel. (196)

That is to say, it is not Lily alone who lives in a materialistic bubble. The opinions and actions of those surrounding her enable her to view herself this way. She only sees herself as an object in need of attention rather than a human being with needs, including the need for genuine love. This self-image does not arise from any character flaws of Lily's, but a flaw in society as a whole. Throughout the course of the novel, Lily is denied the opportunity to grow out of this self-image. Had she been able to, she may have found a happy marriage with Selden. However, despite the implication that had Lily not committed suicide, she would have married Selden, society would have still told her that she should not settle for this marriage. The societal expectation of women would have prevented Lily from happiness, regardless of how her story ended.

The question then becomes this: Had Charlotte been beautiful, would she have been raised in a way similar to Lily's and therefore suffered the same fate? She settled for a comfortable marriage with Collins, but had she been raised to expect luxury, it is conceivable that she would have wished for more than that comfortable life. In the same way, had Lily been raised modestly, she would very likely have settled for a comfortable marriage. Regardless of the almost one hundred years between these novels being written, the stories remain starkly similar, with many occurrences being interchangeable and the fate of women lying in the hands of the society that creates them.

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The Yellow Wallpaper by Caroline Manley

Blue by Jack Weidner

You looked at the casket and it all came rushing back. You're back in Port Jeff, sitting on the dock with your mom eating ice cream. She looks at you; you're smearing the ice cream all over your face and hands. She grins and wipes a cool paper towel against your face. You feel your feet in the crisp blue water, splashing around and resisting the cleaning that she forced upon you. You teach her about the whales, and sharks, and fish you knew were beneath the blue. The sun warms your face, as you walk down the dock together, hand in hand. You look at her and tell her that you want it to stay just like this forever—just the two of you and the red sun and purple sky and the crystal sea. Fast Forward.

You feel the shock in your hands as the ball catapults off the bat. You're hit with thunderous waves of voices yelling run. You take off as your cleats cut through the dirt, propelling you around the square. You look for the ball, but it isn't there. You go faster now. You know what you did. You hear the cheers. Your cleats pound the dirt harder. You want to get home. You need to get to home. You want to see your mom; you need to see her. You round third and feel the thumps of your teammates bouncing at home. You feel your heart thumping inside of your blue cotton jersey. You did it. You look to the stands, but she isn't there. She had to leave. She's sick. Fast forward.

You're taken by the hand of a woman in blue scrubs. She brings you to the room. You have to see her. You don't want to see her. You hear the beeping of machines, lights flashing all around you. You hear the stomping of men in white running room to room. Too many sounds and senses for you to take all at once, but you fight it. You get in. You felt a ball in your stomach tighten as you see her. A frail person in her bed with tubes coming out her nose and needles out of her arms. The woman is pale, sick, a shadow of the woman you knew as your mother. She struggles to lift her head. She sees you. You cry and run. Your shoes propelling you home. You go out the doors. You feel the sun warm your face. You hit the street. You can't take it; you don't look back. "That can't be her. Go home," you tell yourself, "this isn't real, she'll be there." You keep running. You never turned back. Not for thirteen years.

Back to present.



Frozen Waterfalls by Samantha Hegedus

Lost Soul by Isaiah Holbrook

1. Flashing Lights

I remember red and blue flashing lights danced on his face. His hands rested on my waist. I could feel the little stubs of his beard lightly itching the side of my neck. Music lit a spark in everyone's bodies as sweat dripped down our skins. He told me his name was Jay and that he was born and raised in Nevada. I told him my name.

"Esmeena?" he said.

"I'm from Columbia," I told him.

"What made you come to the U.S.?"

"Freedom," I said to him.

I told him about *mi Mamá*, how I ran away from home just a few weeks ago. I was sick of living under rules and following the path she created for me, a path of a Christian, lady-like woman. *You will never be the girl I wanted you to be*, she shouted at me in Spanish, tears of frustration and disappointment exposed on her skin. So I packed my clothes, my life, and ran away to America with my best friend Yolanda, who was tired of seeing her mother being a brittle-wood wall for her father to spatter his bloody knuckles on.

"Let me get you and your friend a drink," Jay offered.

I followed his every move, not sure of the journey he was taking me on. By the third drink, I could not move, my body ached for him to control my movements. He said he would walk us home. He said he would give us water. He said he would take good care of us, but men say many promising things with crossed fingers tied behind their backs.

2. Cramped Spaces

I woke up to the sound of terror whispering into the dark, cramped space filled with unidentified women. Darkness controlled everyone's pleas for help. I was unable to move my legs not to touch the various women who shared the same space. I yelled for Yolanda's name with choked tears, but she did not answer. I banged my hand on the wooden wall out of frustration, the guilt pressed on my chest too unbearable to suppress.

The door swung open and the city lights gave all of us our identities back. That's when I saw Jay, cigar hung loose from his mouth as if captivity was a part of his daily sequence. I grabbed his shirt when I got out of the bed of the truck, demanding him to tell me where Yolanda was. He threw me on the concrete floor and demanded my eyes align with his.

"You wanted freedom, right?" he whispered aggressively through his teeth.

"Yes," I said, tears dripping on the ground.

“Welcome to freedom.” It was in that moment when I would rather have been curled up in that cramped space hiding under a blanket of darkness than facing the reality of my captivity.

3. School Girl

He didn’t want to announce my real name. Maybe he couldn’t pronounce my full name, too many Spanish-speaking vowels swarming around in his American tongue. Or maybe he was afraid to expose the real me on the internet for fear that *Mamá* would come looking for me. He didn’t have to worry about that. The words I left on her doorstep would make any mother deny me as her child. Instead, he gave me a pseudo name, masking the real Esmeena only to suffocate her voice.

“*Esmé* sounds much better!” he said to me, smiling as if my fake identity would excite me. He posted pictures of the new me online, patiently waiting for a man to take what’s below my waist that’s not rightfully his. He dressed me in a plaid miniskirt, white knee-high socks, and a dress shirt that revealed the slight curvature of my small breasts.

“Old men love the school-girl type,” he said to me.

I couldn’t tell him that I craved for Esmeena already. I couldn’t tell him that these clothes are just a mask that’s suffocating me, dehumanizing me.

I remained still and silent. Two commands that I was forced to master.

4. Un-kissed Skin

My first session took place in a dirt-filled motel room where flies and insects feasted on the half-eaten food in the sink. The paint from the walls began to chip, falling onto the ground to expose the wooden wall behind the beige paint. My client didn’t want anything fancy. He was too afraid that his wife would check his balance on his account. So, he gave the cashier the cash for the room and knocked on the door. Before I opened the door, I checked the prices I had written down on my wrist. My hands started shaking. Nerves drowned my body, petrified to face what I might have invited into the room. Too afraid that if I went through with it, this would be my life forever. No way home. No way out. Trapped.

I opened the door and he walked in. He made himself at home, taking off his business jacket, his shoes, and his wedding ring, which he placed on the dresser. By the way he took off his clothes, I could tell that this wasn’t his first time, that he had taken off his wedding ring many times for girls like me.

“How much for sex?” he said.

“Three hundred and fifty-five dollars. Cash only,” I said.

“Does that include everything in between?”

“Maybe,” I tried to tease.

“Come here and sit on my lap.” I did what I was told like Jay taught me.

“You’re so beautiful,” he said while placing his cracked lips on my breasts.

I had never let a man touch my skin with his lips. One time when I was at a party in high school, a boy felt the need to force his lips on mine on his friend’s bed. I bit down on his bottom lip so violently that I felt my top and bottom teeth rub against each other through his skin. Blood decorated my mouth as he cried in pain. But at that moment in the motel, when I laid down on the pain-aching mattress with him on top of me, I couldn’t bite down on his lips. I couldn’t resist him from touching my un-kissed skin. Instead, I watched as his wrinkled body took the only thing I held onto for a boy to take with love instead of lust. As he was about to finish, I realized that some lost souls should never be found.

5. The Messenger

After my father’s death two days before my *quinceanera*, *mi Mamá* always treated me special on my birthday. I remember grabbing the keys to my brand new car and smelling the new car smell erupt in my lungs. We drove all around town, the wind hitting our faces as the music overpowered our laughter. But on my nineteenth birthday, I was doing tricks in cheap motel rooms, longing for a way out of that life. It had been a year then since Jay transformed me into his sex object. Even though I was forced to allow men to grope my body as if it were their own, I still had an unexpected gift waiting for me to unravel it.

I walked to the hotel room to meet my last client for the night. It was midnight. At that point, I had gotten used to the sequence of a standard session: meet the guy, ask him what he wants, tell him the cost of the night, put the money in the bag, finish the job, and get out of there alive. The last part was expected but not always guaranteed. There had been multiple reports of sex workers found dead, their lifeless bodies sprinkled around town. Out of all the cases displayed on the news, police only found and arrested two of the men in charge of the women’s murders. The rest were in hiding, reverting to their other lives as husbands, fathers, successful employees at their companies. I tried not to think about that. Instead, I walked into the hotel and took the elevator up to Room 302.

He greeted me and I entered the room. He said his name was Freddie and I announced my pseudo name. His young features and tall physique made me question how close in age we were. He wore a cross around his neck, a tattoo of a verse stained on his wrist: Jeremiah 29:11. I didn’t think too much of it.

“What can I do for you tonight?” I asked.

“I was just thinking we could talk for now,” he said.

“Is this your first time or something?”

“Not at all. I just like to get to know a woman first before I sleep with her.”

“What do you want to know about me?”

“Everything,” he said with a smile that took me off guard.

“I don’t know where to start.”

“You can start by telling me what led you here.”

“Oh, I can’t tell you that. He would—“

“‘He’ as in your pimp?”

“Look, if you’re some kind of law enforcement, then—“

“I’m not a cop,” he said, reassuring me with the inflection in his voice. “I just want to get to know you, that’s all.”

We sat on the bed and talked for what seemed like hours. I told him everything: about *mi Mamá*, my father, and how I ran away from home. I knew telling those things to a client was forbidden. I knew his words weren’t enough validation to convince me he wasn’t a cop, but somehow I believed him. I put all of my trust and vulnerability onto his lap, hoping he wouldn’t run away with it.

“So listen,” he said. “I’m an evangelist and what my church members and I do is get young girls like you off the streets.”

I declined, telling him how the *good* Lord had given up on me.

“That’s not true,” he said. “I can prove it to you if you let me.”

I hesitated to respond.

“What about your mom?” he asked. “I can help you reconnect with her. You have the choice to change your life, to get back to your normal life, the right choice.”

I checked my phone. It was Jay asking me if everything was all right.

“I have to go,” I said. As I gathered my things, ignoring his plea to save me from this world, he blocked the pathway to the door.

“I know that’s your pimp asking you where you are, so I’m just going to give you my business card. If you change your mind, give me a call whenever you are ready.”

I tucked the business card into my bra and left. As I got in the car, I contemplated dialing the number that would help guide my escape route. Then doubt crept up on me. It told me I was too weak to escape, too fragile to fight for the real Esmeena to enter back into my life. And I believed it.

6. Missing Girls

After hearing the reports about the multiple sex workers going missing, I didn’t dare to watch the news. I couldn’t fathom hearing about them and wondering if that would ever happen to me. If *Mamá* would ever get a call from the police reporting my death in another country. One night that possibility stared me in the face with eyes shut and lips sealed.

