



Analog

2017

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## Introduction

Luke Niiler

You are reading *Analog*, an annual anthology of student essays from the University of Alabama's First-Year Writing Program. *Analog* is intended to supplement readings in 100-level writing sections; augment the creative writing culture of UA's English Department (the *Black Warrior Review*, and *Dewpoint*) with expository/academic prose; and help students more closely identify as writers. It is currently available exclusively in electronic form, and, true to its name, it will eventually be available in print. I should note at the outset that this work would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of Sarah Cantrell, Candace Chambers, Julia Coursey, and Marni Presnall—all dedicated teachers of First-Year Writing.

This project came about as I explored how writing teachers could help student writers identify as, well, writers. Real writers. And by 'writers' I mean people doing authentic and meaningful work to express, interrogate, and argue about topics that matter to them--not just submitting essays for grades. I reflected on my teaching career, and realized my students were most likely to work this way when they worked with model texts. I did some digging and learned that teachers' use of writing models helps students see, practice and develop critical writing skills, from "higher order" matters (such as development, voice, and argument) to "lower order" concerns (grammar, punctuation, and mechanics). The idea of models is not new: in fact, it goes back to ancient Greece and Rome. Students of public oratory studied "topoi," or "commonplaces," key passages that enabled them to craft strong speeches. By imitating models, students learned the key moves that good public speakers make. The same is true of writing classes.

To this end, the composition textbooks often used in First-Year Writing classes (and possibly your own) contain a wealth of essays, most of which are professionally written. While the majority of these essays function as models of the many moves writers can make—from addressing reading audiences to determining topics to crafting strong sentences—these essays are often inaccessible to first-year writing students, or irrelevant to their own personal experiences. Students struggle with vocabulary, subject matter, style, and meaning. Writing teachers who use professionally written essays as models often find themselves *teaching the essays themselves*—and not the writing those essays should model, or inspire. A writing lesson using a model text as a frame, a point of reference, or a means of engagement with a topic becomes, instead, a teacher's struggle to inform, explain, or elucidate the work of a professional writer. Rather than serve to inspire, pique, and provoke, such textbook essays often diminish student interest, discourage student innovation, and reduce self-efficacy. "There's no way I can write like that," "I didn't understand what the writer was saying," and "I couldn't relate to the topic" are the responses I hear in my own classes when I teach anthologized works.

Professionally-authored, mass-market composition textbooks have historically presented other significant pedagogical problems. Several studies have shown that much of the instructional material included in freshman writing textbooks does not align with best composition practices or theory, and does not encourage deep critical thinking on the part of students. These materials often reduce the complex and multifaceted writing process into a series of simple steps, from prewriting to drafting to revising to editing. Even as the very latest composition textbooks have

evolved to demonstrate more awareness of best practices (as articulated in the Council of Writing Program Administrators' "Outcomes Statement"), model essays continue to be very difficult for freshman writers to penetrate or emulate. That is not to say I do not admire the rich resources many texts provide—I do. I enjoy reading the frequently anthologized Peter Singer, for example. But I know, too, that Peter Singer is perhaps best taught—at least at the University of Alabama—in an environmental ethics course, and not EN 101.

To return, then, for a moment to my original line of inquiry: I have found that students do their most authentic, meaningful, and 'writerly' work *when the texts they work with are written by fellow students*. This is true, certainly, in the revision process, in which students practice various forms of peer review and workshop strategies—strategies that have been in play in writing classrooms since the process movement of the 1970s. They exchange, read and discuss each other's drafts. They use rubrics to evaluate and assess. They get a sense of each other's topics and rhetorical strategies, and seek to imitate, interrogate, or extend their peers' work in their own. All of these forms of engagement help students cultivate a sense of a writing-intensive self-efficacy. They feel more like writers because they are doing the things writers do.

