

2015 Merry Ann DeVaney Sauls Academic Writing Contest Finalists

Composition

First Place: Dana Murray, “Unaccompanied Minors Crossing the US Border: Political Emergency to Humanitarian Crisis” (Dr. Denny) – page 3

Second Place: Sarah Gage, “A Not-So-Free Public Education” (Dr. Stubblefield) – page 11

Finalists:

Hannah Cook, “Introduction to Research on Morality, Education, and Citizenship” (Dr. Denny)

Brianna Jones, “Is Disney Presenting a More Androgynous Princess?” (Dr. Stubblefield)

Christina Litherland, “The Degradation of Tongues” (Dr. Emery)

Creative Writing

First Place: Hailey Johnson, “Blue Bird” (Dr. Emery) – page 18

Second Place: Jamie Waltenbaugh, “Brothers” (Dr. Emery) – page 23

Fine Arts

First Place: Haley Guerin, “Unacceptance: Sargent and Societal Standards” (Prof. Fulton) – page 33

Second Place: Jessie Andrews, “Sir Arthur Evans’ Labyrinth: Knossos Palace and Its Mythic Elements” (Prof. Fulton) – page 40

Finalists:

Kalina Jurkowski, “Purgatory” (Dr. Andrews)

Christina Litherland, “Bunburying in the Victorian Era” (Dr. Andrews)

Foreign Language

First Place: Kalina Jurkowski, “Una entrada en un blog” (Dr. Bourbon) – page 49

Second Place: Jamie Waltenbaugh, “Me llamo Jamie” (Dr. Bourbon) – page 52

Humanities

First Place: Paige Ott, “‘The Chemists’ War’: Chemical Warfare in World War I”

(Dr. Pivak) – page 55

Second Place: Beverly De Marco, “If the Cap Fits” (Dr. Peszat) – page 63

Finalists:

Caroline Guerin, “A City for the Restless” (Dr. Stubblefield)

Ashley Holliday, “Learning to Grow Up” (Dr. Stubblefield)

Brianna Jones, “Should We Mend the Wall or Tear It Down?” (Dr. Stubblefield)

Math/Science

First Place: Hailey Johnson, “Pollution in Beijing: Sources and Effects on Human Health” (Dr. Ross) – page 68

Second Place: Brianna Jones, “Identifying a Weak Acid by Titrimetry Lab Report” (Dr. Fernando) – page 72

Social Science

First Place: Amanda Mosier, “Extended, Paid Maternity Leave for Mothers and Families” (Dr. Tietz) – page 75

Second Place: Kalina Jurkowski, “On the Study of Literature” (Dr. Rivard) – page 86

Finalists:

Jessie Andrews, “Origins of the Magna Carta” (Dr. Rivard)

Beverly De Marco, “Ethnocentrism Exemplified and Explained in *Language Myths*” (Dr. Quick)

Brianna Jones, “Sutro Baths: Claimed then Abandoned?” (Dr. Firkus)

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Cottey College would like to thank the faculty from other institutions who volunteered to serve as off-campus judges:

- Prof. Debbie Bogart (Nevada High School)
- Dr. Amy Bohmann (Texas A&M University, San Antonio)
- Prof. Lynn Caldwell (Pittsburg State University)
- Prof. Haley Hoss Jameson (University of Missouri, Kansas City; Missouri Valley College)
- Prof. Carol MacArthur (Allen Community College, Park University)
- Dr. Ken Pobo (Widener University)
- Dr. Neil Snow (Pittsburg State University)

Composition

First Place: Dana Murray, “Unaccompanied Minors Crossing the US Border: Political Emergency to Humanitarian Crisis” (Dr. Denny)

Unaccompanied Minors Crossing the US Border:

Political Emergency to Humanitarian Crisis

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-sty to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

The New Colossus

Emma Lazarus

Imagine that you are a fifteen year old living in the ghettos of El Salvador, a small coastal country in Central America separated from Mexico by Guatemala. A group of gang members from Barrio 18, the gang that has nearly complete control of the neighborhood where you live and go to school, has recently approached you. You knew this would happen eventually. The same thing happened to your two older brothers, only one of whom is still alive, and the same thing will happen to your five year old sister someday. They want you to become one of 60,000 other young men and women that they control. You know now that you only have three options: join them by performing an initiation that includes murdering an innocent civilian, remain in your home and be hunted down and killed for refusing their offer, or leave. You have just become one of more than 75,000 children who venture thousands of miles to the United States, in search of refuge from political strife and gang violence. After the long and perilous journey

from Central America, and up through Mexico, you have finally reached the U.S. border. Despite constant hunger and countless injuries you have sustained, you feel hope for the first time in months. Then in a whirlwind of military uniforms and words shouted in a confusing language, you find yourself in a white walled room where a stony faced interpreter gives you two more choices: go to court to fight for your right to asylum, or go back.

Unaccompanied minors venturing to the United States in search of refuge is not an uncommon phenomenon. However, in recent years the number has grown from around 8,000 children annually to 38,833 in 2012 and more than 75,000 in 2014 (Martínez). This recent surge of unaccompanied minors traveling across Central America to the United States has created a plethora of migration policy issues for United States law makers, law enforcers and border control, and it has left policy makers wondering why so many children have begun to flee their home countries in favor a perilous journey to the United States.

Thousands of immigrant children, 73 to 75 percent of them from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico according to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (Levinson), have set course for the United States. Though some of these unaccompanied minors are victims of sex trafficking and others simply aim to reunite with family members who have already made their way into the United States, gang violence is the driving force behind the recent rush of children entering the United States. Oscar Martínez, an El Salvadoran journalist who has focused on the latest child immigration issue, explains that gangs, primarily Barrio 18 and Mara Salvatrucha (MS13) which are the two most predominant gangs in Central America, exercise control over countless communities in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. Barrio 18 and MS13 force people out of their homes to create buffer zones, require individuals and businesses to pay thousands of dollars in “impuestos de guerra” or war taxes (Grillon) and, as Martínez

emphasizes, they have recently begun to recruit children as young as 8 or 9. If a child refuses they are often slaughtered, dumped in nearby fields, and their families become primary targets. In his article “The Children Will Keep Coming,” Martínez tells the story of David de la O, a young boy from El Salvador, who refused to join the gang that controlled his neighborhood and was later found in an abandoned field after being “stabbed four times in the torso; his head, arms and legs had been severed.” Those children who perform the ritualistic murder of an innocent bystander to gain entrance into the gang that recruited them are not guaranteed safety. Opposing gang members will begin to systematically hunt them down once they have officially joined. Martínez reports that “gang violence accounts for 40 percent of the murders in El Salvador and 27 percent of the overall crime.” Many of these murders take place between gang members though bystanders are often caught in the crossfire. The same situation is reflected in Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico where the gangs run rampant and both Barrio 18 and MS13 have complete control in most impoverished areas. It makes sense to me that children in these parts of the world would choose a treacherous voyage that could possibly end in death, over the sure death of remaining in their own country where gangs have more control than their governments.

For countless world citizens who struggle daily to simply remain alive in areas plagued by political conflict and gang violence, the United States has always represented the possibility for their mere survival. Unfortunately misconceptions about the role that the United States plays as a country that protects the innocent have perpetuated the extremely dangerous journey made by the myriad of unaccompanied minors. These misconceptions stem largely from the executive action regarding DREAMers, the name given to young immigrants entered the United States illegally before 2011. In 2012 the Obama Administration made an executive order to stop the deportation of those young undocumented immigrants that had entered the United States and

grant them work permits (Elise). This does not apply to children entering the United States after 2012. The executive action regarding DREAMers, which has been considered a milestone in humanitarian history, has given the impression that all children will be granted asylum upon arrival to the United States. Eric Murray, the Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division District Director for Arizona, who has worked closely with politicians dealing with this crisis states that many of the children believe they will be granted immediate asylum so they will seek out border patrol officers after crossing the border into the United States. They believe the border patrol officers will take them to be cared for as a political refugee. Instead of finding themselves welcomed by the United States government, these children are detained and taken to detention facilities where their fate will be determined within fifty to seventy days of their arrival.

Once apprehended a lengthy process begins which places the fate of these minors into the hands of an overly stressed immigration system. VERA, a relief program designed to aid the unaccompanied minors through a nationwide program for the improvement of legal services for the children, states in their resource for practitioners, policy makers, and researchers that if the child is from Mexico, he or she will often be turned away immediately due to an immigration agreement that the United States has with Mexico and Canada. Children from other countries are given the option of consensual deportation to their country as soon as possible or undergoing the legal processes to fight for permission to remain in the United States as a refugee. As of 2008, all unaccompanied migrant children found in the United States have undergone an extensive process to make sure the proper legal actions are taken for these children. First they are placed in detention facilities until a family member or other proper guardians who they can remain with during their time in the United States are found. With these family members or other guardians they will have access to food, shelter, medical attention, an education and often some form of

counseling. Once settled they are then paired with a pro-bono lawyer who helps them navigate their options, and in some cases a social worker who will fight against any possible violation of their human right. These two people will then help the child to decide their course of action: apply for refuge as a sex trafficking victim, or apply for asylum as a refugee from political or religious prosecution.

The current law requires the protection of the children until it is decided if they will be deported or if they will be allowed to remain in the United States indefinitely. One of the criticisms of this system focuses on the average two year time span it takes for the children to go through the court system. Some law makers believe that this period of asylum only encourages families to send their children across the border unaccompanied, since the children are allowed to remain in custody in the United States for long periods of time while their fate is decided. The families that send their children alone into the United States, largely encouraged by Coyotes who reinforce this misconception, believe that their children will be granted automatic asylum upon reaching the US (Huffington Post). Critics in favor of reforms that would remove the children immediately claim that the entire process places financial burden on the federal government that could be easily justified when the number of unaccompanied minors entering the United States was well below 10,000. Now that it has exceeded 70,000 many law makers are worried that the financial strain is too much. Boehner, a well-known republican and current Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, argues that the current child immigration laws are being abused. He and other decision makers have requested a change in the ruling that would allow the rapid deportation of the unaccompanied minors back to their countries of origin without the extensive protective processes dictated by the 2008 law (Gomez).

From a humanitarian viewpoint the worst thing for these children would be to send them back into the violent situations they have recently escaped from, situations where they face near certain death as the gang members they refused and ran away from often times seek them out and murder them. In response to this stance, which many humanitarian organizations in the United States support, policy makers in favor of reform claim that a process will be put in place that will assure the safety of these children in their countries of origin. They argue that the children will be protected when they arrive back in their homes. However, no policy maker has been able to explain how they can assure the safety of children thousands of miles away. Though the answer might not be to grant asylum to each child that comes to the United States, there is no way that we can justify sending them back to their death. The solution is much more complex than sending these children back or keeping them in the United States. The only way to completely rectify this issue is by weeding out the presence of gangs in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico by supporting governmental reform and humanitarian outreach programs. Until we find a way to do that while maintaining international law, our focus must be on the best interest of the children.

The United States is one of two countries which has not adopted the notion that the wellbeing of every child must come before any political or economic interest. While the United States has not accepted this ruling by the United Nations many activists are against the violations of human rights that changing the current policy to the rapid deportation of unaccompanied minors would allow. Since we are unable, in the short term, to influence the elimination of gang presence in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico, we have a moral obligation to the protection of the minors who come to the United States for refuge. We have a responsibility as human beings to create a system where the human rights of children are upheld in all situations.

The issue is not the children who immigrate but rather the situations that they are escaping. It is not an issue of border patrol, but rather an issue of gang violence in their countries. We cannot look at the flood of unaccompanied minors entering the United States as an issue only concerning immigration policies and border control. We must treat it as a humanitarian crisis centered on the best interest of the children fleeing from violence. We need to ask ourselves how can we justify sending any of them back into the dangerous situations that they have just fled. If we come to the conclusion that there is no justification, as I hope we would, we must look for more constructive ways to protect and assist them.

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Composition

Second Place: Sarah Gage, “A Not-So-Free Public Education” (Dr. Stubblefield)

A Not-So-Free Public Education

Cautiously entering the journalism classroom – or 'j-room' as I came to know it – for the first time during my sophomore year of high school, I expect to see a variety of students from an array of backgrounds as my eyes scan the compact classroom. Instead, I face a single clique – the rich kids. After swiftly glancing around the room, I place them in an instant. My peers are wearing Polo shirts, rhinestone studded Miss Me jeans, new Sperry boat shoes, and sporting Nike backpacks. The gleam of the bright morning sun through the window-lined wall reflects off of their iPhones and car keys that set next to the Apple desktop computers on the tables lining the walls. I quietly take a seat in an empty office chair at one of the tables as I put down my backpack and silence my cell phone. I then look up and continue to study the students around me.

At Central High School, telling who was a “hill kid” is simple. In Salina, all of the wealthy families live up on the hill, which is on the far east side of town – along with the Country Club. Needless to say, I'm not one of those kids. My family is well off, but we don't find any need to live in a half-a-million-dollar home. Rumors spread that some kids had elevators to reach all three floors of their homes and others had televisions in their bathrooms. These unnecessary spoils seem so silly and ridiculous, but these were the kids dominating the j-room. I squirm impatiently in my seat, not venturing out to talk to anyone. Everyone else stays with their clique, and chats loudly among themselves while I observe with watching eyes.

My mind flashes back to my acceptance onto *The Pylon* staff.

“You've been doing really well with the written assignments,” Mr. Garber, the staff

advisor and journalism teacher, tells me as he glances through copies of some of my work from his Beginning Journalism class. The Top Hits Pandora station is playing in the background as the interview takes place. He hums along to “We Are Young” by fun. as he reads silently to himself. Garber is short in stature and has a widow's peak; a carefree, young, and fun teacher, students seem to flock to his classes. Setting down the papers, he rolls up the sleeves of his light blue shirt to his elbows, then focuses his small eyes on me while he waits for a response.

“Thank you,” I respond quietly, bouncing my knee. I look around the room, finally focusing on a hole in my faded skinny jeans. I play with the frayed material, eyeing the chipped navy blue nail polish on my fingers. Smiling gently, I look up again at Garber. A lot of students had applied to join the staff for the following school year, and my nerves are evident as I bite my lip and chip off more of my nail polish, unable to sit still.

“But you didn't turn in the last assignment,” he announces, his mood shifting. His light smile fades and he no longer hums to the background music. He adjusts his heather grey sweater vest a bit, setting the small stack of my articles on the table in between us. The current editor-in-chief glances at me, waiting for an answer. Trent is a year older than me, and I recognize him from sideways glances in the hallway. He is tall with cropped blonde hair. He appears boyish and young, but I can see that he needs to shave.

“Well, I—I'm not very good at sports writing,” I stutter, not sure how to respond. Would one measly assignment cost me my chance to be on staff as a reporter?

“We can't have that if you are going to be on staff,” Garber speaks firmly. Biting my lower lip, my hands begin to shake. “No, no, no, no, no,” I think to myself desperately. I can't lose this opportunity because of one measly assignment. I sit up straighter and swallow hard, a small lump forming in my throat.

“It won't happen again,” I promise him, my voice not quite as firm as I had hoped.

“Alright, well we'll review your file and talk a bit, then I'll give you a call about our decision,” Garber concludes. I stand and quickly put my backpack onto my shoulder, eager to leave the crowded classroom. Another girl walks in confidently as I leave nervously. I wipe the sweat from my hands onto my jeans, then walk outside to the school parking lot.

I sit in my room later that evening, reading *Revolution* by Jennifer Donnelly – a new library find – when my phone rings. I pick it up and immediately recognized Garber's phone number. I click the little green answer button and hold the blue phone to my ear.