The first time my eyes examined a deceased boy was when I was ten. I remember chasing my soccer ball down the neighborhood street only to find a pool of his blood

embedded in the concrete. I didn't cry. I didn't scream for help. I stood there in silence. Shock planted my feet to the ground. My parents ended up taking me to see a child psychologist, but I refused to detail the physical appearance of death.

That night was different. That night I saw Yolanda lying in a river of her blood in the back of an alleyway. Ever since Jay separated us the night of our captivity, I prayed to God that He would let me find my best friend one day. I made a promise to myself that if I ever found Yolanda, we would escape together. I cursed God for taking the only hope I had away from me. I left my questions up in the sky for Him to send His answer back to me. I still waited for His answer to rest in the palms of my hands, but they always remained open.

7. Bullet Wounds

"What are the chances we go again for free?" a client said as we dressed our naked bodies.

"Very funny," I said to him, brushing off the possibility of that ever happening.

"I'm serious."

"I don't give away freebies."

"Oh, come on," he said while disappearing into my neck. I had dealt with these types of men too many times. They thought they could intimidate me into letting them go for round two without any cash after. I always shut them down and this time was no different.

"Like I said, I don't do that. Now get your clothes and go." Unlike all the men I rejected, he was the type that couldn't take no for an answer.

"What did you say to me, little bitch?" he said while latching onto a fistful of my hair.

"Get off of me!" I screamed.

He tossed me halfway across the room like a child tossing a doll she was tired of playing with. He pointed the gun to my head to silence my plea for help, but he didn't have to point the gun to shut me up. Fear had already rested on top of my lungs. Flashbacks of Yolanda's body consumed my thoughts. *This is it*, I thought to myself. *This is where my life ends*. He ordered me to lie down on the bed. I couldn't move. It was like my body forgot how to stand up to place one foot in front of the other. His frustration built up so quickly that he grabbed my arms and forced me on the bed. He placed his body on top of mine while pointing the gun at my stomach. Before his hands could ever undress me, I slammed my knee below his waist. I grabbed onto the weapon and turned his gun to his stomach. *BANG! BANG!* And before I knew it, his weight fell on top of my body.

The sound of people rushing to the room alarmed me. I used all my strength to push him off me. When I was finally released from his body mass, I climbed out of the window just in time for the hotel supervisor to knock on the door. My feet traveled miles and miles,

running away from the guilt, but no matter how hard or fast I ran, the fighter in me was still there, begging to come out again.

8. The Blood-filled Ring

The fearful Esmé I once was transformed into the fiancée of my pimp when I was 29 years old. He slipped the ring onto my finger and called it love. I cherished my ring, wearing it proudly around our condo that he bought me as a gift, but whenever I saw his ring with dried-up blood, I always rubbed my fingers across the bruises on my cheek. *What would have happened if I did remain silent when he told me to?* I thought to myself. *Maybe then his ring would sparkle in the sun like mine does.*

9. The Lost Boy

There was a boy who stood all alone in the city lights of downtown. He clenched onto his backpack and wiped away his tears, adjusting to the foreign place of creating his own roof to shelter him. I made a couple tricks on Baltimore Street before my concerns ate away at my conscience. I knew he wasn't my responsibility, but somehow his dry-stained tears pulled me in.

The sound of my heels hitting the concrete alarmed him, his eye growing bigger and bigger as I closed the gap between us. I asked him where his parents were, but his mouth was sealed shut.

"So you're just going to ignore me?" He didn't dare speak to me. I wanted to call it quits. *I've already done my good deed for today*, I thought, but I couldn't live with myself if I had turned away from his tear-swollen eyes and left him in the care of the devil's hands.

"You hungry, huh?" I said as I caught the roaring of his empty stomach. "Come on, kid. I'll get you something to eat."

I watched him eat the grilled cheese I had made him. By the looks of how fast he consumed the first half of his sandwich, I guessed that this wasn't his first night as a runaway. With all the questions I threw at him, he answered me with his mouth closed and lips sealed. Finally I made him talk, snatching the sandwich out of his mouth.

"If you're not going to talk to me, then you're not eating the food I cooked for you," I said to him. He said his name was Enrique, stabbing his tongue on the roof of his teeth to pronounce the 'r.' I noticed his Spanish-speaking tongue right away, using our Hispanic heritage as a starting point to have a conversation. Before I could start the conversation, Jay busted in through the door. My panic mode set in. I should have been out on the streets making him money, but instead I was ensuring the safety of a lost boy. Jay didn't understand that. He planted his rage and frustration forcefully on my cheek. The sound of my body connecting to the ground startled Enrique, who fled from our place. The beating didn't stop. He wasn't done until he added a fresh coat of blood to his ring.

I watched as my blood traveled between the crevices of the kitchen tiles. The innocence of Enrique's eyes made me reflect on my own. His adolescence exposed to

reality made me think of Esmeena. As I laid there eyeing the small puddle of my blood, I realized Enrique had discovered Esmeena. Jay hadn't stripped her away and banished her never to enter my body. I didn't give her away to any of the men who placed a pile of cash next to me after they were done using my body. I was the one who covered her mouth with my hand and told her it was his. I took his ring off my finger, giving the real me her voice back.

10. Rekindled Voices

It's been two years since I ran away from the life that suffocated me for too many years. I sit on the cozy chair placed on the balcony of San Jose's Treatment Center, a place of sex workers who have left the business and want more for themselves. As I write in my journal, I go back to the night when I cleaned up my blood off the floor for the last time. I reminisce the strength I had for silently packing my clothes in my suitcase. I said goodbye to the life I once knew and jumped into the van.

"It's never too late to call for help," Freddie said to me as he took control of the wheel. For ten years, I kept the card he gave me, hoping that one day I would have the strength to cry for help. We drove away and never once did I turn back. The fear had escaped from my body and joy entered in, celebrating the freedom that I had again, the freedom Esmeena had again.



Unoccupied by Luke Haskins

The Pearl of Africa by Ashley Hill

You feel the heat on your face as you slowly open your eyes. It's barely morning, but somehow, the blazing heat has already penetrated the walls of your room. You sit up and reach for your phone, but you realize it isn't there, so you pick up your watch instead. It's not quite 5:30, but already you can hear the noise and bustle outside your window. As you stand up, you start to think how good the shower water will feel as you wake up. You walk into the bathroom and turn on the water. Nothing happens. You turn the faucet off and back on, but still, nothing. Then you remember. You are not at home. You are in Africa.

When you realize there will be no water this morning, you pick the best alternative, wet wipes. It takes about 15 wet wipes to substitute for a shower, yet even that doesn't quite have the same effect. When you feel sufficiently cleaned, you get dressed and head downstairs for breakfast. The rest of your team is already there waiting, a pot of coffee brewed and smelling better than ever. While you wait for breakfast, the team begins to discuss the plans for the day. It seems it will be business as usual. Load the bus at 7:30 and arrive in Suubi by 9:00 as long as traffic cooperates. As usual, traffic was running on Ugandan time, so you get there late. The workers are already waiting for you, so immediately you go back to your spot at the wall where you left off yesterday. You tirelessly lay bricks until lunch, then go to find any type of shade so you can cool off while you eat. Lunch is the same today: jelly sandwiches and fruit. You pull out the peanut butter crackers from home that you brought to supplement the meal. After lunch, you go back to laying bricks. It's not easy work, but you know that the village will be able to expand once the wall is done, so you work at it joyfully, despite the torrential downpour that comes with the rainy season. You finish up for the day and board the bus to head back home. You expect traffic to be bad; after all, it had rained, so the road will be washed out. You lean against the window and shut your eyes, prepared for the long ride home. As you leave the villages, kids wave and shout to the bus as you pull out the gate. "I could get used to it here," you think to yourself as you drift into a light sleep...

Something startles you awake, a car horn perhaps. You look out the window and realize you are on the outskirts of the Kampala city limits but at least an hour from the compound with afternoon traffic. You watch the scene out the window change as the bus draws nearer and nearer to the city. You start to notice more and more people. You have been here for a while now and have become accustomed to the change of scenery on the road from Suubi to Kampala, but today you are taking notice of the people. Upon arriving in the city, you almost immediately meet bumper-to-bumper traffic. You don't mind, though, as you look out the window, the warm breeze against your face. Suddenly, there is a woman at your window. She startles you. She has a baby on her chest and it is obvious that they haven't eaten in a while. Your team gathers all the snacks they have left on the bus, and you pass them out the window to her. Even this scene is not unfamiliar to you. The people here are in need; after all, that is why you are here. You say a prayer for her as

she walks to the next bus of Mzungus (white people) to beg for food. You hate to say it, but this scene does not bother you as much as it once did; you have almost become used to it after seeing it every day. Not much time has passed until you hear a voice say “Mzungu! Food, please?” You look out the window and you don’t see anyone. Then you look down. A child, a little girl maybe 7 years old, is standing in traffic, on her own, begging for food. You can see every bone in her body as she stands in tattered clothing looking up at you. Her eyes are empty and hollow, yet filled with hope as she eagerly awaits you to give her something. You know you just gave your last granola bar to the mama and her baby, but you dig through your bag hoping to find something. When you find nothing, you dump your bag out onto the seat beside you, frantically looking for something, anything. You have no food and no money, and neither does anyone else on the bus. “Nsonyiwa,” you tell her as she stares up at you. It means “I’m sorry,” but she still stands there looking up at you. “Mwattu,” please, she says as she continues to stare emptily at you, the look of hope vanishing from her face. Your heart is breaking. She is so young. Suddenly, you feel something you haven’t felt in weeks: a tear as it rolls down your cheek. Once again you say “nsonyiwa” as you look out the window at her. She continues to beg. You feel a hand on your shoulder as one of the men gently pulls you from the window. The girl is now crying as she stares at the bus. He speaks the language better than you and he tells her that you have no food or money, but she still doesn’t move. She just keeps staring at you and pleading “mwattu, mwattu.” The bus begins to creep forward and she follows you, still begging. You have seen people begging every day, but not like this, and not a child. Then, it hits you like a brick, and you are no longer numb; you are broken.

It’s surreal to think about. I constantly have to remind myself that it happened. I have been to Africa—not just been there as I traveled through, but for several weeks, I was there. I met people. I learned their names and saw their faces. I shared in their culture and experienced life with them, an experience for which I will never be the same. I saw and experienced things I never thought I would, many of them things I wish I had not. These experiences shook and rocked me to my very soul. I pray there never comes a day when I can think about the things I witnessed and not be moved to tears. I witnessed atrocities against humanity, but in the midst, I also saw pure joy from the people I was supposedly serving—although I would argue that they gave me far more than I ever gave them.

When I think about what I experienced, I immediately think of the names and faces. Names like Abu, Cato, Waswa, Mercy or Precious. To some people, these may just seem like names or random words strung together, but to me, they have a face and a story. My story will always be connected to theirs, and I will forever be different because of their impact on my life. I think of the first time I held Miracle in my arms and hugged her so tight because I couldn’t even imagine at just 18 months of age, the atrocities she had been through. I thank God, because she probably won’t remember most of it because she was so young. But then I think of others like Peter or Mercy. They will remember what they have been through. They are old enough; they won’t forget.