With this in mind, First-Year Writing programs have in recent years created their own "in-house" anthologies of student writing. These anthologies are comprised entirely of essays written by students in the freshman composition sequence, and are customized to suit the particular needs, goals, and vision of specific composition programs. Essays are often nominated by classroom teachers, reviewed by selection committees comprised of students and faculty, edited, and published in anthologies. While the specific content of each anthology differs, essay collections generally showcase student writing and provide students with real-life publishing experience. Additionally, First-Year Writing anthologies support the pedagogical aims and creative trajectories of their associated writing programs, thereby serving as the "text of record" for First-Year Writing courses. Some are hard copy publications, such as Cedarville (OH) University's *The Idea of an Essay: Genres, Genders, and Giraffes*; DePauw University's *The Best Required First-Year Seminar Writing Anthology*; and *The Student Writing Anthology*, from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Many are published online, include the *Programs in Writing and Rhetoric (PWR) Anthology*, from Columbia College (Chicago); *FYW Journal*, St. John's University; *NU Writing*, Northeastern University; and *Stylus*, from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

*Analog*, accordingly, features instructor-nominated and student/faculty-reviewed essays from the University of Alabama's First-Year Writing Program. I hope that your students will find it more accessible than professionally-authored textbooks, thereby affording them a better purchase on their writing assignments and providing them with a stronger sense of self-efficacy. As you'll see from the table of contents, *Analog* has been designed to supplement classroom instruction from our standard syllabus—but I think the kinds of essays featured here could be considered staples in any First-Year Writing classroom. And you can count on *Analog* changing and evolving, even as the FWP changes and evolves over time. One such change is suggested by the title. I believe that print carries weight; therefore, eventually, *Analog* will be available not only electronically but also in print. Print, moreover, carries an aspirational quality; I want students to want to not only see but also touch their work—to experience it as a tangible object fraught with significance. Note that when I say students, I should note that I am talking about freshmen in



First-Year Writing classes—students who too often understand this course, at best, as a requirement, and at worst, a necessary evil, something to complete so that they can get on with the “real work” of their major fields of study. *Analog* could play a vital role in a shift of classroom culture, a move from the rote and required to something vital and transformative. What might happen if First-Year Writing classrooms became places in which students began to identify as writers, as those who feel as if they have something to say, and are looking for outlets in which to say it? *Analog* could be a creative catalyst; *Analog* could be a creative outlet. Not only this, but *Analog* could stand as a reminder of and testament to the value of print in a digital age. Perhaps this publication will encourage some students to set aside some space in their lives, and dorm rooms, for books.

I encourage you to read *Analog* and invite your students to read it. I encourage you to use the following essays as examples of what is possible in the First-Year Writing classroom. And there are many possibilities. Perhaps you’ll use some essays as models of subjects, themes, approaches. Or you’ll see insights, points of departure for classroom conversations. Maybe you’ll understand this work in terms of craft, of helping students form and shape language. Maybe you’ll read these essays and can see only the flaws. And make no mistake, there are flaws; this collection has been lightly edited on purpose, to preserve as much of the authors’ unique and often noteworthy voices as possible. In this spirit, then, I hope that any missteps can become fruitful, productive points of inquiry for you and your students. I encourage you to make at least a few of these essays a part of your teaching, as these essays were shaped and formed in writing classrooms by writing students for writing teachers. By placing these essays in your students’ hands, you complete the creative circle.

A note on production:

This collection includes essays from the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years. Teachers submitted these essays on behalf of their students to *Analog* at [analog@ua.edu](mailto:analog@ua.edu). The editorial staff secured author permissions, reviewed the drafts, and edited for clarity. Every effort has been made to observe the MLA conventions in effect during each academic year.

## Bonded Together By Tailgating

Erin Bilder

“Tailgating is a tradition as old as the SEC itself. Each campus has its own tailgating style, and at Alabama, students and alumnae alike spare no expense when it comes to everything from the tent to the music to the perfect menu of game day snacks and beverages” (Baggett). Students, residents, and visitors share a feeling of euphoria on Saturdays during the fall. I watch the Quad go from beautifully bare to filling with tents as I walk to class all week and count down the days until game day. My roommates and I, much like many others, awaken on game day mornings after a long week of classes or tedious work. We blast “Sweet Home Alabama” over our speakers and prepare to start our day, which will be filled with family, friends, fun, and of course, lots of food and drinks.