“Hello?” I ask evenly into the speaker.

“Hey, Sarah. So, we reviewed the applicants and you're one of the strongest writers, so we'd love to have you on staff, if you still want to join,” Garber says in a bright tone. I sigh in relief, a weight lifted from my shoulders.

“Yes, absolutely, yes, thank you,” I say quickly, a smile forming on my flushed face.

“Okay, well we're meeting in the j-room after school tomorrow to talk about camp, so make sure you're there,” Garber ends the conversation, and I put down my cell phone, a large grin plastered to my face.

“Yes!” I pump my fists into the air with a laugh.

Later the next day, I re-enter classroom 182 after escaping my Algebra II class. It is a warm May afternoon, and I sling my pink sweatshirt over my arm as I find an empty chair. A girl with short green hair sits alone at one of the desktops; she is wearing teal and black striped knee high socks with a flowing black skirt and a neon pink tank top. Quietly setting my backpack down, I take a seat beside her.

“Liz, right?” I ask her gently, taking in the brightness of her short hair style. I remember

hearing someone call her name in the hall, and it's impossible to mistake her for anyone else. Liz nods and responds with a short, but sweet, “Yep!”

“I'm Sarah,” I introduce myself with a soft smile. Our conversation ends, and I look around myself. Photos, various quotes, and writing rules cover the walls of the large room in a collage, and I glance at one in particular – the First Amendment – as I sit impatiently, waiting for the meeting to begin.

“Here, Trent, hand these out,” Garber hands a stack of papers to the editor-in-chief, who proceeds to pass them around the classroom to the students waiting. Receiving mine, I glance down at the purple paper and brochure between my fingers.

“This is the information on j-camp,” Garber begins to explain. He starts to talk about the various classes, the sleeping arrangements, the college, and so on, but my eyes are glued to the price - \$600. I look up at the other students. Some still look carefree, as they smile and talk about who was rooming with whom. There are a couple students – including Liz and me – who move uneasily in their chairs, avoiding eye contact with Garber or Trent. There is no way that I can just ask my mom for \$600.

“We will do some fundraising,” I tear my eyes from the page to listen to Trent. “We will do letters to family and friends, and then we also help run a Senior Olympics out on the track in June,” he explains. I breathe a slow sigh of relief.

“We'll discuss camp in more depth tomorrow after school,” Trent concludes, “but make sure you get registered by next Tuesday.” Students begin to collect their belongings, eager to get home.

“Don't forget that if you don't go to the camp, you won't be on staff!” Mr. Garber calls as we all stand quickly and throw on our backpacks before leaving the classroom.

Walking to my brother's car, I think angrily about how it must be simple for the other kids on staff to ask their parents to pay for an expensive “free public education” extracurricular, so that they can make their way onto the staff. I, on the other hand, know that it will be much harder to get to the camp. Upset and anxious, I sit in silence in the little white Nissan Sentra as my brother drives us home, “A Day to Remember” playing through the car speakers.

My mind drifts to Liz. I pick up my phone and shoot her a text. “Hey, so camp is a lot more expensive than I thought...I wish I had known about it before now.” Liz responds quickly, and I open her message. “Me too. I don't know how I will pay for it :(,” I sigh and put down my phone. “At least I'm not the only one with this problem,” I think to myself. We pull into the driveway, and once he puts the car in park, I take my bag and get out, my shoes slapping against the concrete. I quickly walk into the house, still not sure how to approach the camp conversation with my mom.

“How was school?” she asks me immediately when I enter through the backdoor. I avoid her gaze, looking around the kitchen as I take off my TOMS by the door. She turns the potatoes she has frying in a pan.

“Okay,” I reply simply, not wanting to talk about camp or the meeting.

“How was your journalism thing?” she asks, glancing over at me. I deflate, but don't show my upset on the outside. I glance up at her, noticing that she had gotten her short, dark hair cut. She has a hand on her hip as she sets the plastic spoon aside and leans against the kitchen island in comfortable clothes – sweatpants and a Cottey College Alumnae t-shirt.

“Um...well, we have to go to this camp thing,” I hand her the brochure that Trent handed out. It doesn't take her long to find the price.

“Are they fundraising?” she asks, her voice still chirpy and showing no signs of upset.

“Yeah, but not a lot,” I show her the other page I received. She takes it and glances at the fundraisers.

“You're right...what are the other kids doing?” she puts the papers on the front of the refrigerator with a magnetic chip-clip. I shrug, watching her action.

“Most everyone else can afford to just pay for it out-of-pocket,” I say sheepishly.

“I'll make sure you go,” she promises me. I smile gently and wrap my arms around her slim waist.

“Thanks mom,” I say sincerely. I go up to my room to get started on homework, but first I pull out my phone and text Liz again. “So what do you think you're going to do about camp?”. It takes her close to fifteen minutes to respond. “I can't go.” I feel my stomach sink after reading those three simple words. I had been really looking forward to getting to know the green-haired, perky girl I had seen around school. “I'm sure we can think of ways to raise the money,” I immediately text, my fingers rushing over the keyboard. I put my phone on my bed, but it buzzes with the arrival of a new text. I quickly grab it and click the message open. “It just won't work. Have fun on staff and at camp. Sorry,” I read slowly to myself. I sigh heavily, my facial muscles relaxing into a frown.

This was so unfair. I had seen some of Liz's artwork and photographs displayed in the commons, and she was really talented. Her depth of field work was impeccable, and Liz had nearly mastered the ability to draw human faces filled with raw emotion. Yet, because she couldn't afford it, she couldn't share those talents any further. “I'm sorry too,” I respond sincerely to her message.

I return to the j-room the following afternoon. It's hot and stuffy again as students pile in like sardines. While the room is rather large, it is full of expensive equipment, long tables,

student desks, and people. I sit alone this time, knowing that Liz wouldn't be joining me. Trent begins the meeting by light-heartedly making fun of Kansas University; he does not acknowledge the new absences – Liz only one of many, I realize.

Creative Writing

First Place: Hailey Johnson, "Blue Bird"

BLUE BIRD

It's nighttime. I am walking down the empty street, and the only sound I hear are my black suede heels against the concrete sidewalk. I then hear someone behind me, and I begin to walk faster. Suddenly, my heels sound like clapping, the dark sky wraps around me forming a dress, and the stars are my audience. I am now being whirled by the wind that is pushing me in every which direction—North, South, East, West. The wind dies down to a breeze; I stop whirling and recognize faces in the crowd—my Mom, Dad, my best friends, Juanita, Georgia, and Perrin, my extra best friend, Paolo, and my dog, Honey. I even see random people such as the mailman, the attractive guy with the guitar I saw earlier, and the flight attendant that took up my ticket. Why are they all here?

My mom says, "Keep going, hon you're doing great!" The guitar player starts strumming and Juanita starts singing opera. Wow, so much volume! Her voice sounds like bells, and my feet begin to move with the beat. I am whirling, and I suddenly whirl into Paolo's arms. "Hello, Paolo" I say. "Twirl this way with me, Alexandria" Paolo hums into my ear. We twirl and twirl until everything around me is a constant circle spinning round and round and round. The circle rises to the sky and turns into the moon; I am lying under it, admiring its ring and its purpose on Earth. The light from the moon is illuminating the water to where it is glimmering white and blue. The waves make a soothing whooshing sound moving back and forth—gravity—and I see a red sailboat coming my way. The sails are moving in the breeze, and the color starkly contrasts the midnight blues and white flickers. Honey, my dog, appears to be on the boat barking, and barking, and barking—moving from side to side of the boat.

I now see a black silhouette of a man behind the red sail of the boat. He is stationary and everything is moving except for his figure. The boat approaches and I start to scream but my cries are silent. Alarm and anxiety are rushing through my veins and I cry "Help! Help!" I feel as though I am shrinking closer to the ground to join the particles of sand making up the beach. The boat nears faster and faster, and I slip

further towards the earth. The man appears from behind the sail, and as he approaches, I realize that the man is in fact my boss, or ex-boss rather. What the hell? Are those papers in his hands? I look up from my ground position, and my boss is wearing that stupid looking sarcastic smile he wore whenever he needed something. “Yeah?” I say in a slightly unsure, annoyed voice. My boss, says “I need you to make three hundred copies of this paper, bring me some coffee, take Duke (his dog—more like a horse) for a walk, and pick up my dry cleaning...” Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep! His voice begins to form into an alarm clock with a constant buzzing noise ringing in my ears.

I close my eyes, and I am in my apartment back at home. The beeping noise from the alarm clock is still ringing in my ears going off every second. I look around my small apartment. There is a desk full of papers from work, laundry spilling over the hamper, empty coffee mugs strewn here and there around the living room and kitchen, take-out boxes on the kitchen cabinet. It’s a mess, honestly. I’m embarrassed. I sigh and look out the small, open window—I left that open?—above the kitchen sink, and a blue bird flies inside, landing inside my house on the kitchen table. It looks around the room and fixes its eyes on me. When it immediately catches my gaze, it starts to chirp, chirping louder every second until it sounds like my damn alarm clock. Beep! Beep! Beep! The bird begins to fly anxiously around my apartment, flying into the papers, knocking into walls, all the while chirping away. It flies into the bathroom and I follow after. I look around the bathroom and it is silent. I turn to face myself in the mirror and see the same blue bird with my hazel eyes; I am the bird.

I flap my wings until I am soaring out of the window. It is morning and the sun is shining, reflecting the skyscrapers to where they look like tall mirrors. The taxis, people, and stores look like ants from up here! As I am soaring, I notice the guitar player walking down the street strumming and walking. He looks up with his dark sunglasses at me, smiles, and points. He has the skin of tan silk, his teeth contrast his complexion, and his white shirt is unbuttoned and pushed up to his elbows. There is a ring of tattooed stars around his forearm. I fly closer down above him and I land on his shoulder. “I want to hear your music Alexandria” he sings, “Sing out loud!” I begin to chirp, because I can’t speak; I’m a bird. I chirp and chirp and I actually sound like pure running gold. I like my voice. Oh my god, there’s my ex-boss

again. I run into him, and now I am a human again. “Where are those copies?” he says. Again, he demands orders from me and his voice turns into the sound of my awful alarm ring. Beep! Beep! Beep! I look around the crowded Big Apple, and no one else hears the beeping noise. The beeping continues forever it seems, and guitar player has strummed away into nothing. The beeping is becoming louder and louder and louder.....

My eyes slowly open. The beeping was my actual phone alarm clock that had been going off for two minutes. I groggily rub my eyes, stretch, and look around at the other passengers on the plane, but most are passed out still sleeping. The flight attendant notices me and asks, “Would you like anything to drink or eat?” “Some water, please,” I reply. I look outside the plane window, and I see the expansive blue Atlantic Ocean. The sun is shining through the airport window, and its’ light is bouncing off the cotton candy clouds, making its way to my window and illuminating the strands of red in my hair that you can only see in the sunlight. My sunglasses are shielding my eyes from the blinding light. The flight attendant comes back with some water, “Thank you,” I say in appreciation. She is an attractive woman in her mid-thirties with thick dark hair swirled up in a bun, blushed cheeks, and a friendly smile with a slight gap in between her two front teeth. Her blue uniform is perfectly pressed, and her shoes are a direct match in color to her uniform. “How much longer until we land?” I asked her. “About an hour,” she informed. I suddenly feel like I’m about to step onto the wildest rollercoaster at Six Flags. There are butterflies in my stomach and my leg begins to bounce up and down in anticipation. Should I go freshen up in the bathroom? I probably look like the kiss of death. As I passed through the rows, I notice the guitar player that I saw in the airport, who somehow made it into my dream.

He is wearing a navy blue button up shirt with three buttons undone revealing his chest. His right leg is crossed over the other, and while slightly hunched, he is writing something down in a small black notebook; Wow he actually does have a ring of tattooed black stars wrapped around his forearm. I’m too shy to actually speak to him, because he seems like magic—as if he would disappear the second I started to talk. So I just make my way to the bathroom half expecting to see a blue bird, but instead I just see my reflection. I examine my long sandy hair, which resembles a bird’s nest, the circles underneath my hazel

eyes look like I've just been punched, and my slightly pale, freckled face is flushed with excitement. I am still wearing my work outfit, black slacks, a white button up, and my black blazer. The only thing I changed before boarding the plane was my shoes—white converse. My clothes are slightly wrinkled. I look like a borderline mad woman so I start to finger-comb my hair and splash water on my face. Thank goodness I didn't talk to the guitar player in this state.

When I opened the bathroom door, there he was, leaning against the wall with one leg propped up against it, hands in the pockets of his jeans, and eyes focused on me. Feeling very awkward, I gave him a slight smile and looked down letting my hair shield my increasingly red face. He stopped me as I was passing him and said, "Hey you dropped this." His voice was a deep smooth hum, and his words were wrapped in an Italian accent. Even better. In his hands was my necklace that my grandmother had given me for my sixteenth birthday. It was small, thin, and silver with a charm monogrammed with my initials AME, for Alexandria Mae Everest, along with the silver ring that I found in the grass while walking in Central Park. I perhaps should have left it there, but I couldn't resist its simplicity. I held out my hand for the necklace and he dropped it in my palm. "Thank you so much." Oh my god, why is my voice so shaky? Get it together, Alex. "My pleasure" he strummed. I met his eyes which were the color of the ocean beneath us. We are staring into each other's worlds, and I wonder what is beneath the surface. Is he wondering the same? Does he see more than a suit, circles, and an edge of crazy? Does the flight attendant see more? Did my ex-boss see more? Wow that last question is comical.

I broke the moment, by looking down and again shielding my face with my hair. He turned and disappeared behind the bathroom door. I inhale and let the breath reach all the way to my toes. Breathing is natural and easy. Feeling the air swirl into my lungs is satisfying. Usually, I would be too busy and stressed to even think about inhaling and exhaling due to work—my boss—and the slow-death of monotony and routine that my life had become. I smile to myself and begin to feel that this is all real. I am landing in thirty minutes, and can feel the ground of a new place underneath my converse. As I am in reflection, the flight attendant comes by and notifies the plane that we will be landing in five minutes. I am on the rollercoaster again, except the butterflies have escaped from their cage.

We have landed, and suddenly, my phone rings and it is my ex-boss. The nerve of that man. I don't answer, and he leaves a text message. As if I were in my dream again, the text reads "Where r u? I need u here 2 make copies 2 give 2 the board members 4 the conference!" After reading, I deleted his name from my contacts and my phone felt instantly lighter. As we all gather our things and make our way out of the plane, I stop to turn towards the guitar player. He is nowhere to be found. My eyes scan the entire plane and he is gone. Great. I thank the flight attendant for being so attentive, and she says, "No problem! Have a great trip!" I am walking down the terminal with everyone else who was aboard the plane. We are traveling into different realms of life—different conversations, different people, and different places. I don't know exactly what my plan is, but I'm going, moving, flying and I feel like the blue bird in my dream except I cannot actually fly. Bummer.

Creative Writing

Second Place: Jamie Waltenbaugh, "Brothers"

Brothers

George gazed at the walls. White. Why would a place whose sole purpose is to uplift you cover its walls in a color that is so empty? He moved his hands along the itchy fleece throw that laid crumpled underneath him. *Why'd you live? The traitor son.* A child's voice, a voice too innocent for its words, pierced George's temple. He darted his eyes toward the window that was off-centered and always locked. It's funny how they think the injured are so willing to throw themselves out the window. This is physical therapy not the loony-bin. He glanced at the flower vase resting on the side table by his bed. He did not know who they were from or even who they were for. He was more interested in the sole flower that lived, that still had a trace of the vibrant red his deceased brothers once possessed. What made that flower so special?