When I close my eyes, I can still vividly see the faces of the children staring back at me as we drove through the cities and villages. Children without names, without families. I see the baby that I held in my arms who had just been pulled from a pile of burning garbage—thrown away by her family, most likely because they couldn't afford to care for her. She didn't have a name. She hadn't even been given a chance in this world. I think of the face of the girl I stared at from the bus window. She was at an age where she should have been so full of life and hope, but as I stared into her eyes, that is not what I saw. I saw a void. Not despair or sadness like one might expect. I saw pure emptiness as she stood stoically outside our window begging for food, food that I take for granted. I pray that maybe she was one of the street children whom one of the organizations we worked with found later that night or that week. However, I know that even if they found her, there are hundreds more just like her out on the street. I feel helpless as I remember that she is not the only one in that situation.

Being in Uganda shaped the course that my life would take. I may have gone as a 17-year-old, wide-eyed and ready for adventure, but I left broken hearted yet filled with hope knowing that I could make a difference in the lives of people whom the world has cast aside. Six years later, and I am still unable to put into words exactly the emotions I felt, the pain I witnessed, or the joy that I experienced from so many people, people who know that joy is found beyond the circumstances of this life. I have tried countless times, but have determined it cannot be done. The emotions are too deeply seeded, so instead I just feel and remember.

Six years ago, as I stepped out of the plane and onto the tarmac, I took a deep breath of fresh air for the first time in 24 hours. I didn't realize at the moment, but as I inhaled, my life would never be the same from that breath forward. As I took that first deep breath, I was not just breathing in the fresh air. I was breathing in a culture, a nation that would forever change my life. Every breath I took from that point forward in my life would be different. That first breath seemed so insignificant at the time, but will always have a profound impact on my life. My life will never be the same. I have seen life on the other side of the world. That first breath I took was the beginning of a journey, a journey that didn't end when I landed back in the United States later that summer.

No, that journey, or better yet, mission, is one that I will continue for the rest of my life. I am on a mission to bring hope to a dark world, healing to the broken and love to a world of hate. I have not been back to Uganda since that trip, but I have been other places. I have held more abandoned children and cried tears over the unthinkable realities I have seen. Each time I think of the horrors that I have seen though, I have hope. I have hope because I pray and believe that one day I will return to a new breath of fresh air in a country that will change my life once again from that point forward. My mission is only beginning. I will not rest until the whole world knows that there is another world just outside our windows, and it is crying out for help. The world cannot change until we are willing to change it, and that change starts with me.



The Crossing Sign by Brandon Fiume

What Happened on the Ground: My Experience Interning for the 2016 Clinton Campaign

by Harry Olafsen

On July 28, 2016, Hillary Rodham Clinton became the first woman to ever accept the nomination for President of the United States from a major political party. Addressing a packed arena in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, host city of the Democratic National Convention (DNC), she proudly states, “When there are no ceilings, the sky's the limit!” (PBS NewsHour). In that moment, the room was filled with hope and determination, much like Clinton’s campaign as a whole. The arena shook with hope. It felt as though the “highest, hardest glass ceiling” was ready to shatter, and Clinton was destined to be the woman to do it (PBS NewsHour). Luckily, I was able to be a part of this milestone. Over the course of her campaign, I volunteered with multiple women’s groups, and I advocated for United States citizens to elect the first female president. Unfortunately, Clinton did not win. This left almost everyone, especially those who worked for her in some capacity, to ask the question: What happened? Clinton, too, was surprised with the loss, and she addresses these themes in her 2017 book aptly titled *What Happened*. By using my personal experiences from working on her campaign, I will take another approach to analyze what happened on the ground, particularly in Pennsylvania, as compared to what Clinton claims in her bestselling book about the 2016 election.

In her book *Stronger Together: A Blueprint for America’s Future*, co-authored with her candidate for Vice President Tim Kaine, Clinton writes, “It’s unusual to hear a candidate for President say we need more love and kindness in our country—but that’s exactly what we need” (xxi). Therefore, Clinton and Kaine based their platform on the principles of love and kindness to help heal and shape the future of America. This sentiment really became apparent in the political field amongst Clinton campaign staffers and volunteers, such as myself. While her opponent was spewing bigotry and racism, Clinton emanated love and kindness, which her team truly echoed on the streets. Going into the field with love and kindness was crucial to build understanding and empathy with fellow citizens.

Despite the love and kindness Clinton built her campaign on, she still did not win the Office. In *What Happened*, she blames her loss on several factors: the media, Trump’s fear mongering and brutish demeanor, herself, and (mainly) sexism. As the first female presidential nominee, she had both a standard to set for the American public and absurd expectations to meet, just like every other woman in American politics. She explains, “If we’re too tough, we’re unlikable. If we’re too soft, we’re not cut out for the big leagues. If we work too hard, we’re neglecting our families. If we put family first, we’re not serious about the work” (119). In this series of double standards, Clinton shows the tightrope walk women in politics need to tread every single day. Women have to be *everything* in

order to be taken seriously, and perfection is not a skill any human being is good at handling. One of the biggest signs of weakness in politics is crying, yet everyone cries; however, if a woman cries, she is deemed too emotional for the job (123). Clinton recalls a time she cried on stage before the New Hampshire primaries in 2008: “[M]y eyes glistened for a moment and my voice quavered for about one sentence. That was it. It became the biggest news story in America” (123). Although some people saw the positive humanizing effect a slight tear brought to Clinton, most people and news outlets critiqued her for being too emotional, thus connecting it to her gender. Being in politics is very difficult, but being a woman in politics is excruciating. Despite this fact, Clinton has been able to set the prime example for budding leaders to follow.

During one of my favorite assignments, I worked with Emerge America, the nation’s largest organization that trains and promotes Democratic women for public office (emerge.ngpvanhost.com). My task was to bring awareness to the program by handing out brochures, talking with women (and men) about the program, trying to raise donations, and, most importantly, encouraging women to run for public office. As Emerge America reports, it can take a woman approximately seven times to be told to run for office before she even considers the prospect (emerge.ngpvanhost.com). Therefore, I made sure I was diligent on repeating that phrase to persuade women to run for local positions in their respective areas. I clearly remember speaking with a young entrepreneur from the Philadelphia area who wanted to run for her local school board, but she was afraid of public backlash since the incumbent was an old man who had been in the position for years. She had fresh, new, and inventive ideas that could really improve the school board in her area, yet she was timid because of the potential negative press around a woman asserting herself by running for public office. I reassured her that her voice was critical for the area, and I pleaded with her to run. As Clinton writes in *What Happened*, “You’re bringing a vital perspective that would otherwise go unheard” (128-29). Ultimately, the young woman did not run for school board, but she is gearing up to do so as she enrolled in the Emerge America program to teach her the ropes of running and organizing a campaign. I am really hoping that she wins, and I am thrilled that I was able to be a small part in her path to future political success.

When women run for office, many people assume that all women will go out and vote according to gender or sex. However, this is not the case. Clinton reports that “[g]ender hasn’t proven to be the motivating force for women voters that some hope it might be” (128). In fact, Clinton did win the overall female vote (54% versus 41%), but she was not able to grasp the white female vote, falling nine percentage points behind her opponent (“Exit Polls”). This demonstrates that women do not stereotypically vote solely on gender; there are other factors that go into making the final decision. For instance, Clinton writes, “Will we ever have a woman President? We will. I hope I’ll be around to vote for her—assuming I agree with her agenda. She’ll have to earn my vote based on her qualifications and ideas, just like anyone else” (144-45). And, as previously mentioned, women in politics have an even harder path to election than men. Therefore, women truly

earn their votes and give them wisely after much research and deliberation. While white women may have seen Trump as a better candidate, Clinton still won the popular vote by almost three million votes, showing that a woman has the ability to eventually be elected on all of her credentials, not just gender.

Unfortunately, many people still hold the ill-fated belief that a woman is unable to be an effective President. When I was working with Emerge America, I was on the early morning shift for the dissemination of materials at the booth. A fellow female colleague, Leslie, was with me one morning when a disgruntled man came up to the stand. He angrily asked me, "What is this group all about?" I responded that, in fact, Emerge America is a semi-national organization that encourages and promotes Democratic women to enter public office, and he was furious. He was enraged that I, as a man, was supporting women's rights because "that's a woman's-only problem." He then proceeded to get even angrier and throw the materials from the table into my face, screaming that women should not be allowed to be in office because they are "too emotional to handle it." The irony of the situation was not lost on me, and I politely disagreed with him and asked him to leave the booth. In that moment, I was honestly shocked. While I de-escalated the situation quickly, I was appalled that someone could actually still believe that a woman *could not* and *should not* be President. Sadly, I heard that statement many more times during my work with the Clinton campaign, particularly when I was back on campus at Saint Francis University. I clearly remember one of my good friends echoing the same statements as the man from the DNC, and I was both disgusted and disappointed in him. Again, he claimed that women were too emotional and could "start a war very easily." However, looking at the current President's Twitter page, I think he is entirely more emotional and unstable than any candidate from the 2016 election.

Besides working with Emerge America at the DNC, I also was a campaign staffer for Clinton on a very small, local level. When I was home on breaks, I canvassed the local area to gain support, and I attended local Clinton rallies and meetings. Not surprisingly, canvassing is very difficult work, both physically and emotionally. I have had the door slammed in my face more times than I can count, and I have had people say the most outlandish things to me. However, no matter how many doors I knocked on and citizens I spoke with, it was all worth it to me. There were small moments that really stand out from my long days of canvassing, and the most vivid one comes from my very own home. After a particularly grueling eight-hour shift, I got home, threw my bags down, and laid on my bed. My niece, Bella, walked into the room and asked me what was wrong. I told her how badly I wanted Clinton to be the first female President, and I was really discouraged over the responses I received while I was out on the streets. Instantly, Bella inquired, "A girl has never been President? Why?" For the next hour or so, we discussed this upsetting fact in American history (on a four-year-old level), and she instantly became a mini-Clinton supporter. In that moment, I knew that she would grow up to be a strong-minded feminist, and she has not let me down. These are the moments that make all of the hard work worth it. Even though Clinton did not win the election, the discourse around the need for a

female President never goes away. After the election was over, Bella gloomily asked, “Harry, why did Hillary lose? I’m sad.” I responded, “We are all sad right now, and that’s okay. I want you to know that someday, someday very soon, we will have a female President—and it could even be you.” And thanks to Clinton, she understands that this is a real possibility.

On that same day, Clinton gave her concession speech where she stated one of the greatest quotes in American political history: “To all the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve your own dreams” (141). In her book, Clinton credits the inspiration of these lines to Emily Doe, the pseudonym of the young woman who wrote the powerful letter in the Brock Turner rape case (140-41). According to a survey conducted by the CDC concerning rape on college campuses, “An estimated one in five women report being sexually assaulted while in college” (Clinton and Kaine 226). This number is absolutely absurd, yet the public as a whole and the current administration are not doing much to end sexual assault on college campuses. While Clinton had an entire policy dedicated to this area, Trump was allegedly committing sexual assault, as heard on the infamous Access Hollywood tape. However, he was still elected. Many times, survivors of sexual assault are silenced, and their perpetrators are not brought to justice. In *What Happened*, Clinton states, “We tell [men] to believe in themselves, and we tell women to doubt themselves. We tell them this in a million ways starting when they’re young. We’ve got to do better. Every single one of us” (145). One day, that young girl might go to college and be the one-in-five. Although Clinton may not have won, her messages have inspired many people, especially women, to come out about their past cases of assault, despite the current administration’s efforts to cover them up. People do not like talking about this subject because it makes them uncomfortable, but this is a real issue that is damaging millions of Americans in some capacity. We need to have these conversations and pass laws to end campus sexual assault once and for all, and we simultaneously need to raise a generation of girls and boys to understand that “no means no.”