Tailgating is a full day affair that is taken very seriously at the University of Alabama. ““We get here at 6 a.m. and set everything up,” says Sherman Hargrove, a fan from Ardmore, Alabama. “It takes 30 minutes. We have Bloody Marys and we cook breakfast. Sometimes we go into the game and sometimes we stay here and watch the game on TV”” (Klass). The most die-hard fans need about eight hours to get their full experience of tailgating, a ritual they will repeat every other week, sometimes even at away games.

Tailgating is filled with all different types of people that unite for one main cause, rolling with the Crimson Tide. As I walk through the quad with my friends and game-day date, I notice all the different variations of people unexpectedly bonding together to cheer on their favorite team. There are college girls dressed to the nines, in crimson, black, or white dresses, accompanied by a stylish pair of heels or cowgirl boots, supporting their respective sorority with

decorated buttons that exclaim how much their group “loves the Tide.” Their hands usually sport red solo cups filled with various colors of mixed, fruity drinks. There are fraternity boys wearing button-downs and khakis, sporting the sticker matching their game-day date’s button. There are “new-boys” pledging fraternities as well. They have been required to wear a blazer and dress slacks even in the hottest of weather, and expected to supply their older brothers’ needs. There are older, die-hard Alabama fans sporting their houndstooth print garments to remember the legendary coach of their era, Paul W. Bear Bryant. They often offer younger, college-aged fans food and drinks as they walk around the Quad. There are families with young children, already expecting their children to attend the University of Alabama when they grow up. Their daughters are dressed up in Alabama cheerleader uniforms, sporting pigtails and fake tattooed A’s on their faces, and their sons wear their favorite Alabama t-shirts and hats. All these different types of people unite on the Quad, proudly exclaiming “Roll Tide!” to each other before cheering on their favorite team together in Bryant-Denny Stadium with their white and crimson shakers.

As I walk through the Quad and look around on scorching Saturday afternoons, it is filled beyond capacity. The only walking room is in the lanes restricted to emergency vehicles. The remaining area is filled with crimson and white tents all containing similar commodities. There are tables lined with delicious-smelling catered food, coolers filled with water and various alcoholic drinks, people proudly decked out in their best gameday outfits, and speakers playing sing-along songs that fans bond to over every week, like “Sweet Home Alabama” and Dixieland Delight.” Sometimes I see televisions and a mass of chairs, since some people come to the Quad just for the tailgating and often watch the games with new friends on television. It is just as much of an excitement as the game itself.

Other than my own home, I never feel as welcomed as I do on the Quad, as I walk around getting ready for the game with fellow friends. During the last home game I attended with my three roommates, an older, friendly couple asked to take a picture of us because of “how cute our outfits were,” and we were invited into many different tents filled with food and drinks. I had never met any of these people before, but we shared a special bond in the team we root for. Our love of the Tide seems to make us friends for the day and sometimes even friends at the upcoming home games. In other situations, actions like this would not be considered normal and a majority of people would not invite random others to eat their food or drink their drinks. The pride that older fans feel for the team is what radiates into my generation to keep it going.

Tailgating at the University of Alabama is a tradition that outlives most of the students that go to the university, including myself. To me, it seems like a way to unite the different generations for a few hours and proposes a way to keep the tradition going into the future since we college students of the present get tailgating ideas from generations past. I have bonded with fans of all different ages while discussing the Tide’s chances of making it to the championship for the seventeenth time. I have bonded while debating how much the Tide will dominate their opponent this week compared to last. I watch people chat with neighboring tents and exchange things back and forth, creating lifelong friendships that are renewed every football season. It’s an unlikely alliance between people that may never associated with each other if the circumstances were different. An older fan describes, “I’ve been in this same spot for 10 years,” Kevin Crawford said of his tailgating location on the Quad. “The people all around, we’ve all pretty much been here the same time. We go about four months without seeing each other and football season starts, and boom, we’re back and it’s wonderful” (Klass). Tailgating is its own form of socializing and connecting with new people of all different backgrounds when in Tuscaloosa.