George suddenly lost his balance as his arm buckled underneath him. His knuckles had turned white as snow. He could feel each joint as he slowly released his grip on the faded fabric. Wiping his hands on his gray sweatpants, he stood up. I pain hit his right thigh as he felt his body weight pressing down on it. He inched around to get a full view of his surroundings. White. Nothing but white. There was a pink plastic box on the wall that was marked with the words Biohazard: Used Needles and right next to that was a black hand-sanitizer dispenser. However, what caught George's eye was the small square mirror just to the right of a poorly laminated sign that read All Employees Must Wash Their Hands Before Helping a Patient. He was attracted to his appearance but not in a vain way. He was curious what he looked like to others. He made his way to the far corner of the room trying his hardest to walk like a normal person and not the gimp that he was.

George observed his eyes as if they were not his own. The brown flecks in his otherwise intense green eyes seemed alien to him. He brushed his lanky hand through his light brown, almost on the verge of blond, hair. He watched as his fingers disappeared as though they were children running into a corn field. He used his palms to rub the grogginess from his early morning. He leaned on the counter in front of him. *Why'd you live?*

“Mr. Kai,” George jumped back from the counter and spun to face the nurse as if she had caught him with his hands in his pants. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to startle you.” She had a beautiful voice it was like a soft hum. It matched her innocent demeanor well. She giggled as she bent her head down, her brown hair cascading over her blue scrub covered in little ducks. This happened a lot to George. He never understood why women had the urge to giggle at everything he said. “Oh no it’s okay. I have always been jumpy when it comes to rooms that have bins for used needles. Doesn’t really sound that pleasant.” She giggled again before looking up from the chart that she had grabbed from the counter. “Everything looks great, Mr. Kai. Your recovery is right on track. I’m just going to ask you a few questions before you can leave.”

George dreaded this part of every check-up. The part where they check on your mental health. They always ask the same questions and give the same speech: taking a trauma when you’re an athlete can be tough but when that trauma permanently disbands you from the game it can seem impossible to continue but your recovery depends solely on your will to recover and blah, blah, blah. “Did you hear me, Mr. Kai?”

“I’m so sorry, it’s too early for my brain to function and please call me George.”

“Alright, George, then. How is your social life and school going?”

“Great.” *Liar.* “I am keeping a pretty sturdy position in my academics. Not falling too behind. As for as social, I dropped out of Delta Kappa Alpha. I couldn’t necessarily be part of an athletic fraternity with a shit-stick for a leg. So I moved back to the dormitory with Simon.”

“Do you miss it? The fraternity I mean.”

“No, in honesty. Simon would rather play Xbox and catch up on gossip by listening to all the rooms in the auditorium through his sound booth than drink protein shakes for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and work out until the entire house smells like a locker room. It feels normal with Simon.”

“That’s good that you’re adjusting. And your family, George, how are they considering the most recent circumstances? I’m so sorry about your mother.”

“Good.” *Oh look another lie.* “I saw my father at the funeral yesterday.” As he spoke he stared at her pen moving rapidly like she was taking notes in a history lecture. What could she possibly be writing? “George, I’m going to ask a question, okay.” *Isn’t that what you are already doing?* He wished he didn’t say to call him George. He turned twenty-one years old a week ago and she was treating him like a child. “Your trophy went missing from the University last Friday. Would you know anything about that?”

George was taken aback by the question. This wasn’t part of the normal routine. He laughed and stuck his hands in his pockets. He fiddled with his keys as he spoke. “I got a bum leg, you really think I’m going to go all ninja and steal from the school.” He chuckled again. *You’re a monster.* He swallowed the lump in his throat. The voice in his head called to him like family. He twiddled with a piece of rope that was wrapped around his wrist. “Ignore him, remember her” he told himself. *Remember her.*

Simon walked beside him, a Starbuck's latte held firmly in his grip. He wore red skinny jeans and a white polo. His leather satchel hanged over his shoulder. "I'm not asking you, man. I'm forcing you." Simon said between gulps of coffee. George had his thumbs hooked in the pockets of his jeans as he spoke down to the sidewalk "You know I have to spend my birthday with my family." *Our birthday*. Before George could react to the sudden and loud hiss that engulfed his brain Simon stepped in front of his path. He placed his free hand gently on George's toned shoulder. "Listen to me, bro. It's your twenty-first birthday. We," he placed his pointed finger on George's chest, "are going to get so plastered that you are going to think you possess the one ring of Mordor and I will be Gandalf, of course. You are allowed to have this one birthday without having to go through your creepy family voodoo-shit." George knocked Simon's hand away from his chest and continued down the sidewalk to his noon class, Economics. "The what of what?" George asked wanting Simon to drop the idea.

"The One Ring. You know," he curled his body into a hunchback looking shape as he caught up to George's pace. "*My precious*." George shook his head in pure amazement that Simon would think a weird voice would explain his point. Simon straightened up and mimicked George's look of shock. "Your lack of culture classics frightens me."

"We can't all be film majors."

"True, but you know what all humans in this beautiful country do? Get shit-faced with their mates on their twenty-first birthday."

"Drop it, Simon. I'm not going. I can't."

"Yes, you can. Trust me." They rounded the corner of a giant brick auditorium. Simon's stop. "I'll meet you at the room at eight o'clock and wear something nice for once." He was through the glass-doors before George could respond. "I'm not going!" Simon turned around as

if he heard him and blew a mocking kiss before racing off down the hallway. He let out a laugh under his breath. He wanted to go with Simon more than anything but he couldn't. *Mother is going to be so excited to see me.* Or could he?

The club smelled different from what George would have imagined. It smelled of coconut and vanilla. The music blared louder with each song. The beat was more of an audible rumble than a note. George sat at the bar staring at all the glass bottles of liquor wondering how they stayed up when the neon-lighted cupboard they rested in was bouncing to the commotion. *You shouldn't be here. You don't deserve human pleasure. You took my life and now my day.* George clutched at the counter top in front of him disregarding how sticky it was. How could the voice be so loud in such a place? Simon returned from the far end of the bar with two small glasses of an auburn liquid. His vibrant green suit matched the lighting of the club and attracted a few curious looks. A giant smile spilled across his face. How can a man be so happy all the time when he is cursed with human nature? "Round one, buddy!" He screamed as he handed George the drink and downed it in one swing. George followed suite. The liquid burned his throat. He coughed, terrified that all the salvage from his mouth had suddenly vanished. That was horrible. He wondered why his father was so addicted to it.

Simon did a little dance as if he had a wedge, he was too cool to pick, and yelled to George even though they were in extremely close proximity to each other, "Stay here! I'm going to go get more!" and once again he vanished into the giant sea of people that rubbed up against each other in a way that looked more like mating rituals than dancing.

George all of a sudden felt something, a moment of dizziness. His fingers tingled as if they were falling asleep and the lights became bigger. They were leaving streaks in his vision.

Oh, awesome you're a traitor and a light-weight. George let out a breath. The voice wasn't as prominent, as strong, as it usually was.

That's when he saw her: a solo act amongst an ocean of duets. Her dark skin reflected the lights as if she was glowing herself. Her hair bounced in perfect little curls as she danced to a music purely her own. She smiled to nothing in particular. George thought to himself, he has never seen something so beautiful. "What ya starring at?" Simon bent down so his eyes were on the same plane of sight as George. George wanted to jump. He wanted to say nothing but instead he simply said "her."

Simon squinted his eyes before a giant grin crawled across his face. "The girl in the little pink number?" Simon straightened back up with a laugh. He patted George on the back and gave him another glass. This time it was long and skinny and its contents resembled the look of water. Simon lifted his own glass to his plump lips and spoke before he swung the contents down his throat, "I always thought you were asexual." George watched as Simon wiggled his limbs as if he were doing the Hokey Pokey. Simon placed his empty glass on the counter and turned his gaze back to the dance floor. He gave George one of his signature mischievous looks, "Tonight is going to be better than I thought. I am going to get you la..." his last words disappeared into the noise of his surroundings as he be-lined for the mystery girl. George sat there still clutching the liquid Simon brought him. *You're a monster. I am your punisher.* He downed it like the drink before, feeling like a proper clubber. His human feeling didn't last long as he bent over in a fit of coughs. This one burned more than the last.

He began to wonder if he would make it through the night, when he heard a voice from above him. A voice so angelic yet laced with danger. "I can't believe you started the guy out on

vodka.” George rose from his position to find her inches from him. He could see the beads of sweat drying on her forehead. Her lips stretched slightly to form a smile. Gorgeous. *Breakable*.

Simon stood beside her talking to a man dressed in a waiter uniform. She spoke again, “Hi, I’m Marcy.” Did the alcohol make him pass out? Is this really happening? George felt a familiar arm slide across his shoulders. Simon was back, “Sorry, this is George. He is not use to human interactions.” George just sat there in silence, still in a tipsy daze. She laughed as a tray of multi-colored tubes filled with the same clear liquid arrived, “I don’t know I think he’s cute.”

All three of them laid in an oddly shaped circle on the university stage. With a few drinks down and some of the weirdest dance moves performed, they left the club as though they were a grade-school trio celebrating their college graduation. Simon had the brilliant idea to go back to the university and here they ended up, staring at the fly lights as though they were stars. Marcy rested her arm against George’s, their heads inches apart. His vision was blurred at the edges and his limbs felt lighter than feathers. He looked at the world with happiness, like he could run a mile and not be short of breathe. Simon was recapping some episode of TV he recently watched with extreme enthusiasm. George wasn’t paying attention though. He was concentrating on the soft intakes and exhales of Marcy’s breathe. His mind was filled with the movement her body made when she laughed at something Simon said. He longed to grab her hand, to feel her warmth interlaced with his. *You’re going to hurt her, like you always do*. He didn’t know if it was the alcohol, but a sudden wave of defiant bravery rushed through his body. He could feel it in his fingertips. They burned like firestones.

He adjusted his arm to rest slightly on top of hers. He could hear her sharp intake of breath. It felt like he was hearing for the first time. He brushed her skin with his finger feeling

every goose-bump as if they were a maze to be solved, artwork to be made. He did this till he reached her wrist. There was an obstruction: a scar. Her chest started to race up and down but he did not release his touch. He brushed the mark repeatedly as if it were a beautiful line of poetry. She turned her head to stare at him. He was inches away. He could smell her breath as it hit his mouth in waves. Her green eyes raced back and forth trying to read any doubt that may have been on his face.

A door opened from off-stage and Marcy and George quickly jumped into sitting positions. Simon was at the backstage door, "I'll be back. I have to do something." Before George or Marcy could say anything he vanished behind it. He had a habit of doing that. The theatre was engulfed in deafening silence. George's eye sight traveled from the door Simon vanished behind to Marcy. Her back was to him. Her shoulder blades were exposed due to the cut of her dress. *Don't do it.*

George's voice came out weaker than he anticipated, "You know I tried to kill myself too. Jumped off this very building. Woke up in an ambulance with Simon telling the EMT some story of how he asked me to get an aerial view of the campus and how I must have slipped." She turned to him and he thought he had never seen someone look so sad. Did he over-step? He did just meet her. What was he thinking?

She spoke her voice also shaking, "Simon is your normal, isn't he?"

"What?" she scooted toward him. Her knees now rested on his calves. "Your normal. The one person that makes you feel human. The one kid with a big enough heart to stand next to shit-holes like us." George never thought of Simon as anything but Simon. He gazed at the red light in the corner. Simon was always just there, saving him. George answered his voice gaining strength, "Ya, I guess. He's been my friend since grade school."

“So why are you keeping a secret from him?” He looked at her with shock. His mouth slightly open. What did she mean? *She means me, idiot.* She continued leaning her face closer to his. “Trust me; I know when a person is keeping a secret. It eats at them. It destroys their humanity.” He wanted to trust her. He can’t tell anyone. They would think he was insane. Maybe she would just think he was drunk. *I’m your punishment, yours.* He would have to be drunk to consider saying anything. He’s told no one for twenty-one years.

“My brother. I can hear my brother.” What is he doing? Why is he saying these things? “I can hear him in my head.” He stopped to swallow the ball that had formed in his throat. What happened next George didn’t expect. He thought maybe she would run away call a psychiatrist but, no, she laughed. “Your big secret is that you can telepathically speak to your brother?”

George got up knocking her knees off him. He paced back and forth. *Told you she wouldn’t understand.* He screamed it all in one breath “No, you don’t understand. My brother is dead. No not my brother, he was never even a brother. He was an arm. A fucking arm that was attached to me at birth. My twin. And now it rests in a damn shoebox in a graveyard under some stupid made-up name. A name that will be more of son to my fucking family than I ever was.” He laughed a laugh that was used as an excuse to breath. He continued no longer aware that he was in the presence of someone else. “Every year, every god damn year I have to pretend on my birthday to be him so my mom won’t try to kill me or herself. I grew up in a family with a nut-job of a mother. Who instead of tucking me in at night would repeatedly call me a murderer while convincing herself I wasn’t her son, her own flesh and blood. I can still see her from across that dinner table, skin bags for eyes, mumbling *why’d you live.*” He drug out the last three words pronouncing every syllable. *What have you done?* George’s world was collapsing in on itself. The stage seemed to spin underneath him. *They’re going to think you’re crazy like our mother.*

He snapped out of his daze as the backstage door slammed behind him. Simon had returned with a trophy clutched in his hands. He was still smiling but something was different about it, like it was being seen through a lens. George started to shake. Simon didn't hear. Did he? Marcy still sat on the stage floor. Her feet were curled under her like a scared child. She looked not frightened, not sympathetic, but startled. Simon's voice cracked as he spoke, "Well, I don't know what I walked in on but I can come back." George couldn't move. Instead Marcy did. She got up slowly and shook her head as she spoke, "No, nothing weird was happening here. George was just practicing his Shakespeare."

Simon laughed and George's mind was coming back to reality, his drunken reality. "George practicing Shakespeare? You're drunker than I thought. I got a surprise for ya, Georgie." He lifted the trophy. It reflected the faded work lights as it moved. It was the Man of the Match trophy George had won freshman year at the championship game. Coach had taken it away to stick it in some display case, never to be seen again.

He stared at the people in front of him, his hair tousled to every side like a mad man. He saw the boy that has always taken life and lived it and the woman who has seen his monster and had not covered away. He wanted to scream. He wanted to cry. *Since when does family not mean flesh and blood?* He had found his family. He glanced down at the rope bracelet that covered the scars on Marcy's wrists. He thought to himself how can human nature be so beautiful drowned in its own disaster?

He smiled a tortured smile. His shoulders released their tension. He did not feel free, but for the first time in his life he felt sane.

Then his phone rang.

Fine Arts

First Place: Haley Guerin, “Unacceptance: Sargent and Societal Standards”

Unacceptance: Sargent and Societal Standards

John Singer Sargent’s *El Jaleo* and *Madame X* reflect Sargent’s intimate portraiture technique. His unique depictions of the women in the paintings represent the celebration and the hypocrisy of upper-class ideals. Both were painted at the beginning of Sargent’s career, reflecting his beginning impressions of the aristocracy as a celebrated, but unaccepted, artist. Sargent’s sarcasm within his loved *El Jaleo* and his notorious *Madame X* mock the bourgeoisie. Despite changing times in the salons of Paris, and his eventual fame as an artist, *Madame X* would shock the Parisian art scene and *El Jaleo* would remain masked as an entertaining genre painting despite its social symbolism. Each painting demonstrates the intimate characterization that would characterize Sargent’s unique rendering of the Belle-Époque.