Clinton was speaking about real issues that affect all Americans, but could this have been one of the reasons why she lost? Not only was she speaking openly about ending sexual assault on college campuses, she was also treading controversial waters by advocating for stricter gun laws, racial justice, and anti-police brutality. She writes, “If I had won, we could have made progress toward keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and domestic abusers and making sure fewer parents have to bury their children the way the Mothers of the Movement did” (174). There was a pervasive fear during the election that Clinton was going to literally take away people’s guns; however, during her acceptance speech at the DNC, she states, “I’m not here to take away your guns!” (PBS NewsHour). Yet, people still heard only what they wanted to hear, and false narratives about her intentions plagued her campaign. Trump was supported by the National Rifle Association, whereas Clinton was supported by multiple anti-gun violence groups.

Interestingly enough, most victims of gun violence are black men and women, and they largely voted for Clinton to win the Office (“Exit Polls”). Furthermore, Clinton did not support stricter gun laws because she was trying to solicit voters. In her policy, she asserts, “Gun violence is the leading cause of death for young African American men—more than the next nine leading causes combined. It’s time we do something about the gun violence epidemic that is sweeping across our communities and terrorizing our families” (Clinton and Kaine 204). Throughout her campaign, her plans for achieving this goal were advocating for stricter background checks for gun buyers and owners, limiting the sale of ammunition, closing the gun show loophole, and listening to the individuals who have been affected the most by gun violence: survivors. Therefore, the Mothers of the Movement became great supporters of the Clinton campaign, and Clinton kept her promise of fighting for justice and peace without violence.

With that being said, race and racial justice also became a major concern during the 2016 election. American society has always been inherently racist, and breaking this cycle is and will be very difficult. However, if we do not have these powerful conversations, nothing will change. Therefore, I spent my downtime during my internship with the DNC protesting racial discrimination in the United States. On a blistering summer afternoon, I joined several hundred members of the Black Lives Matter movement for a march from inner-city Philadelphia to City Hall. While one march will not bring an end to racism, it raises awareness for the major issues impacting marginalized communities and opens a dialogue for honest discourse on such an intricate topic. During the march itself, people were conflicted about whether or not Clinton would be able to bring about social *change*. I have always found this word confounding, especially since change is not easy and it takes a lot of time; however, it felt as though many fellow protestors wanted change to come about instantly. When reading *Hard Choices*, Clinton shared a similar feeling, stating, “The yearning for change springs deep in the character of our restless, questing, constantly-reinventing-itself country. That’s part of what makes America great. But we don’t always spend enough time thinking about what it takes to actually make the change we seek” (195). Since racial inequality has been such a pervasive, institutionalized dilemma for so long in the United States, I can understand why people want change to come, and I am right there with them. Fighting over and over for the same cause and feeling like the efforts are wasted is exhausting, yet change will never come if the groundwork for it is not laid. Therefore, I, along with all of those other disheartened American citizens, will keep fighting for change, especially for racial and gender equality.

Following Clinton’s loss, the new theme of the anti-Trump movement can be summed up in one word: resistance. There are bumper stickers, t-shirts, and banners that read, “I am part of the resistance,” adorning cars, chests, and buildings across America. During my internship, I was absolutely confident that Clinton would win, but I was wrong. Like Clinton states, “In short, I thought I’d be a damn good President” (40). I agree with her, and I am now more motivated than ever to make sure her loss is not the end of the movement she helped to start. Since the election, I have attended several marches,

sponsored events with the Blue Stockings Society, and simply created general discourse with other Americans discussing the path of success for the future of the United States. I am convinced that we will see the first female President step into office very soon, and I cannot wait to support her in the same ways I supported Clinton. Working for Clinton's campaign awakened my political fire, and it will not go out any time soon. So, what happened? The system failed us. A media circus encapsulated voters. Clinton discussed real issues that were controversial. She started a movement that will not rest until there is justice in America. And, most importantly, she made me proud to work for her and cast my first-ever Presidential ballot for the first female candidate of a major political party.

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Rush Hour by Erin O'Neill

The Changing World of Technology: How Virtual Reality Will Transform Our Society by Kaitlyn Kitchen

INTRODUCTION

At one point in time, television was seen as state-of-the art technology—an expensive media platform that only few would own. Now, almost every family in the country owns a television. Virtual reality is society’s latest development, and the impact of this technology will completely transform people’s daily lives. Although it is not very popular now, virtual reality will eventually become the next television.

In a virtual reality world, an individual can immerse oneself into a multisensory environment, tuning out reality and becoming fully involved in a brand new area of the world. A user can place oneself in any continent, country, state, or city. An individual has the freedom to do whatever he or she pleases. With this technology, the way people function in everyday society will be completely altered. Although there are still many more years of development needed, virtual reality will affect the way people live, for better and for worse.

HISTORY

The development of photography in the 1800s stems its roots in the world of virtual reality. Throughout the years, innovation in photography sparked new ideas in each generation since the 1800s. After many different cameras were developed, headsets and other photography-viewing devices were created. From there, multisensory devices began to develop, and ever since then, virtual reality has continued to improve.

DEVELOPING THE CONCEPT

The first virtual reality device can be linked to the 1939 View-Master (“History of Virtual Reality” 1). Although some argue that this device is not virtual reality, the underlying idea of the device can be connected to modern virtual technology. The device did not have complicated computer programs, nor did it have a virtual simulation. However, the idea of visually transporting oneself to a different location was created. The View-Master is a stereoscope, which has a similar look of current virtual reality headsets. One would buy a View-Master reel, which contained seven 3-D images, and insert it into the View-Master. The 3-D images typically depicted scenery in beautiful locations or highly toured cities, and the reels were often given out as gifts when a friend or family member visited another part of the world. The idea of the View-Master was to transport oneself to a new place on Earth without physically being present. This idea, essentially, is the goal of virtual reality.

The next development of virtual reality involved the addition of a multisensory environment. In 1956, Morton Heilig, a producer, wanted moviegoers to feel as if they were “in” the movie. His solution to the problem—the Sensorama. This machine, the size of an arcade game, included a built-in headset for an individual to watch a movie, and it also included devices that produced gusts of wind, smells, and vibrations. The Sensorama changed movies from being a visual form of entertainment to a multisensory experience. The concept of the Sensorama, combined with the headset idea of the View-Master, would eventually become what is known as virtual reality.

ENHANCING THE PRODUCT

In 1960, Heilig patented a headset that was called the Telesphere Mask. This was the first-ever head-mounted device. The headset provided 3-D television and sound. This device was essentially the prototype for future virtual reality headsets.

The term *virtual reality* was first used in the 1980s when Jaron Lanier utilized the term in the development of his company Visual Programming Languages (VPL) Research. Lanier and his team created a new wave of technology during this time. Including both hardware and software, this technology was the motivating factor that would influence future virtual technology creators. The company developed several virtual reality instruments, including the DataGlove, a glove that relayed stimuli between the user and the software; the EyePhone, the headset used to display images; and the AudioSphere, a device that created real-life, three-dimensional sounds. These devices are still used today, but with more updates and improvements.

MODERN VIRTUAL REALITY

Virtual reality technology today relies heavily on the research of the past. It was the development of a real-life multisensory experience that sparked the creation of virtual reality. In the last few years, virtual reality devices mainly consist of a headset, with the possible addition of gloves or software. Current virtual reality headsets include the Google Daydream View (\$79), Oculus Rift (\$499), HTC Vive (\$600), Windows Mixed Reality (\$499), and Samsung Gear VR (\$130).

EDUCATION

Technology has become a growing addition to the education system. When the Internet became increasingly popular, the education system was forever changed. With new technology, students could have a more advanced learning environment. Now with Internet technology, students can use computers, tablets, and even cellphones as part of their everyday classroom routines. The Internet is generally seen as a positive impact on the education system. Virtual reality, however, may not have the same effect. Although virtual reality can improve many aspects of education, the advancement of the technology will have difficulty succeeding in classroom environments.

A POSITIVE IMPACT

The use of virtual reality in the education system can have many positive effects on student performance, the main effect being that students could experience more visualizations than ever before, all from a desk in the classroom. With virtual reality technology, students could travel to many different areas of the world to get a deeper look at the environment. They could also be taken back in time to witness the history of an event, such as the Civil War, where they are virtually put in the environment of soldiers hiding in a trench. Students could transport themselves to any environment they please, which results in a better understanding of the environment, concept, or event.

Virtual reality in an educational environment is predicted to increase student engagement in the classroom. Many students find reading from a traditional textbook boring and unexciting. Virtual reality can solve that problem. If a student has the opportunity to feel as if he or she were present in an environment, the interest level in a particular subject may increase. Student engagement typically leads to more knowledge, so virtual reality technology could be the catalyst that some students need to become immersed in the classroom.

THE DOWNSIDE

As appealing as virtual reality may seem, the effects of the technology in the classroom can have a negative impact on education. Engaging students in an environment using virtual reality can allow students to experience parts of the world that they had not yet discovered, but students who become too curious in the unknown may not want to learn the information from a traditional textbook.

Virtual reality can be addictive, and this could lead to isolation and disconnection from the real world “The traditional education is based on personal human communication and interpersonal connections. Virtual reality is quite different; it is you and the software, and nothing else” (Hicks 1). Virtual reality takes away real-life communication. An essential part to education, especially at the elementary level, is human interaction to develop the necessary social skills to function in society. Children exposed to virtual reality at such a young age will never encounter the same amount of social interaction that is of the same level as current children in society.

Figure 1

Source: Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

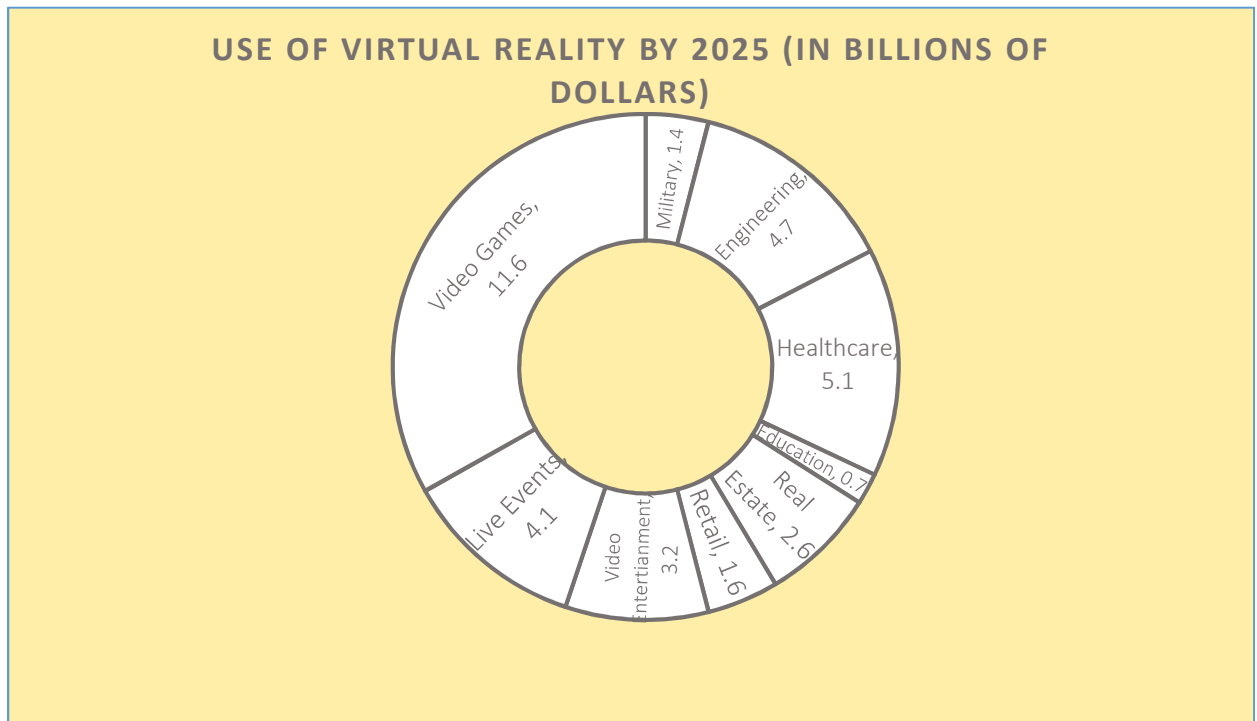


Figure 1 depicts the anticipated amount of spending in each industry on virtual reality technology by 2025. The field of education is predicted to have the lowest amount of spending on virtual reality technology compared to all of the other fields that were studied. This can be linked to the negative effects that virtual reality can have on education. Estimated to be around \$70,000,000, virtual reality spending in schools will be scarce over the next decade.

HEALTHCARE

Virtual reality in the medical field has been growing increasingly. In Figure 1, one can see that healthcare spending on virtual reality is expected to be \$5.1 billion. This amount of spending can make a huge impact on the way that healthcare providers distribute their services. The two most common uses of virtual reality in the medical field currently are in exposure therapy sessions and PTSD recovery. The use of virtual reality has made a major improvement in the results of patient treatment.

EXPOSURE THERAPY

The use of virtual reality during therapy sessions has greatly impacted the results of exposure therapy patients. Exposure therapy is the process in which “the therapist typically guides the patient in imagination to gradually get closer and closer to what it is they fear” (Rizzo 1). Exposure therapy techniques work hand-in-hand with virtual reality technology. The advancement being made in exposure therapy is the added sensory feelings that a patient receives through virtual reality. Instead of just telling a patient to

imagine the environment, the patient can put on the headset and place himself or herself in the actual environment. The patient can see his or her surroundings, feel the textures of objects, and smell the environment. By having patients virtually place themselves in an environment, the therapist can get a better understanding of what the patient is thinking.

Typically, virtual reality is used to help patients get over their fear of heights, driving, flying, spiders, snakes, or other common phobias. For example, an individual who is afraid of heights will put on a virtual reality headset that is programmed to place the patient in an elevator surrounded by windows. The patient will virtually go up the elevator to a higher level during each session until he or she reaches the top. Once reaching the top of the virtual elevator, the patient will then repeat the same process but in an actual elevator. According to psychologist Albert Rizzo, a patient who uses virtual reality loses the irrational fear; thus, the fear becomes less frightening after the patient confronts it (1). This technique has improved results in exposure therapy patients.

TREATING PTSD

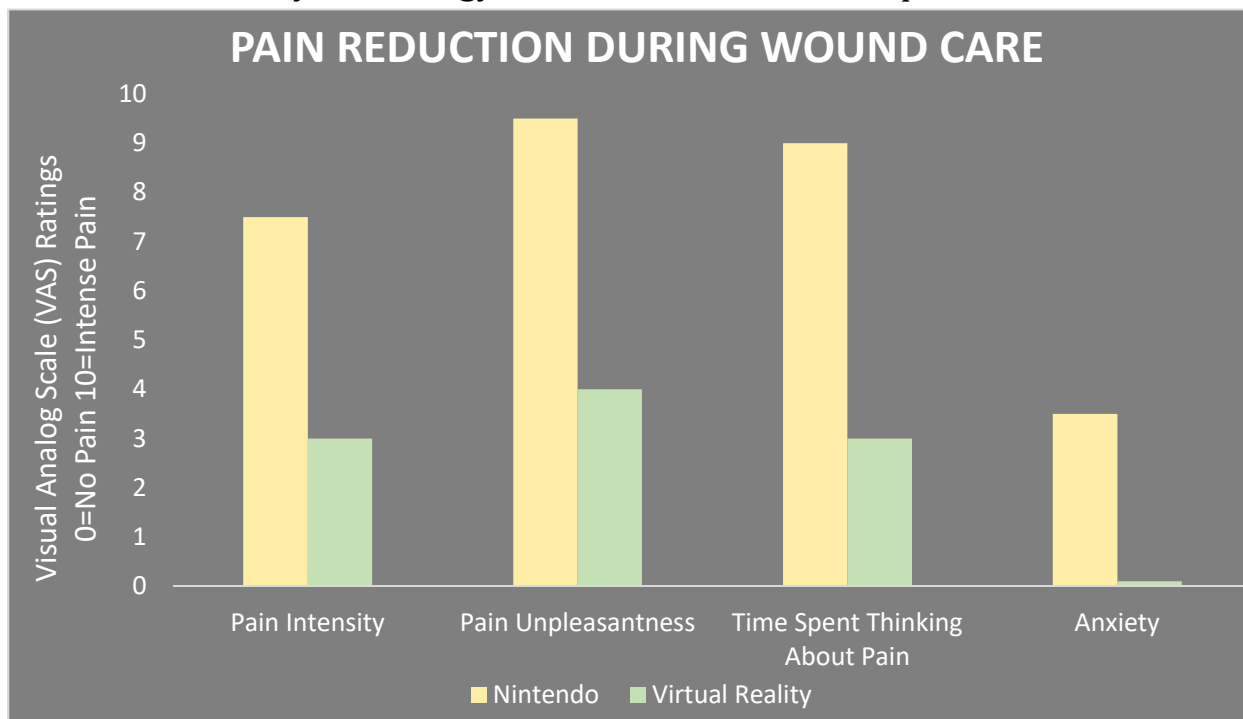
The use of virtual reality in the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) works in a very similar way that it does during exposure therapy. When treating PTSD, the therapist will guide the patient through a virtual reality world that recreates an environment of war. The therapist has the ability to control the time of day, sounds, and other factors. By taking a patient back to the site of trauma, the therapist can hear exactly what thoughts the patient had at the time.

In 1997, Virtual Vietnam made great improvements in the treatment of PTSD. Ten veterans, all suffering from PTSD, volunteered to participate in a study that would use virtual reality technology. After not responding to other treatments, the veterans were hopeful that this technology would be the solution. The patients put on a headset and were transported to a jungle setting, where the therapist then manipulated the environment according to the details each veteran gave of their prior experience. The veterans all showed vast improvement after just one month. Because of this study, virtual reality is now being used to treat people with PTSD, and the results are positive (Parkin 1).

OTHER USES OF VIRTUAL REALITY IN PATIENT TREATMENT

The use of virtual reality spans across many different medical fields, with its use becoming more and more popular. Virtual reality has helped patients cope with pain, whether it be mental or physical. Virtual reality affects many different senses, so patients who are suffering can use virtual reality technology as a distraction from the pain.

Figure 2



Source: University of Washington

In Figure 2, the results of a case study of virtual reality use during treatment of burn victims are shown. Two patients were studied, the results of the second patient being displayed in the Figure 2. The first patient, whose results are not shown, had five staples removed from a skin graft while playing Nintendo and six staples removed while using a virtual reality headset. The first patient had similar results to the second patient, who had severe burns that covered 33 percent of the body. The patients rated his or her pain on a VAS scale—0 being no pain and 10 being intense pain (Hoffman 1). When looking at Figure 2, one can see that virtual reality was effective in reducing pain in the burn victim. This is only one study, however, so the results cannot account for all burn victims. The results, though, are important to note when looking for a coping method to pain during treatment.

The use of virtual reality is growing increasingly popular in the field of occupational therapy as well. There are many benefits to the use of virtual reality in pediatric rehabilitation, the greatest being that children can improve sense, perception, motor skills, cognitive skills, and social skills (Aran 184). The use of virtual reality can be seen as “play”

for children, which makes them more responsive to the technology. Children who have a fear of social interaction can use virtual reality to get over their fears. Multi-user ability is also an added benefit to virtual reality. Children can use virtual reality to interact with other children who use virtual reality in the same room. Parents can also use virtual reality to connect with their children, which can be an added benefit to group therapy sessions.

The downside to using virtual reality in pediatric rehabilitation is that children can become addicted to the technology, which would then lead to isolation and an even larger disconnect from society. Using virtual reality can improve many skills, but these skills must also be applied to real-life situations. Children who constantly use virtual reality without application to real-world situations can do more damage than good. Virtual reality is also very expensive, which makes it hard for companies to incorporate the technology in rehabilitation: "Current virtual reality systems like Interactive Rehabilitation Exercise System (IREX) are also too expensive for the majority of the population" (Aran 184). Not only is virtual reality expensive for companies to afford, but average consumers cannot afford the technology either.

CONCLUSION

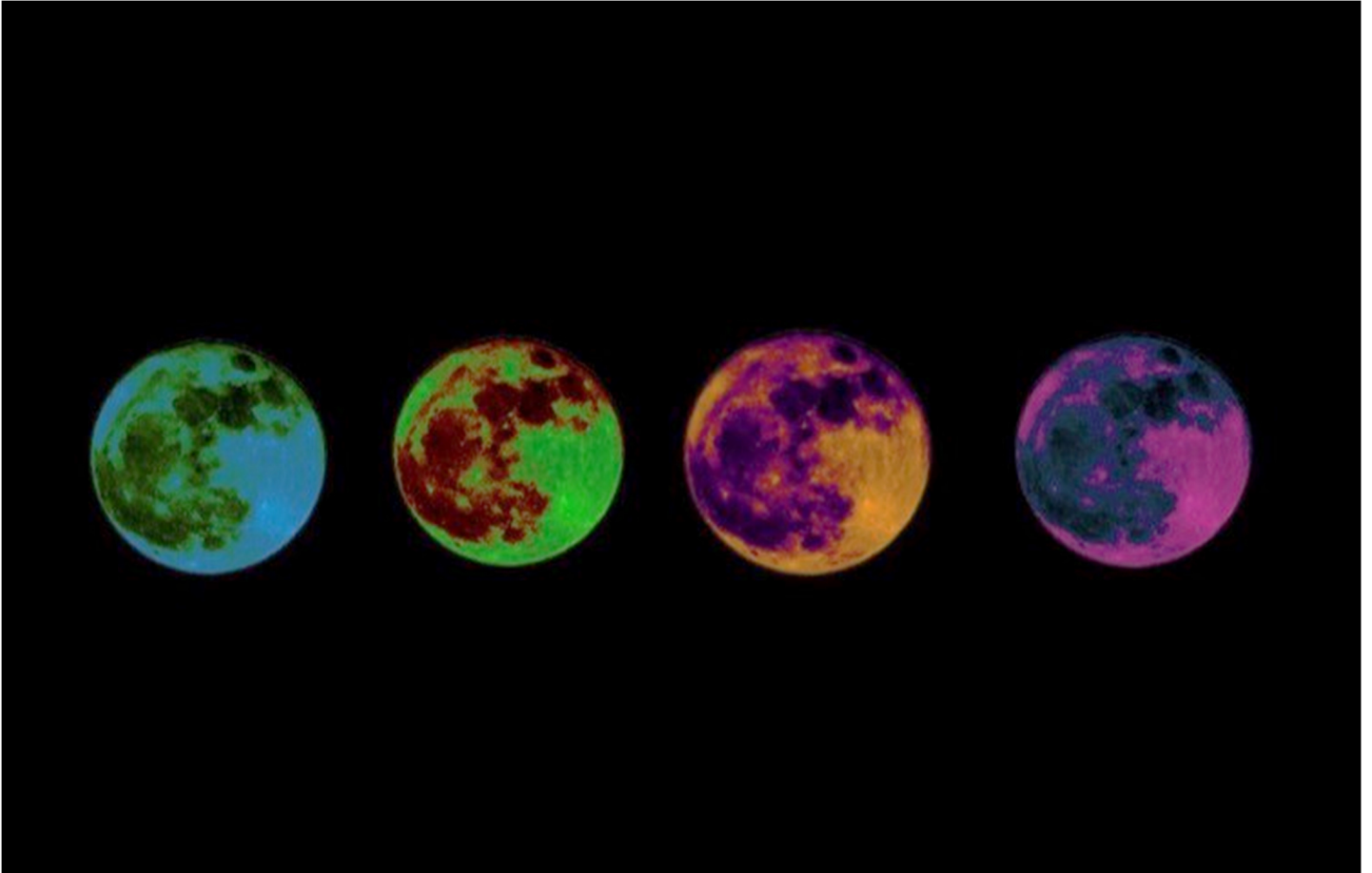
Virtual reality is going to consume our society, and the way people live will forever be changed. As with any technology, there are both benefits and drawbacks to using virtual reality. In education, virtual reality can greatly enhance student performance, as well as increase curiosity and interest in the classroom. However, virtual reality can disconnect students from real life. As currently seen with cell phones, students can become so addicted to the technology that human interaction becomes minimal. Major improvements are being made in the medical field, where virtual reality is being used to help people face their fears. Virtual reality is also being used to treat PTSD victims, as well as being used as a distraction from pain. In pediatric rehabilitation, virtual reality is helping children improve many important life skills. A drawback to virtual reality is that the technology and systems are still expensive, so most companies and individuals cannot afford it. As with television, when virtual reality develops even further, the impact on society will be huge. Virtual reality is not highly used in current society, but with further development, virtual reality will eventually become the new television.