Sargent, the traveler, inspired the rhythmic, dark and tangled *El Jaleo*. Reveling in extreme chiaroscuro, *El Jaleo* portrays a Spanish gypsy, dancing to the flamenco music of the trio behind her. Inspired by his trip to Spain in 1879, Sargent sought to express the bohemian culture of the gypsy that artists in ramshackle Montmartre idealized. The dancer is placed slightly off-center right, creating movement within the frame. The space is intimate, enclosed, and theatrical. The man and three women clapping frame the scene, whilst the band, and man howling, not only enclose the space but contribute to the live-action quality of the artwork. The empty chair, where presumably the flamenco dancer sat, qualifies her presence. Chiaroscuro serves two roles in the painting; to create an intimate setting and spotlight the flexed dancer. Light seems to swirl rhythmically like the gypsy’s outreaching dance. The lighting from the left and right corners forms a triangle with the gypsy’s gown which shadows the black costumes

creating further constraints alludes to the dark and light subject matter. The Gypsy's white silk skirt, uncommon in gypsy attire at the time, absorbs and reflects light in its drapery as if she controls its fragmentation (Artble). The pops of red in the women's shawls balance and illuminate the swirling light source. The tone is raw, unashamed, and filled with mysterious energy. Sargent personified flamenco's drama, grief, and exhilarating movement (Artble). His loose brush strokes and varnished canvas allow the otherworldly performance to come alive.

When *El Jaleo* was completed, Sargent was still a beginner to the structured, haughty Parisian art scene. A realist painter, he rejected yet strove to be one of the affluent. Although *El Jaleo* represents Sargent the world traveler, it also depicts the static views of the upper class. Sargent as the young artist however, heavily played to the upper class' love of unconventionality and the exoticism of the "rambunctious" lower class. The paintings dichotomy demonstrates Sargent's need to be recognized for his painterly interpretation despite his criticism of hypocritical upper-class ideals. If *El Jaleo* depicted the bourgeoisie it would be scandalous but because it a representation of the lower class, it was destined to be viewed as entertainment. Even though Sargent strove to capture the beauty of his traveling experiences, as he so often would, its reception would reflect the hypocrisy of the upper class that *Madame X* would later challenge.

After its completion in 1882, Sargent exhibited his nearly seven by twelve foot wide painting at the famous Paris Salon (JSSGallery 1). The Salon writhed with the rich, famous and potentially notorious upper-class members of Parisian society. Predictably, critical reception was enthusiastic at the year's Salon, and was even revered, for its entertaining depiction of the exotic, ethnic, and passionate lower-class genre scene. The publication *Le Figaro* claimed it to be, "one

of the most original and strongest works of the present Salon” (Davis 121-2). Sargent became a recognizable rising star of the Parisian art world, under the condition that he played by the rules.

While *El Jaleo* is accepted for its intimacy, ethnic, risky, off-centeredness, *Madame X* would not be. The subject of the painting, Madame Gautreau, was glorified among Parisian society for her style, elegance, mystery and unconventional beauty. Born in New Orleans, Virginie Amélie Avignon immigrated to France with her family after her father fell at the Battle of Shiloh during the Civil War (Davis 21, 25). At age seventeen, Virginie entered the judgmental, leisurely, enjoyable aristocracy. Shortly after her well-recognized debut, Pedro Gautier, a wealthy property-owner, asked for her hand in marriage. Virginie's mother, persuaded by Gautier's affluence, granted the unusually matched marriage. Madame Gautier, who would be known as Amélie, young and unsettled with her forty year old husband, invaded the Parisian social scene (Davis 54). She soon accumulated endearing influence within France's highest social circles. Armed with her indefinable mysterious elegance and great wealth, she began to fill her life with gaiety and rich personalities. However, Amélie's celebration was fueled by her notoriety and American upbringing. She was treasured in high social circles for her mystery, beauty and charm but, like Sargent, was not accepted for her American ancestry. Amélie's unconventional beauty featured a high forehead, strong Creole nose, thin lips, extremely pale skin, and paired with her carefree lifestyle, attracted famous painters and would-be artists (Davis 58-9). Well aware of her mystique and unswayed by her unacceptance, she safe-guarded her image and gave careful consideration to the lucky artists whom would be celebrated for their depiction of her.

Sargent had just completed an interesting portrait of the rich surgeon and gynecologist Dr. Samuel-Jean de Pozzi when his subject introduced him to Amélie. Predictably, Sargent

longed to paint her portrait. Both were young. American, celebrated amongst Parisian society, but deeply trying to be accepted amongst their contemporaries (Davis 123-24). Conscience of Sargent's work *El Jaleo*, and perhaps on the recommendation of Pozzi, Amélie's rumored lover, she agreed on allowing Sargent's rendition (Davis 109). Thrilled with the commission, Sargent set out to secure his own fame as well as capitalize and immortalize Amélie's notoriety.

After weeks of frustration in February 1883 during Gautreau's sitting, Sargent finally made his decision regarding the depiction of his current muse. Sargent rummaged through her decadent closet and chose a form-fitting black gown (David 127). Black was a common color worn at the time by businessmen, shopgirls and clergy. Moreover, it was worn by the upper classes in the evening to darn theatricality, look distinguished, or "look romantic in the Byronic sense" (Davis 128). Gautreau's well-known, unnaturally, pale skin against the muted brown and black background sprouts light. The folds of her gown are detailed yet do not reflect light as the silk draped skirt of the gypsy in *El Jaleo*. Instead, Gautreau absorbs light as if to transfer it to her unusually pale skin. Unlike *El Jaleo*, *Madame X* does not seem to pertain to any particular setting. The backdrop and plain table, in which Gautreau rests her hand, is bathed in a soft glow with dark and heavy undertones. The Anthony van Dyck inspired background makes the setting seem other-worldly. Gautreau's pose creates even greater incorporeality. She is in full-profile, her body positioned in a twist, her hand barely balanced on the table, and her eyes stretched away from the viewer. Her glance, with her famous Creole nose in the air, creates a sense of unattainability in which she seems completely conscience.

Sargent showcased the nearly seven foot tall, *Madame X* at the 1884 Paris Salon with much anticipation from the press and society alike (JSSGallery 2). Sargent's questioned fame and Madame Gautreau's continuous quest to sustain her own, led both to hope for a good critical

reception (Davis 156, 163). However, the Salon jury was a tough and the traditional crowd difficult to satisfy. The aesthetic of the 1884 salon sought. “A painting, be it a portrait, landscape, or historical scene” that was to “enhance, ennoble, and illuminate its subject” it was not meant to “mirror, or in some way expose, reality” (Davis 162). The salon still continued its French Academy origins and its love for “rousing scenes from history, pretty pastorals, classical nudes, and flattering portraits” (Davis 162). Sargent’s portrait of Madame Gautreau was placed in Salle 31, the last room dedicated to painting that year (Davis 169).

To the terrible dismay of all involved in the painting, it was dreadfully received by critics and viewers. Sargent’s rendition of Gautreau was deemed suggestive, inappropriate, and lower class. Her lack of jewelry and form fitting black gown suggested she was not wearing a petticoat, and the most scandalous aspect to viewers, her fallen strap, exposing her bright pale skin, horrified viewers (Davis 139). Her glance was “indifferent to her shocking dishabille [and] called attention to her shamelessness” (Davis 171). Women, who loved the indecent *El Jaleo*, were the first to “assert their moral superiority and disparage Amélie” (Davis 171). After failure in the eyes of the public and lost fame amongst the Paris bourgeoisie, Gautreau and Sargent both decided to have nothing to do with the portrait (Davis 188). Sargent repainted the fallen strap and secured it to her shoulder and kept in his studio until he sold it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1916 (Davis 188). Gautreau hid away in shame and never regained her previous likeability. Both were fighting against the same societal inconsistencies as each other despite ruling each other out of their lives in a fit of embarrassment. Their American heritage raised prejudice, their originality was adored yet threatening, and fame their utmost goal. Neither was adamantly rebellious, but through the unattainable eyes of *Madame X* and the eyes of which envisioned them, each longed for the world that neither would ever fully possess.

Sargent stated, “I do not judge, I only chronicle” (Davis 255). Indeed, with both *El Jaleo* and *Madame X* Sargent seeks to depict a moment in time, interspersed with little hints of his own personality and judgment. *El Jaleo* not only embodies Sargent’s love of travel but his ability to understand, even aspire to, upper-class society whilst commenting on their hypocrisy. The critical reception of both artworks reflects classic standards as well as the societal constrictions of women at the time. It was deemed acceptable for a gypsy to be sexual, intimate, and theatrical but Madame Gautreau, a member of the upper class, could not represent similar eroticism. However, progressive attitudes of both John Singer Sargent and Amélie Pierre-Gautreau in the creation of the portrait have paid off today. Sargent would not only later believe it to be his greatest work, but it now is one of the most popular works housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art seen by thousands of visitors a year. Today, *Madame X* is now known as “the face that launched a thousand loan requests” stationing its image across the Atlantic once again (Davis 260). Its extreme style is glorified amongst designers and artists today and has become one of the most known female portraits of all time. *El Jaleo* continues to fascinate and entertain viewers for its elements of revelry and encapsulating theatricality. Each rendering has a social significance that is relevant today and the study of the time period. Sargent created an air of mystery in both works that allow us to attach new perspectives on his timeless subjects.

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Fine Arts

Second Place: Jessie Andrews, “Sir Arthur Evans’ Labryinth-Knossos Palace and Its Mythic Elements”

Sir Arthur Evans’ Labyrinth- Knossos Palace and Its Mythic Elements

The societies of the ancient Aegean provide us with a wealth of myths that have captivated those who have heard them for centuries. One of the most popular and best known of these myths is that of the Minotaur and its Labyrinth. The story begins with Minos, a prince of Crete, attempting to claim the Cretan throne, only to be rebuffed by the king’s advisors. To prove that he had a divine right to rule, Minos prayed to Poseidon to send him a sign from the sea. In response, Poseidon sent Minos a pure white bull, which Minos was to sacrifice on his coronation day. But Minos was so taken by the bull’s perfection that he decided to keep it, and instead sacrificed another, less perfect bull to the gods. But Poseidon discovered this deception and decided to punish Minos by making his young wife Pasiphae fall in love with the white bull. Pasiphae then made love to the bull, the eventual result of which was the Minotaur- a creature with the head and tail of a bull and the body of a man. To hide this monstrous progeny away, Minos commissioned the inventor Daedalus to design and construct the Labyrinth- a colossal maze beneath Minos’ palace in which the Minotaur was confined and forced to live out its days in the darkness and loneliness of the underground (Atsma).

With its convoluted floor plan, bull-centric art, and mysterious origins, it is easy to understand why, when Sir Arthur Evans uncovered Knossos Palace in 1899, he initially believed to have found the legendary Labyrinth. However, once he began to study the site properly, it should have become readily evident to him that this was not the historical inspiration for the dank, dark Labyrinth at all, rather it was a vibrant palace which flourished from 1900 to 1450

BCE. This was, unfortunately, not the case as Evans was part of the early school of Aegean archeologists who, rather than use their excavations to learn something new about an ancient people, attempted to force the evidence to fit their personal theories regarding their discoveries. This group, which included Heinrich Schliemann, the archaeologist famed for his discovery of Ilium (the legendary city also known as Troy) in Turkey, and the graves of “Agamemnon” and “Atreus” at Mycenae in Greece, were especially eager to use their finds as historical evidence to support the origins of Greek myths (Cothren, Stokstad 91) and were not above altering or carefully selecting their finds and evidence to better do so. Evans, for example, altered his photographs of Knossos Palace in order to have the evidence better seem to fit his belief that he had found the Labyrinth (German). He did this not to maliciously obscure the truth, but to accentuate and strengthen pre-existing evidence, such as the architecture of the site and its bull-centric art.

With its sprawling floor plan, numerous levels, and winding corridors, it is easy to draw parallels between Knossos Palace and the Labyrinth of legend. However, while the notorious maze was subterranean, dark, and confined, the palace was a place of light and openness. The sprawling complex (Figure 1) spans 150,000 square feet- double the square footage of the modern American football stadium (Jarus)- and the tallest buildings are believed to have been five stories tall, with several of these stories below what appears to be ground level (the palace is built on a rise). It is comprised of a series of halls, corridors and chambers constructed using a wooden post and lintel system, which was then covered with dressed stone, much as a modern house would have a wooden structure covered by sheetrock. Many of the main rooms and stairwells had skylights which allowed for ventilation and illumination, even at the lowest levels of the buildings (Cothren, Stokstad). Most of the buildings centered around the open Central

Court and nearly all of them had either terrace or portico walkways on the exterior of all levels. Corridors within the buildings were, however, usually fully enclosed, as was the case with the one that wound its way from the southern entrance of the compound to the Central Court (Jarus). These corridors, when excavated, would have looked very reminiscent of the winding passageways of a maze, thus possibly inspiring Evans' claims to have discovered the Labyrinth.

In addition to these architectural features, how the complex was decorated also helped support Evans' theory. The Hall of Axes (Figure 2), a reception hall decorated with a double axe motif ("Knossos Palace & Archaeological Site, Crete Island, Greece: The Monuments"), helps connect the room and the labyrinth (which, in later versions of the myth, was referred to as the "House of the Double Axes") in a rather indirect, but seemingly convincing way. "Labrys" is the modern Greek word for double axe (Cothren, Stokstad 86) and was believed to be the root for the word "Labyrinth." However, modern scholars contend that "Labyrinth" actually comes from the Hellenized word "laburinthos," meaning "place of the winding roads" (Kaya). But the double axes are not the only Labyrinth-esque wall decor at Knossos. Bulls, such as the one Minos was supposed to have sacrificed and which sired the Minotaur, feature prominently in the Minoan frescoes which cover the walls of the complex.

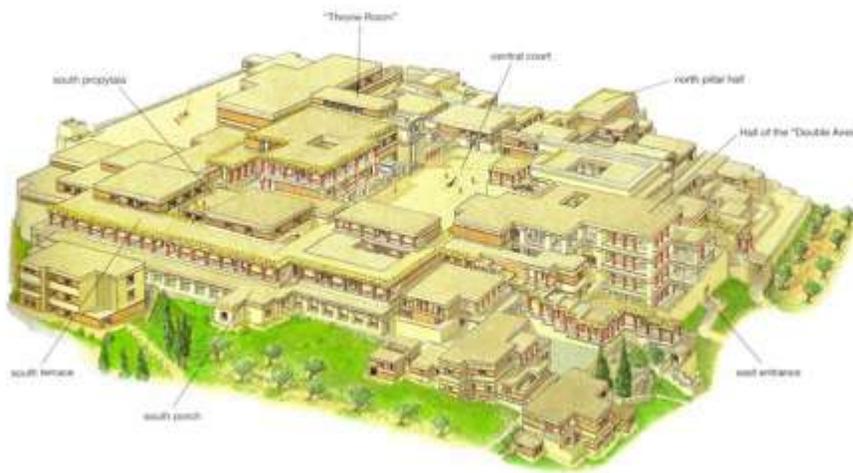
Perhaps the most famous of all the Minoan frescoes is *Bull-Leaping* (30 by 41 inches, stucco based fresco, 1400 BCE), which depicts three individuals, two women and a man, apparently in the act of flipping over the back of a bull. What the fresco actually depicts is still debated by scholars today, with some arguing that it is merely a representation of a symbolic event, such as a rite of passage into adulthood, while others claim that it illustrates a real athletic competition held by the Minoans ("Bull-Leaping"). Both possible meanings indicate that the bull was a very important animal to the Minoans, and the multiple possibilities highlight a

gap in scholars' knowledge of the Minoans- while it is known that bulls were revered, why they were is still a mystery. Again, theories abound, and range from the bull as a symbol of fertility to the bull as a symbol of strength. Seemingly in support of the later theory is a lesser known fresco, located above the north entrance to the complex, depicts a bull charging at an olive tree (thus fittingly called *Charging Bull and Olive Tree* (Figure 4), fresco, no dimensions given, Late Minoan), a motif also seen on the famous Vapheio cups. While the bull is massive, it is not the sheer size that is important, rather that it would have faced outwards from the complex and could have been visible as one approached the complex from the north. This was the ancient equivalent of flying a flag with a crest upon it, thus marking the Minoans as the people of the bull, a strong people, like the animal which they chose to represent them.