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Phases of the Moon by Jillian Scott

Advertising and Ethics: A Renegade Relationship by Jarrod Piper

1st Place Winner

Leo Burnett, one of America's most influential advertising executives, emphasized that "Good advertising does not just circulate information; it penetrates the public mind with desires and belief." This statement is especially true in locations where ideals of perfection and affluence pervade logical thinking. In the United States, consumers strive to emulate those individuals with particularly opulent tastes and align their purchasing patterns with the status quo. Evidently, advertising agencies hold tremendous power over consumers; they can leverage their visually-appealing campaigns to drive sales and promote loyalty to certain brands. Unfortunately, some entities abuse this power; a single incendiary aspect of modern society skews both the moral and ethical thoughts of agencies and their clients. Greed alters marketers' perceptions of truth and authenticity, resulting in unconscionable advertising initiatives.

The proliferation of technology has resulted in a plethora of digital advancement, especially in terms of software programs. Photoshop, which is utilized in a variety of photography- and design-based disciplines, is at the vanguard of advertising controversy. Major cosmetics companies, including CoverGirl®, Lancôme Paris, and Maybelline New York, have been accused of using excessive photoshopping in advertisements (Swinson). A prime example is a recent print advertisement created by CoverGirl® for its NatureLuxe Mousse Mascara and endorsed by country music icon Taylor Swift. Soon after the ad was published, The National Advertising Division (NAD) requested that it be removed from Proctor & Gamble's print media spots. The NAD argued that "the mascara, as shown in the ad, has two times more volume vs. bare lashes," which is unattainable without digital modifications (Hunter-Lopez). Rather than focus on the genuine beauty of everyday women, these cosmetics companies partner with advertising agencies that cheapen and objectify physical features.

In addition to print mediums, these types of false advertisements largely permeate social media outlets, which have garnered increased popularity with younger women. When young girls enter the world of social media, they are instantly overwhelmed with advertisements flaunting the "perfect" appearance. For some, this may cause severe mental and physical health issues, including depression and bulimia (Swinson). The extravagant use of Photoshop in advertising continues to plant feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy in young women. Young men are also negatively impacted by the unrealistic physical standards that modern advertising exudes. Owing to the appreciable number of cases surrounding Photoshop's misuse, some individuals and groups are campaigning and calling for legislation to ameliorate the issue.

As former CMO of Live Nation, a California-based concert and ticketing venue, Seth Matlins aims to expose Photoshop's excessive misuse in advertising. He is primarily concerned with the digital manipulations of a model's "shape, size proportion or removal or enhancement of features" (Weissman). These types of changes can be detrimental to a consumer's psyche and overall mental health; he or she develops an unhealthy desire to mirror the model. If a person is consistently unhappy with his or her appearance, the individual may try any type of operation, procedure, or drug to create a more "perfect" appearance. Should a multitude of people adopt this same type of distorted logical reasoning, mortality rates could potentially increase, especially suicide. Despite all of these dangers, advertising agencies continue to manipulate consumers' perceptions for the sole purpose of increasing profit. Some marketing executives may be more concerned with job security rather than the physical and psychological well-being of the nation's most vulnerable demographic: young adults.

While Photoshop has envenomed the mental health of consumers, another type of software has been exploited to mask human imperfection. In the music industry, recording artists and producers are constantly vying and competing to produce the next popular, chart-topping hit. Enter auto-tune, a dynamic audio correction tool that digitally alters artists' vocals to make them sound pitch-perfect. The software is utilized by many of music's most prominent modern performers, including Cher, Kanye West, Britney Spears, and Rihanna (Prisco and Stewart). While auto-tune enables artists and record companies to synthesize and alter acclaimed, high-grossing tracks, certain individuals are cheated. By masking human imperfection, especially in such a cutthroat industry, auto-tune negates the need for true talent. For example, suppose a rather off-key and shaky singer is offered a recording contract because of personal connections and auto-tune's ability to perfect his or her voice. Someone with similar career aspirations may be denied a contract despite his or her ability to hit lows, mids, and highs effortlessly without using auto-tune. As a result, a greater number of talented people may be discouraged from pursuing and succeeding as artists. Furthermore, in many cases, auto-tune exploits consumers by offering a product (perfect singing) that does not exist. Someone might enjoy an artist's song, purchase it from iTunes, and then purchase tickets to see the artist live in concert. However, soon after entering the venue, the consumer realizes that the artist sounds nothing like the digital rendition. The consumer is somewhat defrauded; a non-existent product was advertised, and the consumer gets no return on the investment. Greed motivated the artist and/or the producers to fabricate a false image and knowingly cheat consumers out of their hard-earned money.

This same type of false advertising is exceedingly evident in other industries as well. For example, certain types of advertising are restricting consumers to the idea that there is only one type of beauty, and it can be achieved only by celebrities. Endorsements are extremely powerful tools in the marketplace; they allow consumers to identify with a certain personality that connects them to a parent brand. Both the advertising agency and client hope that this connection will form a lasting buyer-seller relationship and spark an

increase in sales. For example, in 2008, television chef personality Rachael Ray signed a contract with Dunkin' Donuts to advertise the company's iced coffee in a commercial. Shortly after airing the advertisement, certain groups became enraged with one of Rachael's fashion accessories: a black-and-white scarf. Some viewers believed the scarf was actually a jihadi keffiyeh, which is popular in the Middle East. Dunkin' Donuts and Rachael Ray were accused of supporting terrorism, which degraded the images of both parties. In response, Dunkin' Donuts released the following statement to eradicate the misinterpretation: "Rachael Ray is wearing a black-and-white silk scarf with a paisley design . . . absolutely no symbolism was intended" (Bukspan). From a consumer's perspective, a celebrity endorsement can result in poor purchasing decisions, misunderstandings, and general vexation. In fact, some celebrity endorsements are completely fictional and advertised without the celebrity's consent.

Recently, singer-songwriter Adele and fashion maven Victoria Beckham were shown endorsing the Raspberry Ketone diet, a program with which neither star was affiliated. Inevitably, the endorsements captured the attention of public relations, media, and consumers. Even though these advertisements were a scam—and the product resulted in no health benefits whatsoever—consumers swarmed at the opportunity to imitate the two celebrities. In addition, even in those instances where celebrities agree to endorse a product, it is done so for one reason only: increased revenue. Foods that are particularly high in calories and sugar are endorsed by well-known individuals, which could potentially decrease the nation's overall physical health. In reality, "celebrities often have teams of nutritionists and trainers to keep them eating right, healthy, and fit" (Lee). So, why would these celebrities support unhealthy consumption habits? Their greed-centric empires convince them to overlook the ethical implications that result, effectively destroying the smaller empires that support them.

Nonexistent health advantages are becoming increasingly prevalent in other advertising mediums as well. Dannon's Activia yogurt was recently criticized for falsely representing the health benefits associated with the product's consumption. According to the original product packaging, Dannon advertised the yogurt as "scientifically proven to boost the immune system," when, in reality, no scientific evidence confirmed the product's health advantages. Following a consumer lawsuit, Dannon was fined \$45 million for damages and required to revise the packaging. In this example, a company's greed motivated it to unethically coax consumers into buying an inaccurate product. Red Bull faced a similar dilemma in 2014, owing to its claim that the energy drink could heighten both reaction and concentration. Beganin Caraethers, a Red Bull consumer, alleged that he experienced no enhancement physically or mentally. Finally, cereal giant Kellogg attempted to convince consumers that Rice Krispies and Mini-Wheats could improve a person's immune system and intellectual ability, respectively. Rice Krispies's advertising was targeted toward health-conscious parents; sales would likely spike if the cereal had child-centric benefits. Also focusing on children, the advertisements for Mini-Wheats noted a general increase in overall cognition and memory after consumption. The Federal

Trade Commission mandated that Kellogg reimburse consumers for consumer mistreatment (Heilpern). All three of the aforementioned companies played upon consumers' naiveté for the sole purpose of generating revenue. At the time, none of these food companies seemed to care whether consumers were exploited—at least not until lawsuits were filed and they were forced to pay.

In addition to consumables companies, inaccurate packaging has also bled into the clothing industry. In 2016, Macy's, Sears, and Amazon.com were charged by the FTC for breaching the Textile Products Identification Act in the advertising of bamboo-based products. According to the original product descriptions, the clothing was supposedly produced using environmentally-friendly bamboo. However, after analyzing the products' chemical compositions, the FTC reported the use of toxic chemicals in the production phase. Rayon, which generates harmful chemical byproducts, was deemed the actual base of the products. Despite the harmful effects on consumers, the three companies did not revise any advertisements until the culmination of the settlements (Frohlich and Calio). Even though they were in the midst of explosive lawsuits, the companies felt no qualms about continuing their practices of consumer deception and endangerment.