But frescoes were not the only form of bull-centric art which adorned the palace at Knossos. Sculpture helped to bring the beasts which may have inspire the minotaur into three dimensions. One instance of this is the *Bull's Head Rhyton* (Figure 5) (c. 1550-1500 BCE, black steatite, jasper, gold leaf covered wood, rock crystal, approximately 10" tall). This rhyton, when filled with wine via a hole in the back of the neck, would spew wine from its mouth, so the Minoans could imbibe the wine as if it had passed through an actual animal, perhaps drawing upon the strength and virility of the beast as they did so. This demonstrates how, to the Minoans, the bull was something to be worshiped, rather than locked away in a maze. Also of note are the peculiar statues which ring a balcony on the southern side of the complex. These large, U-shaped statues (Figure 6) are thought to have been meant to resemble the horns of a bull and many theories abound as to what their purpose was. Some claim that they were ceremonial (Evans' called them the "Horns of Consecration"), perhaps having to do with fertility, while others simply insist that they were decorative- again a sign that the Minoans were the people of the bull.

It is important to note that, despite all of this evidence which could lead one to agree with Evans that Knossos Palace was the Labyrinth of legend, no physical evidence of a maze or depictions of the Minotaur have ever been discovered at the site (it should also be noted that while Evans did believe in the existence of the Labyrinth, he did not believe in the existence of the Minotaur). However, Evans did, in a way, discover the Labyrinth- after all, the bull and what it represented to the Minoans is still locked away in the complex ruins of Knossos Palace, which is known to this day as the real-life Labyrinth.

Figure 1. Knossos Palace



Reconstruction of the "Palace" Complex, Knossos, Crete . Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

Figure 2. Hall of Axes



http://www.interkriti.org/dbsf/pages_pics/15/1512316/axes_hall01.jpg

Figure 3. *Bull-Leaping*



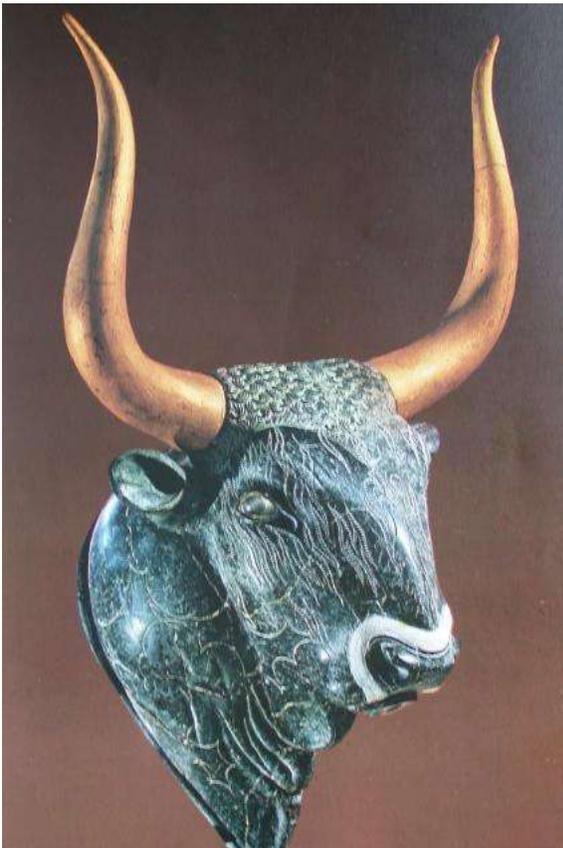
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Figure 4. *Charging Bull and Olive Tree* (Reconstruction by Sir Arthur Evans)



Knossos North Gate View . By Paul Cowan.

Figure 5. Bull's Head Rhyton



<http://archives.evergreen.edu/webpages/curricular/2006-2007/greeceanditaly/files/greeceanditaly/images/Bull%20rhyton.preview.jpg>

Figure 6. Horn Statue



Horn Statue, Knossos . By Derek Seto.

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Foreign Language

First Place: Kalina Jurkowski, “Una entrada en un blog”

Una entrada en un blog

Para mí, el problema medioambiental más serio del mundo es el cambio climático. El cambio climático es algún cambio en el clima por un período largo de tiempo. Incluye el calentamiento global, cambios de viento o precipitación y cambios de otros aspectos del clima. Este problema es tan peligroso porque no les afecta sólo a algunas personas, pero le afecta todo el mundo. Según NASA, noventa y siete por ciento de los científicos climáticos están de acuerdo que el cambio climático es real y que los humanos lo causan (“Scientific Consensus”). Porque tantos científicos educados han estudiado el clima y encontraron los mismos resultados, sabemos sin duda que el clima está cambiando y la Tierra se está calentando. Y desafortunadamente, la Tierra seguirá calentándose para siempre a menos que la gente tome acción contra las causas del problema del cambio climático.

Los humanos están causando mucho del cambio climático porque ponen demasiados gases de efecto invernadero en la atmósfera. Es cierto que los gases de efecto invernadero son necesarios para la vida en la Tierra porque permiten la atmósfera retener la energía y el calor. Sin embargo, demasiados gases causan la atmósfera y el planeta llegar a ser demasiado caliente. La agencia de la protección del medio ambiente de los Estados Unidos (EPA) explica que la mayoría de los gases de efecto invernadero vienen de la quema de los combustibles fósiles, como el petróleo y el carbón, además de la deforestación y algunos procesos industriales (“Climate Change”). En nuestra sociedad, estamos acostumbrados a depender de los combustibles fósiles

para nuestros coches, casas, y casi todas las cosas que usan la electricidad. Esta dependencia es una de las causas más grandes del cambio climático.

Habrán muchos impactos importantes del cambio climático. Según NASA, en el siglo pasado, la temperatura de la Tierra subió por un grado Fahrenheit. Parece como un cambio pequeño, pero creará los cambios gigantes en el medio ambiente (“Effects”). También, el EPA explica que el dióxido carbono, un gas de efecto invernadero, puede quedarse en la atmósfera por casi un siglo. En consecuencia, la Tierra seguirá calentándose después de que paremos de producir tanto gas de efecto invernadero (“Climate Change”). Por eso no hay ninguna acción que pueda parar los impactos para las décadas próximas. Los impactos ya ocurren y seguirán ocurriendo. Los glaciares están encogiéndose, el nivel de mar está subiendo, y muchos lugares están sufriendo de más períodos de calor intenso. En nuestra tierra en el Medio Oeste, los veranos harán mucho calor y los inviernos harán menos frío. Este cambio de la temperatura causará muchos cambios en la agricultura, los lagos, los bosques y es posible que causará más inundaciones. Como se ha notado, el cambio climático tendrá muchos impactos serios en el medio ambiente que afectarán todo el mundo.

Hay ilusión para el futuro con tal de que más de la gente trabaje en los muchos medios posibles para reducir el uso de los combustibles fósiles y por consiguiente el cambio climático. Por ejemplo, las personas pueden caminar, andar en bicicleta, o usar la transportación pública en vez de conducir un coche. También, la gente puede ahorrar la electricidad si apaga las luces y otros aparatos electrónicos cuando no los está usando. Además, las personas pueden reciclar para crear menos basura. Si las personas difunden los hechos sobre el cambio climático y los medios de reducirlo, entonces más personas ayudarán al medio ambiente. Se darán cuenta de que hay nadie que el cambio climático no afecte. Todas estas acciones ayudarán a reducir la emisión de

los gases de efecto invernadero, que a su vez ayudarán a reducir los impactos del cambio climático.

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Foreign Language

Second Place: Jamie Waltenbaugh, “Me llamo Jamie”

Me llamo Jamie

Me llamo Jamie y quiero cambiar lo siguiente de mi persona. Yo quiero cambiar poco de mi persona. La pregunta es muy difícil contestar. Un problema con mi persona es mi gusto de trabajar mucho. Siempre estoy ocupada. Este semestre, tomo veintiún créditos y trabajo dos trabajos. Tomo seis clases: español, geografía, dos de computaciones, actriz de teatro, y religión del mundo. Mi clase favorita es español porque es muy interesante pero muy difícil. La clase de español toma la mayoría de mi tiempo. Yo no pensé que toman a mucho tiempo pero fue al cantarano. La pronunciación me hace enojar. Practico en mis ratos libres pero es muy poco. Mis trabajos son júnior bibliotecario en la biblioteca de Cottey College y escribo cartas para mi pueblo. También mis trabajos toman mucho tiempo pero estudio en mis trabajos. El próximo semestre estoy tomando menos créditos, estoy tomando diecisiete créditos.

Tengo un problema con decir “no” porque tengo muchas posiciones en la universidad. Soy la presidente de la clase de segundo año en mi universidad. Esta posición es muy importante para mí. Esta posición toma mucho tiempo pero me gusta el trabajo. Tomo cinco otras posiciones en mi universidad: coordinadora de publicidad de Delta Psi Omega, coordinadora de publicidad de Phi Theta Kappa, un miembro de Sigma Kappa Delta, representante de la clase de segunda año para la asociación del gobierno de estudiantes, y un miembro de Golden Key. Toman mucho de mi tiempo pero no tanto tiempo como la posición de presidente. Mis posiciones quitan tiempo estudiar para mis clases. Necesito poner mis clases primero. Con este horario no me salió tiempo

libre. Necesito mi tiempo libre porque voy me loca. Mi problema es trabajar todo el tiempo. Quiero hacer una siesta una parte de mi rutina de vida diaria.

Yo quiero cambiar la persona en que sobre analizo todo. Estoy preocupada de mi futuro. Necesito pensar en el presente ¿Qué universidad debo ver? ¿En qué estado estará? ¿Qué país a viajar? Mi mente está llena de preguntas. El futuro es incierto. Cambio mi profesión futura cada semana. Mi pasión es la industria cinematográfica. Son poco los trabajos en la industria. Hay críticos que dicen ‘No tienes talento’ o ‘trabajos en la industria son recibir difícil.’ Mi mayor crítico soy yo. Algunos días tengo opinión negativa sobre trabajar en la industria cinematográfica. Otros días tengo opinión positiva. Cambie la posición que quiero trabajo cada semana pero en la industria cinematográfica. Las películas no son necesarias para a vivir. La actriz es no importante comparada a la doctora. La directora de películas no se compara con la ingeniera. ¿Por qué quiero trabajo en la industria cinematográfica? Porque las películas son masajes y las profesoras de vida. Mi meta es llevar los masajes de las películas a la gente. También quiero un trabajo en la industria cinematográfica porque me hace feliz. Mi gran meta es ser feliz.

En conclusión, mi mente es mi peor enemiga. Pienso mucho y trabajo mucho. Necesito velejarme. Necesito vivir en el presente. El presente es hermoso. ¿Por qué me preocupado con el futuro? No hay una solución de esa pregunta. Vivo en el presente y no vivo en el futuro. Mis soluciones de los problemas con mi persona son lo siguiente. Soy la presidenta de la clase segunda de mi universidad por todo el año escolar pero estoy tomando menos créditos el próximo semestre. No estoy preocupada por cosas no que puedo cambio. Yo quiero traer alegría a la gente. Primero necesito tener estabilidad. Estoy logrando metas para mí futuro. Pienso que estoy viviendo el sueño de mi vida. El mundo es grande y mis es nuestro para viajar. La vida es

pequeño para pensar y trabajar mucho. Quiero vivir mi vida. Quiero viajar el mundo. Quiero cambiar poco de mi persona. Mi persona es mi persona y estoy muy feliz nací. Me llamo Jamie y estoy madurando para ser la mujer que quiero.

Humanities

First Place: Paige Ott, “The Chemists’ War: Chemical Warfare in World War I”

“The Chemists’ War”: Chemical Warfare in World War I

Though the Hague Declaration of 1899 and the Hague Convention of 1907 outlawed chemical warfare (specifically the use of “poison or poisonous weapons”), both the Allies and the Central Powers participated in the research, development, and use of chemical weapons in World War I (Jones 3; Hague Declaration qtd. in Eksteins 161). France, Britain, and Germany all began experimenting with tear-gases at the beginning of the war in order to break the stalemate of trench warfare, not considering this a violation of the Hague agreements (Jones 3). The French used tear-gases that had been developed before the war and used by their police force; in January 1915, General Curmer of the French corps of engineers ordered a design of tear-gas hand grenade (Jones 3). In late 1914, Britain tested fifty possible substances in a trench (Jones 3). The substances tested at this point were non-lethal, meant merely to harass the opposition (Fitzgerald 615). And, in 1914, the Germans attempted to exacerbate the effect of shrapnel shells by adding an irritant to the shells, though the attempt went unnoticed by the British (Jones 3). The Germans then designed T-Shells—shrapnel shells filled with the tear-gases benzyl bromide and xylyl bromide—to be used against the Russians at Bolimov in January 1915. The attempt again went unnoticed when the liquid failed to vaporize in cold weather (Jones 3).

Experimentation with tear-gas quickly grew into a separate category of warfare—one that the world had never seen before. Soon, it was more than any country could do to protect its armies from the increasing number of substances that made their way to the battle front. Though both sides were guilty of developing and deploying chemical weapons throughout the war, Germany was behind some of the worst attacks and the most important developments in

chemical weaponry. Germany was the first to deploy chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas, as well as a chlorine-phosgene combination. (The Allies quickly followed suit after each development.) Much of Germany's success in chemical warfare was due to Fritz Haber.

Haber was the German director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry in Berlin. Prompted by the German shell shortage in Bolimov, he was the first to suggest releasing chlorine gas from industrial cylinders; this method would not require the use of shells to release gas (Jones 3). Haber worked with IG Farben, then a German chemical industry conglomerate. As chlorine was a by-product of IG Farben's dye-stuff industry, the agent was already available in high quantities—likely the reason that chlorine, specifically, was suggested (Keegan 198). Haber was confident that the gas would reinstate German initiative, and bring victory to Germany despite a disadvantage in munition and manpower (Eksteins 161). Haber led German chemical warfare throughout World War I, and continued to do undercover research after 1918. Though Haber would later be named the “father of chemical weapons,” his work was the product of a mobilization effort in which all countries of the war participated.

Haber's idea would be executed on April 22, 1915, the second day of the Second Battle of Ypres. This day marked the “first systematic use of asphyxiating gas on the Western Front by the Germans,” and indeed the first significant use by any power, though France and Britain had been buying liquid chlorine as early as September 1914 (Eksteins 161). Germany's initiative in the research and deployment of chemical weaponry seems due to two primary conditions, the first being that Germany was, at the time, the world's leader in science (Fitzgerald 613). Germany not only led the world in academic chemistry, but its companies (IG Farben; Badische Aniline & Soda Fabrik) held a near world monopoly in chemical production, and as a result, provided Germany with many of the materials used in combat (Fitzgerald 613, 619; Keegan

198). The second condition was Germany's ever-present knowledge of its own disadvantage—from the beginning of the war, when the Germans lacked the ammunition and numbers of their opponents, through the end of the war, when they employed mustard gas as a “last ditch attempt to defeat the Allies” before the US would arrive (Eksteins 161; Jones 50). The Germans justified their use of chlorine gas at Ypres by claiming that the Allies were already using poisonous gases in battle (as opposed to nontoxic irritants such as tear-gas), though they could not substantiate these claims (Eksteins 161).

On April 22, 6,000 cylinders containing 160 tons of chlorine were released against French and Algerian armies; “a ‘vesicant,’ [chlorine] causes death by stimulating over-production of fluid in the lungs, leading to drowning” (Keegan 197). Though the Germans hoped to gain territory in the battle, they attacked primarily to distract the Allies while Germany moved reserve troops from the Eastern to the Western Front. The attack was also intended as an experiment for their new weapon (Keegan 197). Neither Germany nor its opponents were prepared for the chaos that would ensue. Within minutes, 1,000 French and Algerian soldiers had been killed, and 4,000 more wounded (Fitzgerald 611). Within an hour, an 8,000 yard gap had opened in the Allies' defenses; once the Allies discovered what the puzzling greenish-yellow clouds were, they fled, leaving the French front lines deserted (Keegan 198; Jones 5). Though the Allies had been warned by German deserters that the attack was impending, they possessed little understanding of the potential consequences of such an attack, and as a result, failed to take the threat seriously. No preparations whatsoever for the gas had been made (Jones 6).

The Germans, as surprised by the impact of their attack as the Allies were unprepared, did not have enough soldiers in reserve to advance and take advantage of the damage they had inflicted. They were also prevented from advancing by the gas itself, which lingered, and could

potentially be blown back in their direction (Jones 6). Chemical attacks would reoccur several times throughout the battle. A second chemical attack on April 24, this time against British and Canadian troops, was less successful because the gas failed to rise above ground level, but in panic, the Allies retreated anyway (Winter 142). On May 1, 6, and 10, a change in the direction of wind caused casualties to both sides.

The Second Battle of Ypres ended on May 25, 1915. Though the Allies had been pushed back within two miles of Ypres, they were never defeated (Keegan 199). Germany's use of gas reinforced Ally beliefs of "the satanic nature of German threat"; the British were appalled by the effects of the gas; nonetheless, holding an exaggerated view of its potential, the British quickly began preparations to respond in kind, which they would attempt at the Battle of Loos in September 1915 (Eksteins 161; Jones 10). Chemicals would subsequently become standard in the battles of World War I. Gerald J. Fitzgerald states that "by mid-1915, both sides regularly used cylinders to deploy chlorine gas, and by mid-1916 both sides mixed chlorine and phosgene in an attempt to create larger numbers of casualties" (615). Though the use of gas by both sides increased throughout the war in frequency, volume, and lethality, "soldiers continued to associate gas with improper methods of fighting," considering gas warfare to be "beyond the bounds of humanity" (Eksteins 162; Fitzgerald 617).

The progression of the war meant "the complete mobilization of [each nation's] academic, industrial, and economic resources for war" (Fitzgerald 613). The resulting militarization of science departments in (often prestigious) universities facilitated the development of increasingly sophisticated chemical weapons and chemical protection (Fitzgerald 614). Gas, therefore, was not only released in a variety of forms, but deployed using a variety of methods. Gas shells, initially abandoned because of a shell shortage, were reintroduced later in

abundance; by 1918, one in four shells fired by both sides on the Western Front was a gas shell (Winter 143). In addition to shells and cylinders, gas projectiles were developed in late World War I and used with substantial success (Jones 45).

Predictably, weapons advanced faster than protection, and the earliest models of gas masks illustrate what was, throughout the war, a mostly desperate attempt to counter progressively more destructive chemical weapons. On April 23, the day after the chemical attack at Ypres, cloths soaked in water and tied around the mouth were proposed as protection against chlorine gas (Keegan 198). Bicarbonate soda and urine were also suggested as neutralizers (Jones 7). Winston Churchill appealed to the public through the *Daily Mail* to make the masks of waste cotton and wool. Though Churchill had been advised by Professor John Haldane, a gas poisoning expert, that the masks would be useless, many of the 30,000 masks that had been made by the following day ended up in the hands of soldiers (Jones 8). The Black Veiling Respirator, a similar model which had been soaked in more sophisticated neutralizers, saved hundreds of lives in a chlorine attack on May 24, 1915; however, the nonetheless primitive mask would have to be re-dipped in neutralizing solution every five minutes if one were to prevent the mask from drying out while in use (Jones 8; 10).

Gas protection continued to evolve, quickly developing into the model that would inspire the modern gas mask. The British Hypo Helmet, which included goggles, began to arrive in France on May 8, 1915. An early French version of this helmet, the *Compresse*, added a wire framework to keep the mask evenly spaced around the face, as well as a chemical indicator that would change color when the helmet's neutralizing absorbent had run out (Jones 10-11). Early versions of gas masks, if functional, were not always helpful: in the Battle of Loos, the neutralizing absorbents of British gas helmets seeped out when wet, irritating the skin and

sometimes causing men to think they had been gassed. The helmets were also stuffy, and difficult to breathe through amid the pressure of battle (Jones 14-15). Later, in response to threats of phosgene gas, the Large Box Respirator was designed: a box containing three layers of neutralizing agent was carried in a satchel, connected to a facemask by a rubber tube (Jones 21-22). Though too bulky to be efficient in battle, the box apparatus provided the basis for the more sophisticated respirators of late World War I, which featured a removable cartridge filter attached to a snout-like mask. Because the filter was removable, the masks could be easily updated and improved according to developments in gas weaponry.

Rather than embracing protective masks, soldiers felt dehumanized and claustrophobic in them. Denis Winter, a British officer, expressed feelings of detachment and lethargy: ““We gaze[d] at one another like goggle-eyed, imbecile frogs. The mask makes you feel only half a man... A man doesn’t live on what passes through the filter—he merely exists. He gets the mentality of a wide-awake vegetable”” (qtd. in Fitzgerald 616).

As protection from and response to gas continued to improve, gas did little for the advance of either side, save for cause casualties and lower morale; this remained true until the appearance of mustard gas, the usage of which would undermine all stabilization that had been achieved up to that point (Fitzgerald 617). Mustard gas did not emerge in battle until July 1917; until then, phosgene was perhaps the most prevailing threat in gas warfare. The first verified use of phosgene was by the Germans against the British on December 19, 1915, in combination with chlorine at a ratio of four to one. Over ten times more toxic than chlorine, phosgene can have a delayed reaction, victims appearing unaffected for hours before death (Jones 20). When mustard gas eventually surfaced, it caused more chemical casualties in World War I than all other chemical agents combined (Fitzgerald 617). Capable of causing permanent blindness in non-

lethal cases, exposure to mustard gas resulted in blisters to the skin, followed by bronchitis, and in the worst instances, eventual death by inflammation of the lungs (Jones 48). By 1917, gases were often combined in mixtures, with names such as “Blue Cross,” “Green Cross,” and “Yellow Cross” (German combinations), or “White Star,” “Green Star,” and “Yellow Star” (British combinations) (Jones 41-42). For example, the Germans used lachrymatory (tear-gas) in combination with phosgene to outsmart gas masks: the lachrymatory caused soldiers to remove their masks in a relief reflex, and the phosgene then caused extensive damage (Keegan 376).

Gas was a psychological as well as physical weapon. The constant threat and deployment of gas intensified the “already unbearable stress of life at the front,” sometimes causing mental breakdowns. Identifying real as opposed to imagined gas injuries became a challenge for doctors and medics. Further heightening the stress of soldiers was the unreliability of gas protection, which could leak, or run out of neutralizing agent (Fitzgerald 617). In addition to the lasting physical damage caused by exposure, the psychological damage caused by “gas fright” had notable public health consequences (Fitzgerald 612).

In total, more than 124,000 tons of gas were produced during World War I. Chemical weapons were responsible for approximately 1.3 million casualties and 90,000 deaths by the armistice on November 11, 1918 (Fitzgerald 612). Not restricted to the battlefield, gas blown by wind into surrounding villages and towns caused 5,200 deaths officially, though “the numbers were undoubtedly much higher” (Fitzgerald 616). The manufacture of chemical weapons also endangered chemical workers: an analysis of a single production facility over one seven-month period revealed 925 casualties and 3 fatalities (Fitzgerald 620). In 1925, the Geneva Protocol forbade the use of chemical weapons by any power (Jones 59). World War I is now referred to

by historians as the chemists' war, and chemical warfare has not occurred to the same extent since.

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Humanities

Second Place: Beverly De Marco, “If the Cap Fits”

If the Cap Fits

From a young age, we learn what types of hats firefighters, police officers, soldiers, and many other authoritative figures wear. Hats are an important indicator of the wearer’s profession, both in real life and in movies. On the screen, these articles of clothing also point us to the nature of the person. For example, in *Paper Moon*, Addie Pray’s cap highlights her craftiness. During a particular scene of *Adam’s Rib*, Adam’s hat enhances his supposed malice; Mrs. Attinger’s headpiece adds humor to an otherwise tense situation in the same movie. In these films as well as *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Gilda*, and *Bonjour Tristesse*, the symbolic nature of the characters’ hats significantly adds to their roles.

In *Iron Jawed Angels*, hats are present to dispel feminist stereotypes. When one thinks of Alice Paul’s character, a particular hat comes to mind. It is a velvety, orchid-colored cap with mauve ribbon and a feather; the delicacy and trendiness represent Alice’s feminine style. The first scene of *Iron Jawed Angels* highlights the playfulness of Alice and Lucy; they flip a coin to decide who will get the cap, although Alice, “saw it first.” Viewers might imagine suffragists of that era as serious women dressed in starchy Victorian clothing, with prim, broad-brimmed hats perched on their heads.

While NAWSA president Carrie Chapman Catt certainly fits the aforementioned mold, Alice’s character is quite contrary. She is spritely, striking, and definitely not a “man-hater.” In one part of the movie she agrees to go out with Ben Weissman; he teaches her to drive and dance, and she seems freer. She lets her guard down by taking off her hat and loosening her hair. When Ben humorously asks her not to wear her hat in an earlier scene, she ignores his request,

emphasizing her stubbornness. In politics and in everyday life, Alice did not take “no” for an answer. She even took the hat from her comrade Lucy, who had won it fairly, based on their coin flip.

In *Adam's Rib* and *Gilda*, hats serve ironic purposes. The whole overtone of *Adam's Rib*, despite presenting a serious societal problem, domestic violence, has a witty tone. In the beginning scenes, Mrs. Attinger disguises herself with a hat that has a black veil attached. Her appearance may provoke the audience's laughter, but it also could symbolize the death of her marriage, and attempted homicide of her cheating husband, thus prefiguring mourning attire. Hats in general often signify one's socioeconomic class. The glittery decoration on Mrs. Attinger's hat makes it look flashier, and less expensive or tasteful, than others' hats in the movie.

In regard to another couple, Adam and Amanda treat each other as equals; they even call each other the same pet name, “pinkie” and “pinkie.” They play around in the court room, looking at each other under the desk and pulling other shenanigans. However, Adam shows signs that he is traditional and chivalrous, and that this is attainable even in a relationship where both sexes play similar roles as breadwinner. He gives Amanda a pretty hat because he comes home late from work. To help her client appear likeable and respectable, Amanda gives her the hat. Amanda also might have wanted Adam to see the woman testifying as if she were his own wife, and win his sympathy. The hat plays an important part when Amanda asks the jury to imagine the sexes reversed (Mrs. Attinger as a man and Mr. Attinger as a woman). The husband is pictured as a rather homely woman, and the floral hat emphasizes this even more. When juries envision the wife on trial as a man, they are able to sympathize with her, thus deciding that she is not guilty.

In *Gilda*, there is an ironic scene in which the “femme fatale” and her true love, Johnny, elope after Ballin’s assumed death. In speaking with his clientele immediately before this elopement, Johnny says “Mrs. Mundson is in no condition to see anyone. Her husband’s death has hit her very hard.” When asked if there is a chance that “she might recover,” Johnny mentions that there is “not a chance in the world [...]. You see, Mrs. Mundson is marrying me this afternoon.” The marriage seems oddly out of style for Gilda; they do so hastily on a rainy day in a small office. One might expect her to be glamorously dressed in a glitzy gown, but instead she is modestly cloaked in black, the color of mourning. She wears a small dark cap; a black veil with a floral lace pattern covers her face. Ironically, she is marrying Johnny while supposedly grieving the death of her previous husband, Ballin. Perhaps the director did this to feed into the promiscuous woman and “gold-digger” prejudices audiences of the 1940s might have had of a woman like Gilda, in that she moves so quickly between men.

Yet another use of hats and symbolism occurs in *Paper Moon* and *Bonjour Tristesse*. These articles of clothing represent the characters’ desires to hold on to loved ones who have passed. In *Paper Moon*, Addie Pray is almost always seen wearing her deceased mother’s lace-trimmed cap. One might even argue that this is out of a desire to be like her mother. A particular scene comes to mind in relation to this; Addie sneaks into the hotel bathroom after Mose has gone to sleep. She takes out a picture in which her mother is wearing the lace cap so often seen on Addie herself. The young protagonist then tries to pose like her mother was posing in the picture; perhaps this represents the idea that she wants to emulate her mother’s femininity and glamour, but, because of her age, she is not yet able to do so.

In regard to *Bonjour Tristesse*, there is one important scene in which a hat appears. This is when Cécile takes the hat from a passerby who might have been trying to save Anne after she

drove off the cliff. The straw hat with the red ribbon, once broad-brimmed and proud, now looks drenched and defeated. The style of the hat represents Anne's minimalist fashion; it also is important in the scenes involving her and Cécile. One might argue that Cécile never loved Anne, and just feels a deep sense of regret at her actions; either way, the woman's death has deeply affected Cécile. Rewinding to the scene immediately before her death, Anne is holding the hat in her hand as she watches Raymond rendezvous with Elsa. The close-up shot highlights her unhinged state and her attempt to maintain her composure, although her lip quivers and her eyes well with tears. Importantly, the scene of Anne's death does not show her body. Rather, her bonnet is carted away in place of her corpse; it seems that this hat serves as a metonymy for her character.

Finally, hats are used for male characters in many of the previously discussed movies to symbolize their (sometimes) sly intentions. In *Iron Jawed Angels*, Ben Weissman wears a chipper straw hat with a red band encircling its middle. The hat reflects his good-humored attitude, and goes along with his colorful car. Ben wears this cap during the scene in which he convinces Alice to go out with him. In *Adam's Rib*, Adam wears a black top hat cocked to the side, making him look like a member of the mafia when he comes to Amanda and Kip with a "gun." This image adds to the hostility viewers feel emanating from Adam, and increases the tension of the scene. In *Paper Moon*, Mose has a hat that seems to reflect his shrewd nature as a scam artist, and also to protect his identity by providing a disguise. He is frequently seen wearing a white, wide-brimmed hat with a black band around it. Johnny Farrell's hat in *Gilda* might be the most guileful of them all. In the scene where he marries Gilda, one soon becomes aware of his malevolent intentions to usurp Ballin's role in the ominous way he wears his formal black hat cocked to the side, casting a shadow on part of his face. Even Gilda picks up on this; when

Johnny asks her, “What kind of guy do you think I am?” she replies, “I don’t think anybody knows that, Johnny. Not even you.”