Similar product features controversies have also crept into the technology industry, resulting in consumer backlash and frustration. In 2012, Nokia, a Finland-based smartphone company, released the Lumia 920, its newest flagship handset. Made popular by its cameos in CBS's television series *Hawaii Five-0*, the Lumia 920 featured groundbreaking optical technologies, including advanced optical image stabilization (OIS). OIS steadies the device's camera, enabling a photographer to capture crystal-clear pictures. This particular product feature was showcased in a television commercial. In the scene, a boy is filming a girl with the Lumia 920 while simultaneously riding a bike. Upon further review, in one of the frames, the reflection of a professional cameraman and crew can be seen filming the girl. As the number of video impressions increased, consumer backlash toward Nokia multiplied. A few days later, Nokia issued a formal apology admitting that it "produced a video that *simulates* what we will be able to deliver with OIS" (Warren; emphasis added). Regardless of Nokia's apology, the company intentionally deceived consumers about the Lumia 920's actual technological capabilities. Nokia either ignored or refused to discern the advertisement's ethical implications; the primary objective seemed to be an influx of sales, no matter the cost to consumers. If every company acted in this way, society would be completely devoid of trust; no one would be able to perceive what is right versus what is wrong. Some companies need to recognize that ethics are vital to the proper execution of advertisements and sensible collection of revenue. In fact, revenue in pricing is yet another area where many companies disappoint in terms of ethics.

Especially common during Black Friday, companies slash original prices in an effort to drive sales and increase foot traffic. However, many of these "sales" are actually pre-inflated prices; in some cases, consumers are paying more than the original price for some products. This practice, known as "price anchoring," has been used by some of the most

prominent retail chains, including Kohl's and JCPenney. Bloomingdale's and Macy's have come under fire with similar allegations, including the utilization of "phantom markdowns." According to *Time Magazine*, "they represented that the listed or original price was two or more times the MSRP, and then offered the item at a purported 50% or more discount price which was in fact the original MSRP" (Tuttle). This process causes difficulty for consumers when attempting to determine the true monetary value of an item. If a shopper has no remote idea as to an item's actual price, he/she could be excessively overcharged. Unfortunately, some companies seem to care less about the financial stability of their customers than they do about their own profits. Perhaps a result of this acute apathy, Sears, Macy's, and J.C. Penney are experiencing financial difficulties, and a concerning number of retail locations are closing (Tuttle).

Physical retail is not the only industry manipulating consumers; online pricing scandals are also on the rise. Amazon has recently been accused of using "deceptive" pricing, according to the advocacy group Consumer Watchdog. According to the latter organization, Amazon has been fabricating "original," "sale," and "was" prices in an attempt to deceive users into thinking that they are buying products at discounted prices. After analyzing approximately one thousand prices, Consumer Watchdog noted that the previous prices do not accurately convey the true value of the items. Similar to JCPenney, consumers are completely unaware of an item's true worth, which can prove problematic when making informed purchasing decisions. Delving deeper into Consumer Watchdog's report, we find that Amazon supposedly raised reference prices above more than half the manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP). Some products were never listed at the original price within the past ninety days, indicating that Amazon likely tampered with the true value of certain products (Picchi). Convincing a large number of people to unknowingly purchase products with exorbitant markups is extremely unethical. Should the FTC deem Amazon's pricing inaccurate, some consumers may complete transactions at other e-commerce websites, which would be detrimental to Amazon's profits and public image. In effect, Amazon's insatiable greed could potentially consume the company entirely.

Some companies and/or advertising agencies may believe that these types of advertising methods are necessary and inevitable. To some, utilizing Photoshop, false advertising, and altered pricing are effective ways to capture the attention of multiple market segmentations. In other words, consumers would not purchase a certain lipstick if a model or celebrity was not sporting it. Similarly, if Photoshop was not used to perfect the spokesperson, the brand would elicit negative or cheap connotations. If a brand wants to demand the consideration of and to persuade consumers, the advertising must be explosive, innovative, and aesthetically-pleasing. However, a stark difference exists between persuasion and manipulation.

Consumers can be divided into two main groups: passive and active. Passive consumers are more likely to be manipulated by a particular advertisement while an active consumer is likely to be more questioning and skeptical (Sheehan 27). If an agency

wants to effectively advertise to consumers, it must first consider the implications of the techniques used. Owing to the fact that passive consumers can be more easily manipulated, they likely would not notice unethical advertising practices. Active consumers, however, would likely question and look beyond the enticing pictures and clever slogans; these people want to know why they should purchase a particular item. In these situations, an active consumer may research the company, including its mission statement, overview, primary functions, and, especially, its corporate social responsibility. A prospective customer may regard the company's values and beliefs as the most pertinent information. One of these perceptive individuals is Tricia McFadden, a previous marketing and advertising specialist with ten years of experiential knowledge. In her personal consumption habits, McFadden first examines a company's impact on society and the social initiatives undertaken. This valuable information enables her to formulate a more accurate perception of the company's marketplace status and societal acclamation. In terms of using Photoshop to digitally modify advertisements, McFadden concedes that it "is an amazing tool and creative outlet, but advertisers must understand the ethical implications and use it accordingly." Therefore, unethical advertising methods are not necessary to cultivate meaningful relationships with consumers. The inevitability of unethical advertising is the backlash the agency will likely face from consumers.

Some advertising agencies may try to rationalize their unethical and greed-centric practices by maintaining an idea of non-responsibility. In other words, they are not responsible for how consumers react to the advertisements produced. Whether a person becomes offended and denounces the company's products or becomes elated and purchases an entire line, the advertising agencies claim no responsibility. Unfortunately, the idea of living in a blameless society is illusory and likely impossible to achieve. In today's world, very few people seem to take responsibility for their actions, especially those entities with particular influence on society as a whole. Role models are a key aspect to any society; they allow younger generations to gain a more developed understanding of and appreciation for ethical practices. However, when companies and advertising agencies do not take responsibility for their actions, it communicates a rather treacherous idea to future leaders. If no one claimed responsibility and did not attempt to fix the resulting issues, the world would likely experience a severe version of anarchy. "In a free market economy . . . ethical role models could potentially enhance the moral standing and effectiveness of self-regulation" (Spence et al. 1999). This statement is key to understanding the strategic position of advertising agencies; they could enhance modern perceptions of ethics. Rather than focusing on hiding human imperfections, advertising agencies could embrace the unique differences among everyday people. Randy Frye, a professor with years of marketing and consulting experience and Dean of the Saint Francis University School of Business, emphasizes that companies are responsible for the messages they distribute. Frye also supports the idea that, when a company's main objective is to exploit consumers, the company is at fault and responsible for any repercussions that result from the exploitation.

Ultimately, much of modern advertising is motivated by greed and the desire to accumulate wealth; consumers' satisfaction is no longer a top priority. Some advertising agencies deliberately manipulate consumers with digital modifications, false claims and conflicting endorsements, and deceptive pricing strategies. When prompted to consider the ethical implications of these methods, companies and ad agencies excuse their unscrupulous actions and refuse responsibility. However, some consumers are more perceptive and incisive than these companies would like to believe. In those cases where consumers are unknowingly manipulated, the blame rests on the entity executing the false advertising. For some companies, ethics and advertising are renegades; hopefully, this provides some helpful relationship advice for future advertising leaders.

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Concrete Jungle by Rachel Kelly

Shall We Play by Shay Boisvert

A standing ovation greeted the young prima ballerina. The *pointe* number Lyla Primrose just completed had apparently been more than enough to please the crowd. With her arms outstretched towards marbled ceilings, she dipped into an elegant curtsy. She rose, at the protest of her bloody toes, and slowly walked away from the almost blindly bright spotlight. All the while, she kept her face focused on the crowd, continuing to smile.

She couldn't help but focus on specific members, one being an older man who appeared to be recording the whole thing on his phone, another a handsome red-headed man with particularly lovely green eyes. Regrettably, he had an even prettier woman on his arm. Lyla realized that this wasn't helping when she almost tripped over the ribbon from her shoe, and she went back to just smiling and focusing her effort on achieving a graceful exit.

After a mere minute, the ballerina was out of the audience's view.

Immediately, she grimaced and limped to her nearby dressing room.

Once the dancer opened the door, she walked inside the cramped room. She heard the insistent chatter of the other dancers.

Do they ever shut up? she thought. How could they possibly have so much energy after a performance such as *Swan Lake*?

Closing the door, she finally let out a sigh. After months of doing the same dance, it was finally starting to bore her.

Relevé

Piqué

Relevé

Piqué

Over and over... it truly got tiring after time. With a frustrated yell, she collapsed against the door and sat down for several minutes, thinking.

Her frustration was interrupted by a severe knock at the door.

"Ms. Primrose, do you mind if I speak with you for a moment? I swear I will not take up much of your time." It was clearly the voice of an older man. He seemed to be rather impatient, for his words were clipped and his tone rushed. She wondered if it was the man who recorded her. Lyla wanted to tell him to go away but her director had told her she was too rude with fans. Her director could be quite overbearing, so she decided it'd be best not to ignore the man.

“Are you here for an autograph? An interview?” she asked.

“Well, not exactly, Ms. Primrose. I have a note for you, and it is urgent. I’m required to deliver it to you face to face, so please open the door, Ms. Primrose.”

She had received plenty of letters and notes before, but the man’s tone gave Lyla chills. Why would a letter need to be delivered “face to face”? She was a young and pretty dancer; what if the man meant to harm her? She thought about telling him to go away but remembered the words of her director,

“You are too cold, Lyla. If I hear of you upsetting another fan, don’t think I wouldn’t replace you with someone more... charming.”

Lyla shuddered at the thought. She sent half her paycheck to her family, and it was enough to get their food and to give her sisters a decent Christmas. Before her promotion to prima ballerina she hadn’t made enough to support them in that way. To turn away this fan was a risk she couldn’t take.

Cautiously, she opened the door and was pleasantly surprised by what she saw. In front of her stood a middle-aged man in a pressed suit with a neatly clipped beard.

“I’m very tired, sir, so I will just take the letter and return to my room,” she said.

“Ms. Prim-”

“Please call me Lyla,” she said. Lyla hoped her director was nearby to watch her be so pleasant.

“Perhaps, *Lyla*, you should get rest instead of sitting behind the door lost in thought then. I wouldn’t really classify that as ‘sleep.’”

“Just give me the damn note,” Lyla said. She instantly regretted her word-choice; now she hoped her director was far, far away.

“If you wish. Good luck and goodnight, Ms. Lyla Primrose,” the man whispered, handed her note, and walked away.

As the man disappeared, Lyla realized how strange that interaction was. How did the man know that she was collapsed against the door? More importantly, why did he wish her “good luck”?

“Perhaps, it’s some silly trick. Maybe I’m on some reality show,” Lyla whispered, eyeing the letter.

The envelope was a deep red, and there was no return address. Golden script read, “Read me.”

Something about the instruction bothered Lyla, and she started to feel a bit unnerved. She flipped to the back of the letter to find more neat writing, stating, “Too slow. Care to be a bit faster?”

“What the hell?” Lyla exclaimed.

Her hands shook as she ripped open the letter.

Inside was an intricately folded piece of paper. Lyla carefully unfolded it. Then she began to read the handwritten note.

“Good Evening, Lyla.

Put aside your confusion and trust me, as there is a more important matter at hand. By opening this letter, you have joined my game. Perhaps you’ll enjoy it. After all, games are fun, aren’t they? There is only one goal of this game: to win. You can do so by any means possible. The winner will get a spectacular reward. However, the loser will get. . . well, you’ll see if you lose. The game is a grand chess match. This letter was the first move.

Time for you to make the next one.

E6.”