Costumes are reflectors of characters’ true natures and can be used to draw laughter or tears, anger or excitement from the audience. In regard to hats telling the true intentions of a person, Polly Platt told an interesting story in an interview about *Paper Moon*. She described her creation of the lace cap to hide the pilfered moonshine profits “in plain sight”; this reflects Addie Pray’s cunning nature. Hats also foreshadow events in the plot, like Johnny’s “revenge” on Gilda after their elopement. They are the final, finishing touch on a good wardrobe for actors and actresses. As Polly Platt indicated in the aforementioned discussion, it is important that designers pick them out carefully, and even design headpieces themselves when necessary.

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Math/Science

First Place: Hailey Johnson, “Pollution in Beijing: Sources and Effects on Human Health”

Pollution in Beijing: Sources and Effects on Human Health

Every day in Beijing, China, pollution is emitted into the air, casting a thick blanket of smog over the city and enveloping what was once considered normal: safe air. This shift in normality, otherwise known as a shifting baseline, has been looked upon as simply a “way of life” in Beijing according to Steven Jiang of CNN.ⁱ However, the alteration into this “airpocalypse”ⁱⁱ has many root contributors which has resulted in health risks and problems along with pollution from this megacity to disperse into other territories of the world, including the United States.

Major contributors of pollution in Beijing include manufacturing and power plants, automobile exhaust and dust, and factories and construction sites.ⁱⁱⁱ From these sources, pollutants such as carbon monoxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and large quantities of particulate matter are created and emitted into the air, rendering it unhealthy to breathe. Additionally, due to combustion, black carbon, otherwise known as soot, is produced from vehicles, crop burning, factories, stoves, and the burning of coal, and is a key factor in Beijing’s lingering particulate matter. It is particulate matter in the form dust, aerosol particles, hazardous organic compounds, and the burning of fossil fuels that has become a major cause of illness in Beijing, as it can travel deep into the lungs causing respiratory problems and even lung cancer.^{iv} Particulate matter in high concentration is especially detrimental. According to the World Health Organization, a (PM) of 2.5 μm in diameter is “considered safe” “when it is below 25.”^v However, on January 12, 2013, the $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ reached “886 micrograms per cubic meter” and the air

quality index, which is considered hazardous between 301 and 500, reached to an off the chart number at 775 on the U.S. Embassy Beijing Air Quality Monitor.^{vi} The largest contributor to this particulate matter is the combustion of coal. China receives “80 percent of electricity and 70 percent its total energy from coal.”^{vii} Annually, the country burns “3.8 billion tons of coal” which is “nearly as much as the rest of the world combined.”^{viii} In addition to the combustion of coal, Beijing is home to 21.1 million people with “90 million” vehicles emitting exhaust such as carbon monoxide into the air along with dust particles, further increasing the particulate matter into ambient air.^{ix}

As a result of Beijing’s heavy polluted air, a mass quantity of citizens have suffered from numerous health problems and lifestyle changes. A scientific study on “the leading causes of death worldwide” indicated that 1.2 million premature deaths have occurred due to China’s hazardous air.^x Furthermore, air pollution has caused premature births, low birth weight, respiratory illnesses, heart disease, and cancer, specifically lung cancer.^{xi} People are now having to anticipate the amount of time spent outside during the day, remain aware of their rate of breathing, reduce their physical activity spent outdoors, decide whether to use a protective mask, and determine whether or not to take their young child or elderly loved ones outside on a specific day. Last year, “Beijing reported 58 days of serious pollution, or one every six to seven days on average.”^{xii} Because of this pollution, canned air is now being sold to the people of Beijing by philanthropist, Chen Guangbiao “With flavors, such as pristine Tibet and post-industrial Taiwan.”^{xiii} The fact that canned air is being sold signifies the extent of the pollution in Beijing.

Finally, while some may presume to think that what happens in Beijing may stay in Beijing; this notion is not the case. A study on air pollution and Pacific Cyclone activity, published in *Nature Communications*, revealed that air pollution “has powerful consequences for

cyclone formation, increasing overall precipitation over the Northwest Pacific by 7 percent over what it would be otherwise.”^{xiv} Additionally, “regional greenhouse gas effect” from particulate matter in China’s air is being created which is “significantly contributing to climate change.” Also, according to this same study, particulate matter transported to other countries through “prevailing winds known as Westerlies” have been found by researchers to be traced from China. As a result of Westerlies, “between 12 and 24 percent of the sulfate-based air pollution,” “four to six percent of carbon monoxide,” “and two to five percent of ground-level ozone” present over the Western United States in 2006 originated from China. During this year, these pollutants caused Los Angeles to surpass EPA standards of air quality for ozone which is evidence that pollution can travel and does not remain concentrated in one particular location of the world.^{xv}

In conclusion, Beijing has experienced a detrimental shifting baseline. Air is being sold in cans do to the immense amount of particulate matter and pollution emitted into the air every day. People must now assess risk factors before entering the outdoor world. Premature deaths and births as well as serious diseases such as lung disease and cancer have occurred due to the simple fact that Beijing’s air is not safe. The severe abundance of pollution and particulate matter in Beijing has traveled across the world and has found its way here in the U.S. If significant action is not taken and maintained by government officials and the population of Beijing, the return to clean, healthy air and normality of blue skies may drift into simply a dream.

ⁱ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ksps_1Zwg5o

ⁱⁱ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gU9IAMO-rxY>

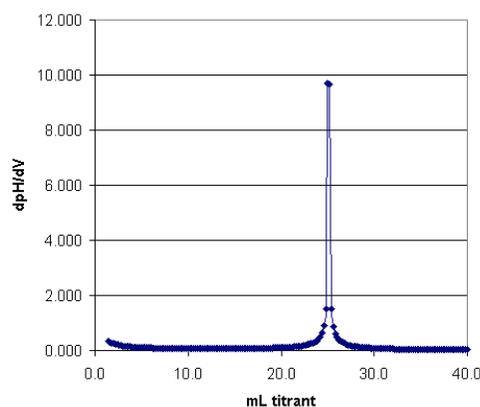
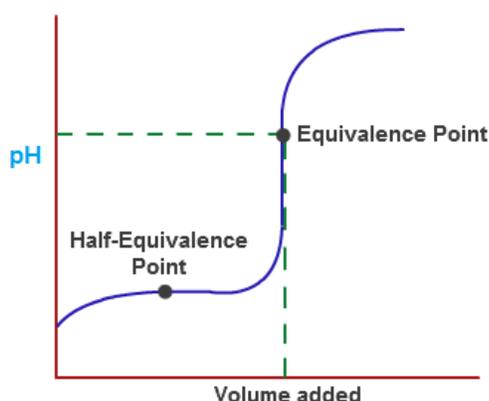
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Math/Science

Second Place: Brianna Jones, "Identifying a Weak Acid by Titrimetry Lab Report"

Introduction

The objective of this experiment is to identify a weak acid using a titration method. The Bronsted-Lowry theory claims that an acid donates protons (H^+) and bases accept protons. Every acid has an equivalent mass which is the mass an acid needs to give a mole of transferable ions. Something else an acid has that can help identify it is the strength it has. Strength is determined by how likely the acid is to dissociate into ions. The K_a value (acid dissociation constant) of an acid shows the strength of an acid. The larger the value, the stronger the acid. Usually K_a values are changed to pKa values for convenience: $pK_a = -\log(K_a)$. In the experiment an unknown acid will be identified by using titration and the LabWorks program. The titration data will then be used to discover the pKa value which can then be compared to the tabulated values in the lab book to uncover the actual acid used. The graph that will be created with LabWorks is called a titration curve, and it looks like this:



The graph on the right is the first derivative of the titration curve. The equivalence point (where the number of moles of OH^- added to the sample is exactly equal to the number of moles of the acid present in the sample) is the very tip of the graph, and this can be applied to the first graph to determine the pKa value.

Materials and Methods

Safety

Always wear goggles while in the lab, wearing gloves during this lab is desirable, avoid skin or clothing contact with the chemicals, do not ingest any of the substances, and the NaOH substance and unknown acids are toxic and corrosive.

Materials

2 250-mL Erlenmeyer flasks, distilled water, sample of unknown acid, weighing paper, analytical balance, 50-mL graduated cylinder, phenolphthalein indicator, 0.5 M NaOH, watch glass, 50-mL buret, ring stand, buret clamp, 400-mL beaker, computer, pH probe, LabWorks Interface Program, pH 7 buffer, stirring bar, 100-mL beaker, and a magnetic stirrer.

Methods

Rinse a 250-mL Erlenmeyer flask and obtain a small sample of an unknown acid, enough to measure 0.5-0.6 grams of it. Transfer the sample to the Erlenmeyer flask and dissolve it with 50 mL of water (measured in a graduated cylinder). Record the concentration and cover with a watch glass while it is not being used. Carefully rinse the buret with the NaOH solution and then fill the buret to the 0-mL mark completely with NaOH solution, draining any excess into a discard solution. Titrate slowly until the solution turns pink and stays that way for at least 30 seconds. Find the volume required of the NaOH to achieve this. Use the mass of the unknown acid and the volume of NaOH required to find out the mass of unknown needed for a 25-mL titration. Next is the pH probe calibration. Begin the program and plug the probe in. Calibrate your probe based on the instructions given to you by your instructor. An apparatus for pH titrations needs to be set up. To do this, attach a clamp to the ring stand and obtain a magnetic stirrer. Place a stirring bar in a 100-mL beaker and put that on top of the magnetic stirrer. Add 50 mL of water to the beaker. Weigh a sample of your unknown to the mass you calculated earlier and pour it into the 100-mL beaker. Begin the magnetic stirrer and wait until the mixture is completely mixed up. Turn off the stirrer and set up the pH probe inside so that it is clamped but

not able to be hit by the stirring bar. Refill the buret with NaOH to the 0 mL line. Begin the program under the direction of your instructor. Continue the experiment until the titration is complete. Next you will analyze the data based on the direction of your instructor. Print a copy of your first graph and then follow the next set of instructions to get the derivative graph. Discard of your solutions in the appropriate manner and rinse and wash everything once you are done.

Results

(See attached sheets.)

Discussions and Conclusions

To find the needed mass for the second titration, the following equation was used:

$$\frac{0.0506 \text{ g Sample B}}{5.2 \text{ mL NaOH}} \times 25 \text{ mL NaOH} = 0.243 \text{ g Sample B}$$

Based on the derivative graph, the half equivalence point volume was interpreted to be 12.5 (25/2=12.5). When that value was applied to the titration curve, the pKa value (at the half equivalence point) was determined to be 5.1. The other value we found came from the equivalence mass calculation.

$$\text{number of equivalents} = 0.05 \frac{\text{mol}}{\text{L}} \times 0.025 \text{ L} = 0.00125 \text{ mol}$$

$$\text{Equivalence mass calculation} = \frac{\text{mass of unknown acid}}{\text{equivalents of unknown acid}} = \frac{0.243 \text{ g}}{0.00125} = 194.4$$

When compared with the table of acid values, it was construed that the Sample B that we obtained was potassium hydrogen phthalate. The found pKa value was 5.1 and the actual pKa value of that acid is 5.51, so we were slightly off. Our equivalence mass value was 194.4 and the actual value is 204.2. The numbers we found were close enough to the actual values to conclude that the acid we had was indeed potassium hydrogen phthalate.

The reason for error could be the source of many things. It is possible that there was an error in transferring the acid. Some of the particles could have stuck to the paper, making the experiment slightly incorrect. It is also possible that too much or too little base was added during the titration because the meniscus was not properly read. It is possible that the same thing happened with the

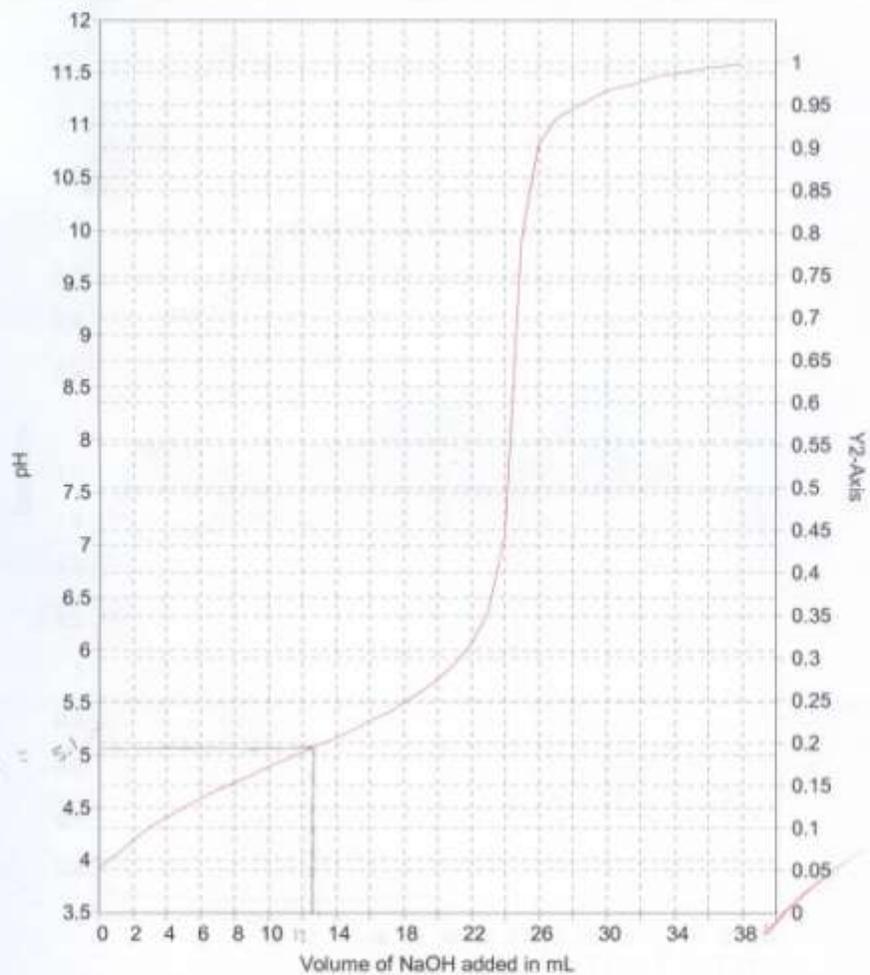
NaOH. There was also sometimes a delay with the readings, which could have affected our graph. However, overall, nothing went too terribly wrong with this experiment.