The letter fell from Lyla’s fingertips. “A game? This is a terrible joke.” Lyla said aloud, kind of hoping for a confirmation that it was indeed that—a joke. She grabbed the note from the floor and realized that there was some writing on the back. Lyla was unsure if she wanted to read the back, but she was also rather... exhilarated. Finally, she was doing something different and new, rather than the same positions, day after day, show after show. Lyla secretly liked the feeling, and she didn’t want to see it go to waste.

She flipped over the letter. On the back were two sentences:

“I knew you’d play. It’s your move.”

Lyla was starting to get over the shock of the paper knowing what she would respond. She took out a pen. “E6” was a chess position. She used to play with her grandfather so she knew. Lyla carefully wrote, “D5”.

Nothing happened.

Impatiently, she sat down and waited. Something had to happen. Six minutes later, there was a knock at the door. Lyla hurried to the door and swung it open. However, she was not greeted by the same hallway.

On the other side of the door was a sterile white room. In the center were polished marble chairs and a table. In the center, a chessboard, the pieces already set up. Sitting in one of the chairs was a person that she couldn’t quite make out.

Lyla gaped. There was no way this could be real, was there? She slammed the door and opened it again, thinking that her eyes might have been playing a trick on her. Lyla opened the door again and the room was still there. Nothing had changed.

She walked in slowly, closing the door behind her, slowly inching towards the table. Towards the stranger. As she got closer, she noticed it was a young woman, with a very smooth face and grey, piercing eyes.

"Huh, she looks a bit like..." Lyla started to say before she realized something. The woman was her. Her legs began to shake and she froze in the center of the room. The woman had all the same features as Lyla, including the exact same costume.

"Come closer... shall we play?" the duplicate said. It grinned as it stood up and pulled out a chair for Lyla.

"Call me whatever you want. Perhaps Akuma? I've always liked that one."

Lyla was still shocked by this clone of herself. She turned to leave, but there was no longer a door. She had no choice but to play. She sat down and decided that she had to uncover the truth. "W-What are you?" she asked.

"Are you blind? I'm you," it replied.

"That is impossible."

"Haven't you ever considered that everyone has a double? One that knows every single action you'll ever take, and every single action that you have ever done? We can keep talking, but first I'll make my move. Pawn to F3." It moved the piece forward.

Lyla began to speak again. "If you know every move that I am going to make, then how can I win?"

"That is the fun of the game," it replied.

Lyla remained silent. Tears fell down her cheek as she stared at the board.

"Earth to Lyla? Akuma speaking, you are quite slow. Make a move," it said.

Lyla took a deep breath and began to play once more. "Knight to C6."

A wide grin spread across the duplicate's face. "Splendid! Knight to C3."

Lyla considered her moves as it sat there. She watched as it fingered a black pawn, waiting for her to decide. Underneath the table, Lyla's feet shuffled nervously, but she tried to keep her expression passive.

It sighed, "You're going to say F1, Lyla."

Lyla grinned. "Wrong, I'm going to say—"

"Pawn to F5," it interrupted.

That was when Lyla understood just how difficult this challenge would be.

****One Hour Later****

"P-Pawn to F5," Lyla said.

"Pawn to G4," it replied.

Lyla thought maybe she could distract it with conversation. "So, how were you creat—"

"I'm not listening," it said.

"But don't know all my thoug—"

"I do. However, I'm ignoring any thoughts that have nothing to do with the chess game. Go on, please," it said.

Playing this game was like resting in a house while a gale raged outside. Lyla's mother always said the root of all fears, was the "fear of need" and our task was to meet this fear with the same resistance a rock shows to wind. That the resolved person lets fear blow around them and remains resolute in the will to succeed. Lyla resolved herself to escape this terrible match.

"What if I don't play?" she asked.

"Then we sit here, and I get very upset. Also, you can't exactly leave. I know you noticed that there no longer is a door."

Lyla opened her mouth and began—

"No there aren't any other exits," it replied.

Defeated, Lyla said, "Pawn to E4."

"I say Pawn to E4 as well."

"B—" Lyla's next move was interrupted by a scream from Akuma.

"You bore me," it said.

That comment was so out of the blue that Lyla just stared at Akuma open mouthed. Her brain formulated no thoughts other than to register that she was shocked. She closed her mouth, then looked at her toes before glancing back up to catch its eye. "What? I'm playing the game," was all she could think to say.

"Well, this game no longer interests me. It takes too long and there is nothing to occupy me while you think of moves. So, let's spice it up, shall we?" Akuma said. It snapped its fingers and the chess board disappeared. The room collapsed around her as the ceiling flew above.

Lyla still thought this was very strange, but she was starting to get used to the oddness.

The rest of the room continued to be deconstructed as the chairs simply disintegrated. Lyla stood up as Akuma did as well, laughing hysterically.

"God, you're going to love this. Now, make your move," it said.

"How the hell am I supposed to without the board?"

"Memory. Mine is only as good as yours; so this should be fun."

The room had finally disappeared to reveal a new location. They were on the top of a moving train, along a mountainside. Akuma laughed even harder when it saw Lyla's expression. "Well, make your move!"

"Um... Pawn to G4?"

"Good choice. Knight to D5," it decided.

The train accelerated as they spoke. Lyla knew that if she stayed on this train much longer, she would surely die. As she understood that the track eventually would end. Lyla fled to the side of the train when she collapsed, her head sticking out the right side of the train. Below was an abyss; she knew she would not be able to survive the fall.

Akuma came up behind her. "How many times do we have to keep doing this, Lyla? Make. Your. Move."

"Pawn to A... 5," Lyla said.

Akuma pulled Lyla back up to her feet. "Pawn to D3."

Lyla wanted to scream. "Just leave me alone. I'm just a dancer that wants to live her life, not deal with this bullshit. I have my family to support."

"Oh, but I thought you were tired of dancing *Swan Lake*? Doing the same moves, over and over? Crushing your toes as the audience pities you," it mocked.

Lyla got incredibly defensive, very quickly. "People love my performances."

"Love how hilariously terrible they are, sure. Have you ever noticed the snickers hidden among the claps? The lack of flowers in your dressing room? Your understudy receives more attention than you."

"Shut up! Shut up! SHUT UP!" Lyla was absolutely teeming with rage and anger. One more comment, and that would push her over the line.

"Hey, guess what, Lyla? I think you've made another mistake. This one might just be quite magical." Akuma waved its hands, and a discarded doll appeared. It was the gift she got for her daughter she gave up for adoption, when her fifth birthday passed last week.

That one set Lyla off.

She charged straight ahead for Akuma, yelling and swearing the whole time. It waved her attack off, laughing.

"You've been so caught up in this that you haven't even realized that this train is about to drive off a cliff. See you later, deadbeat!"

As Akuma disappeared from the train, Lyla felt as the train went off of the ground and started diving into the abyss below. She started falling down into the area, dropping faster and faster with every second. Lyla watched as her body impacted the ground. Heard her bones shattering, before finally hearing nothing.

Slowly and reluctantly, Lyla uncovered her face. She blinked, closed her eyes, and blinked again. Streaks of sunlight penetrated the window and blinded her. She sat up, dragged her feet off the bed, and rubbed her knuckles across her blood-shot eyes. Stretching her arms far above her head, she watched her legs dangle above the off-white polyester carpet. A knock disturbed her relative tranquility.

“Who is it?”

“James, dear,” said a deep voice.

Lyla smiled as she opened the door and let her husband through the door. He looked lovely with his sleek black hair. She could smell the breakfast he prepared—eggs and bacon. He always knew her favorites. He made her forget all about her nightmares.

“How was the show last night? I am sorry I couldn’t make it.”

“I-It went well. The audience seemed to enjoy it quite a bit. My feet are sore, though.”

In that moment, Lyla realized something: She didn’t have a husband.

James grinned and his hands twisted grotesquely. “They probably loved all of the mistakes you made. Did you hear them whispering that you don’t deserve your position? Wondering if you slept with the director?”

Lyla watched in horror as James’s face disintegrated, his brown eyes falling out, and his skin tearing off to reveal his organs, completely changing and mutating into different shapes and sizes. Blood leaked out from everywhere, and Lyla thought she might faint. After a few moments, Lyla saw the skin reforming into the old familiar face it was. Her face.

“So, I saw you unabashedly stare at a man who looked just like this. Thought it would be a good choice,” Akuma grinned as Lyla stared in disgust and awe, and then continued. “Oh, stop. We have a game to finish, after all. This time, I’ll even give you the board back.”

The bedroom quickly fell apart to change back into the marble room. However, this time, something was different. There was a ledge where her chair used to be, a large black abyss nipping at the bottom.

“W-What is with that?” Lyla said.

“Oh, that’s an easy explanation. You considered this a dream previously, but it is rather obvious that this is just the breakdown of your mental psyche,” it said.

“W-What?” Lyla replied.

“Come on, the stress and the boredom of your career was getting to you, and you know it. I knew you were a mediocre dancer because you already knew that yourself. You merely suppressed the memory, trying as hard as you could to forget.” It laughed.

“So? Pawn to H5,” Lyla said.

“Oh, not ready to give in, are you? All right, let us finish this. Bishop to G5.” Akuma sat back down in the chair as the bishop moved across the board. Lyla stood uneasily on the stone ledge.

“Stop avoiding my questions. What do you mean by ‘breakdown’? Pawn to E6,” Lyla said.

She tried to seem calm and collected but her slender fingers pressed into the skin of her forearms, nails biting in the layer of fine dust, drawing beads of blood. Lyla’s whole body shook, bones rattling in the constant fear of the future that loomed before her. Heart pounding so hard that she believed Akuma could hear it across the board.

“Well, you reached the breaking point. Your mind, deteriorating faster and faster, is hallucinating left and right. So, when you fell off that train and passed out, feeling incredible pain, you probably just wandered off and fell down a flight of stairs. Bishop to D8,” it answered.

“N-No, I was there. It was real. The train—”

“Lyla, look at me. I am you. Exactly you. I know everything you know. How could I possibly exist?” it interrupted.

Lyla said nothing and bowed her head.

Upon seeing Lyla would not answer, Akuma continued, “Your reality is crumbling because you are accepting your inevitable fate. Don’t you have anything to say, Lyla?”

She slowly lifted up her head, stared Akuma down, and decided what she needed to do. “King to D8.”

It spared her no reply as she moved the king.

“Knight to F4,” it replied.

Her footing was starting to slip on the edge.

“Bishop to H3,” Lyla said.

“Pawn to H3,” it said.

“Queen to G4,” Lyla replied.

The ledge was almost ice-like; Lyla struggled to keep her footing.

“Queen to G5. You’re in check, Lyla.”

Lyla sat on the ledge, holding the sides; her knuckles were ghostly. The ledge was starting to crumble. Desperation clouded her features, "I will win this. I have to. King to D7."

"I'm sorry, that is impossible. You chose to play, Lyla. Pawn to D4," it replied.

"Knight to D4," Lyla said. Her voice cracked at the simple words.

"In four moves, I will win. Make your peace, Lyla. Queen to E5," it said and for the first time, pity marred its features.

Lyla slipped to the edge, "Knight to F3."

"Queen to E6. Check." Akuma looked straight at her, not with a grin, but with a grimace.

Lyla sighed heavily. She knew that this was her final move. Nothing she did would get her out of check. She held onto the ledge with her fingers only. "King to D8." Lyla whispered.

"Rook to D4. Checkmate." It choked on its words.

Lyla fell.

Her eyes opened.



Following Our Own Path by Samantha Hegedus

Tapestries

2017-2018

Weaving the Threads of
Creativity & Innovation