Titration Curve

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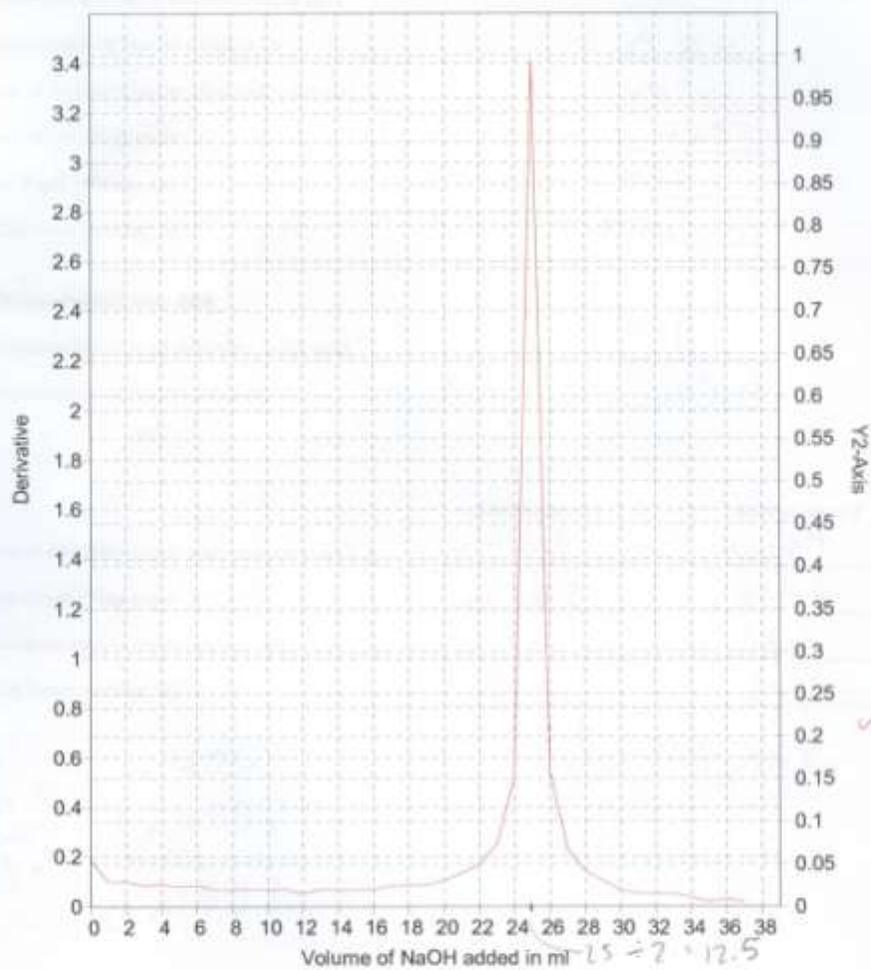
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First derivative of the titration curve

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DERIVATIVE

Social Science

First Place: Amanda Mosier, “Extended, Paid Maternity Leave for Mothers and Families”

Extended, Paid Maternity Leave for Mothers and Families

Cottey College

Abstract

Providing mothers and families with extended, paid maternity leave can have significant impacts on the child’s health and development, the parent-child relationship, the mother’s mental health, the family’s economic situation, and even the functioning of the institution providing the leave. All of these factors contribute to the conclusion that businesses should provide paid family leave for new parents.

Extended, Paid Maternity Leave for Mothers and Families

The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that does not guarantee paid maternity leave (Houser & Vartanian, 2012). As a result, new mothers are often forced to take a short, unpaid leave or to take practically no leave at all, depending on their and their partner’s work and economic circumstances. An early return to work (usually designated as less than four months postpartum) can have serious consequences on the child’s physical health and development and the mother’s mental health. Conversely, granting parents extended leave can benefit their economic situation, the quality of the parent-child relationship, and may positively affect the institution or business at which the mother works.

One major impact of taking shorter leave is that a woman is more likely to stop breastfeeding exclusively (resorting to formula or introducing solid foods earlier) if she has to return to work soon after giving birth (Gomby & Pei, 2011). The more time she spends at work is less time she is able to spend with her child, and it becomes more cumbersome and time-consuming to breastfeed (or pump milk). This results in mothers being even less likely to continue breastfeeding if they are working full-time as opposed to part-time (Baxter, 2008). It is recommended for a mother to breastfeed for the first 12 months, then afterward for as long as she and the child desire, up to about 2 years (Centers for Disease Control, 2013). However, in the United States, the average length of a maternity leave is only 12 weeks, and in some cases it can be much shorter. This greatly reduces the amount and rate of breastfeeding, with most women weaning their child entirely at around 4 months.

This reduction in breastfeeding can have significant effects on the child's health. In one study, nearly three thousand infants were followed from birth over the course of three years. Researchers collected data each year about the child's development, including fine and gross motor skills, communication, sociability, and adaptability. This was done by administering a questionnaire (to the parents) regarding family functioning, the child's speech, language, and cognitive development, and their general behavior, and followed up by conducting a structured interview with the child. A little over one-third of the mothers breastfed their children for less than four months, while the remainder did so for four months or more (it should be noted that this study was not looking at exclusive breastfeeding, and also included in their results mothers

who mixed-fed their babies by introducing formula or solid foods along with breastfeeding). The findings showed that children who were breastfed for four months or more showed significantly higher scores for fine motor skills throughout all three years, as well as higher adaptability (years one and two) and communication (years one and three). Conversely, those infants who were breastfed for less than four months were more likely to show delay in developing typical communication, adaptability, and fine motor skills (Oddy, 2011). In other words, extended breastfeeding can have a positive effect on a child's growth and maturity, particularly with cognitive and language development.

Another study looked at the relationship between the mother's method of feeding (breast milk, formula, mixed-milk, or cow's milk) and the child's weight gain. About two hundred full-term infants were sorted into groups (based on feeding method) and their length and weight were recorded at birth, one month, and then every three months for one year. Instead of focusing purely on the amount of weight gained (which is different for each child), the study formed a ratio of weight-to-length that measured the amount of weight gained in relation to how much the child grew lengthwise. After one year, the main finding was that exclusively breastfed infants gained the least weight, having the lowest weight-to-length ratio out of all of the groups (it should be noted that all infants involved in this study exceeded the median growth according to the 2000 CDC report, so all of them reached a healthy weight). All of the groups had similar growth patterns until the third month, which is when differences started to appear. With these results, it is possible that breastfeeding, compared to other feeding methods, could have a preventative effect on future childhood overweightness and obesity (Zlatco, 2011).

In addition to weight and cognitive development, maternity leave is also associated with another very important factor: mothers who take extended, paid leave see a decline in infant and child mortality. In this case, the length of leave is especially important. In a twenty-five year study of different European countries, it was found that having access to at least one year of paid leave results in a 20% decline in infant mortality (up to one month of age) and a 15% decline in child mortality (up to five years of age). Short or unpaid leave either have no effect or result in a slight increase in mortality, depending on the study (Gomby & Pei, 2011)

The parent-child relationship is also affected by the amount of leave that parents are able to take (mostly mothers, but there are some effects of paternal leave). One small study done in the US showed that mothers who took less than twelve weeks of leave were less knowledgeable about infant development (physical and mental) and were overall less concerned or preoccupied with their children (i.e. they didn't think or worry about them as much) than mothers who took longer leave. Additionally, length of maternity leave, when combined with other factors, may affect maternal warmth and affection toward her child (alone, length of leave is not a predictor). For example, a mother who shows some depressive symptoms *and* takes shorter leave tends to show less warmth than a mother who also shows depressive symptoms but takes longer leave. These factors may include maternal mental health, state of the mother's marriage or relationship, or the child's temperament, among others (Gomby & Pei, 2011). Along with this, in addition to mother-child relationships, the father-child relationship can be affected by the amount of leave. Some studies show that any amount of paternal leave (even as short as two weeks) can increase

the father's involvedness with his child in the long run. For example, fathers who took time off were more likely to engage in child-care activities such as feeding, bathing, or diapering than fathers who took no leave (Gomby & Pei, 2011).

Returning to work too early can have serious repercussions on a mother's mental health. In one study, over five hundred soon-to-be mothers were examined over a course of about six months. They were sorted into groups according to the length of maternity leave they planned to take and whether they worked full-time, part-time, or not at all. Each of them was interviewed during the 2nd trimester, one month after birth, and then again four months after birth to assess self-reported levels of depression, anxiety, and anger. The findings were as follows: women reported more symptoms of depression with short maternity leave, but only when it was combined with marital concerns (this depression did not occur with longer leave); women who returned to work (full-time) less than four months postpartum reported higher levels of anxiety than either part-time workers or full-time mothers; women who took short leave but experienced decreased work rewards (the feeling that work is unfulfilling or unrewarding) showed higher levels of anxiety and more symptoms of depression (Hyde & Klein, 1995). On its own, length of maternity leave may not have much of an effect, but when combined with other risk factors, shorter leave may result in forms of psychological distress.

Extended leave can have economic benefits as well. Of course, there is the obvious that offering paid leave will enable more parents to afford to take longer leave, and being able to spend more time with their child helps parents save on expensive child-care costs (Gomby & Pei,

2011). One recent study examined parents who either took paid leave, unpaid leave, or no leave following the birth of a child, looking specifically at how it affected their work and economic situation. They found that women who took leave (of any length) were more likely to be working 9-12 months postpartum than women who didn't take leave at all. Of those women, those who took more than thirty days leave were 53% more likely to report wage increases in the following year (however, if the leave taken was more than one year, the women saw decreases in both wages and hours worked). Additionally, they found that women taking leave were 39% less likely to report having received government assistance (welfare, food stamps, etc.), rising to 43% if the leave was more than thirty days (Houser & Vartanian, 2012).

These benefits can carry over to the mother's place of work as well. For example, one study showed that women who were ensured paid leave from their work showed greater loyalty for and were more committed to their companies, regardless of whether they actually took the leave. Ensuring family leave (both maternal and paternal) is also associated with higher morale and employee satisfaction, which, in turn, is associated with higher customer satisfaction (Gomby & Pei, 2011). Guaranteeing paid leave also increases retention rates, with employees more likely to return to work after taking leave. This results in the institution using less money to replace and train new employees to replace those who quit after a pregnancy. Additionally, businesses with high numbers of women and women professionals show a positive correlation between length of paid leave offered and amount of productivity (Gomby & Pei, 2011).

Many of these effects are based on the length of leave, rather than if the leave is paid or unpaid. However, offering paid leave enables parents to have the economic support necessary for them to take longer leaves, so it is absolutely necessary if we want people to be able to take extended leave. Every single other developed nation in the world guarantees their employees some form of paid parental leave, and their economies have yet to collapse so they must be doing something right. In order to ensure optimal child development while protecting the mental health and economic situation of the parents, it is evident that guaranteeing extended, paid family leave is a step in the right direction for the United States.

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Social Science

Second Place: Kalina Jurkowski, “On the Study of Literature”

On the Study of Literature

Leonardo Bruni’s *On the Study of Literature (De studiis et literis)* expresses Bruni’s commendation of humanistic studies and discusses the types of studies he recommends to Battista Malatesta, a scholarly young woman. Bruni asserts that she should study religious texts and moral philosophy as her two main subjects, supplemented by the diverse works of other great writers, which may provide insight into the view of women and education during this time period.

Leonardo Bruni wrote *On the Study of Literature* in Italy in the 1420s.¹ This coincides with the Italian Renaissance, during which the ideas of humanism spread throughout Italy. The humanistic movement revered the writings of the Romans and Greeks, considering them better than all modern writings of the time. It also admired their culture’s morality and classic values. This humanism originally took root in Italy because Italy’s culture was more secular and urban than the other European cultures of the time. In much of northern Europe, the clergy would control the government and education system, where in Italy, the government controlled the education and had more power than the church.² Italian schools were more “broad-based and practical” than the schools of northern Europe. They prepared students for careers in commerce, as well as teaching rhetoric, oratory, literature, history, poetry, and letter writing. The schools emphasized studying the works and values of the ancient Greeks and Romans, especially literature and rhetoric.³ However, women’s education was limited by their denied presence in public and political affairs. Most men thought it was inappropriate for women to have a public role and criticized their works based on what they found proper for a woman. Literate women

were often the object of suspicion and unjust accusations, so they showed their learning in more subtle and restricted ways, such as in domestic settings. Nevertheless, many women did learn how to read and write, and they did play a role in society and the humanism movement, which became a defining element of the Italian Renaissance.⁴

Leonardo Bruni was an Italian humanist scholar and writer, living from 1370 to 1444. He originally studied law, but gave it up to study the classics.^{5,6} He became “a champion of the *studia humanitatis*” and worked to bring back aspects of the classical world.⁷ He was famous for writing his Latin history of Florence, *Historiarium Florentinarum Libri XII*, and for writing his many translations.⁸ He translated important works from Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch,^{9,10} Demosthenes,¹¹ Aristophanes, and Xenophon,¹² among others, from Greek into Latin. He also wrote many letters in Latin, Italian biographies of Petrarch and Dante, and Latin biographies of Cicero and Aristotle.^{13,14} During his career, Bruni was the apostolic secretary for four popes, and he was present at the Council of Constance.¹⁵ In 1410, he became the Chancellor of the Republic of Florence with the support of the Medici family, but he only held the position for a few months before returning to the pope as a secretary.^{16,17} Bruni was so highly admired in his time that foreigners came from distant places to see him, and he was highly honored by the people of Florence after his death at the age of seventy-four.¹⁸ They buried him in dark silk in the cemetery at the Church of Santa Croce in Florence with a copy of his *History of Florence* placed on his chest.^{19,20} Bruni’s famous writing skills and scholarly studies make him fully qualified to write *On the Study of Literature*.

Bruni wrote *On the Study of Literature* as a letter to Battista Malatesta, also referred to as Battista di Montefeltro. She was the daughter of the Count of Urbino, and she was briefly and unhappily the wife of Galeazzo Malatesta.^{21,22} Bruni wrote his letter to Battista at the beginning

of their marriage, when she was very young.²³ Battista was “a scholar in her own right,” a poet, and a lover of classical literature.²⁴ She exchanged poems and letters with her father-in-law, and she also wrote an admirable Latin oration to the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund after becoming a widow.^{25, 26} She then became a sister of the Franciscan Order of Santa Chiara until her death in 1450.²⁷ Bruni highly respected Battista and wrote his letter to her as an admirer of her work.

Bruni wrote to Battista to share his opinions about humanistic education and to recommend subjects of study for her to pursue and avoid. He recognizes her “intellectual power” and encourages her to bring that power to “perfection” and the “highest excellence.”²⁸ Because Bruni was a humanist scholar and openly admits that that he is only sharing his opinions throughout the letter, his writing is made up of biases. He promotes a humanistic study of literature, suggesting that she only read the works of “the best and most approved authors” and pay special attention to “the older authors,” specifically, the ancient Greeks and Romans.²⁹ He recommends that she reads and studies divinity, moral philosophy, history, the orators, and poetry, in addition to perfecting her own literary skill. Like other humanists, Bruni asserts that it is pointless to have the knowledge of these works of literature without being able to write and speak about them. Although Bruni’s letter is humanistically biased, he is open to other opinions that Battista may have. He says that he will “willingly yield” to her because he “[does] not write as master to pupil . . . ,but simply as one of the crowd of [her] admirers, who . . . cheer[s] the runner on to victory.”³⁰ Bruni chooses not to force his opinions on Battista out of respect and lets her decide what she wants to study, weakening any biased agenda he may seem to have in his recommendations.

Notes

1. Richard M. Gamble, *The Great Tradition: Classic Readings on What It Means to Be an Educated Human Being* (Wilmington, DE, 2007), 332.

2. Thomas F.X. Noble, et al., *Western Civilization: Beyond Boundaries, Volume 1: To 1715*. (Australia, 2014), 326.

3. Ibid., 326-327.

4. Ibid., 330-331.

5. Edmund Burke, "Leonardo Bruni," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, 1908).

6. Gamble, 332.

7. Ibid., 332.

8. Burke.

9. Gamble, 332.

10. Burke.

11. Ibid.

12. Gamble, 332.

13. Ibid., 332.

14. Burke.

15. Gamble, 332.

16. Ibid., 332.

17. Burke.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Gamble, 332.

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21. Ibid., 332.
 22. Noble, 329.
 23. Ibid., 329.
 24. Gamble, 332.
 25. Gamble, 333.
 26. Noble, 329.
 27. Gamble, 333.
 28. Leonardo Bruni, *On the Study of Literature*.
 29. Bruni.
 30. Ibid.

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