The University of Alabama uses its almost too-good-to-be-true football team to bring in students from all different regions of the United States and bring in profits that would have been impossible without the team. This thought is exemplified in a *New York Times* article that notes, “Many newcomers are like Molly Brautigan, 18, who says Saban and his football team brought her south from Montclair, N.J. She wanted to spend Saturday mornings like this one — trying on and discarding outfits — for a brunch date at the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity house” (Drape). UA has recruited an immense amount of people from all over the United States. In fact, this is the first year that out-of-state students have outnumbered in-state students, again (and perhaps coincidentally) after a National Championship win. Not only do those out-of-state students pay much more in tuition than in-state students, Bryant-Denny stadium is always packed. The University, in turn, benefits financially.

The Alabama football team made the University of Alabama what is today. Football and tailgating are American traditions everywhere, but there is no similar experience that can match up to Saturdays in Tuscaloosa.

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## Warren G. Harding, Newspaperman

Matthew Bries

June 12, 1920: It was the fourth day of the Republican National Convention. After nine ballots, no one had yet been nominated to run for president. The votes were deadlocked between three of the major candidates, General Leonard Wood, Illinois Governor Frank Lowden, and California Senator Hiram Johnson. After realizing that no agreement could be reached between these candidates, delegates of the Republican Party discussed possible alternatives, including Warren G. Harding, in an infamous "smoke-filled room." As the roll for the tenth ballot progressed, the candidate Governor Sproul of Pennsylvania entered the floor, made his way to his state's delegation, and released his votes to Harding. These were the last votes that Harding needed to win the nomination. Cheers erupted, and a procession holding large images of Harding marched triumphantly around the hall ("Harding and Coolidge Named By Republicans"). By the time all the delegates' votes were counted, Harding had obtained 692 votes over Leonard Wood's 156. Though it took special circumstances to win him the nomination, it would be a different task altogether to win the election. The qualities that led him to win the nomination—in particular, his experience as a newspaperman and skill at public speaking--combined with a well-run, modern campaign, led Harding to win the White House.

Born on his grandfather's farm in Morrow County, Ohio, Warren Harding was the oldest of eight children. When Harding was just nineteen, he moved to Marion, Ohio and took a job with *The Mirror*, a small weekly newspaper. Though he had tried several other careers previously, after working there for a few months he realized that being a newspaperman was his calling. This led him and two of his best friends to purchase a bankrupt local newspaper, *The*

*Marion Star*, in his new hometown for \$300 (Cunningham). He would devote most of his time to the success of this paper and just a year later he became its sole owner.

It was here at his paper that his political life began and where his skills and personality that eventually led him to the Presidency would shine through. One example that highlights the content of his character is the creed that he created for his newly purchased newspaper which included points such as:

Remember there are two sides to every question. Get them both.

Be decent, be fair, be generous.

Boost, don't knock.

There's good in everybody.

Bring out the good and never needlessly hurt the feelings of anybody...

("Harding a Farm Boy Who Rose By Work")

Harding himself fully embodied this creed in his daily life and as a result was generally well liked and non-confrontational. It was because of these tendencies not to offend people and to remain balanced that he would later win the Republican nomination, even though he was not initially a major candidate. His position with the paper would also help him form powerful connections and get him involved with the Republican party.

A newspaperman at heart, he was almost always hesitant about running for office, much preferring to continue his work with his newspaper. When he learned of the desire to nominate him for the U.S. Senate, "he was so reluctant to become a candidate that he left the State for two months on a hunting trip to Texas," ("Harding a Farm Boy Who Rose By Work"). However, his speaking skills and ability to talk on his feet led fellow politicians to encourage him to run for office on many occasions, with varying success. In the early 1890s, Harding began giving



speeches for the Republican party and many members were impressed. One even told him after his second speech, "Young man, you have the gift of gab. Keep it up and some day you'll be President of the United States." ("Harding a Farm Boy Who Rose By Work"). Little did he know that this would actually come to fruition. In 1898, he ran for his first office as an Ohio State Senator. He would eventually achieve the offices of Lieutenant Governor of Ohio, State Senator, and U.S. Senator, as well as speak at the 1908 and 1916 Republican National Conventions. After pressure from colleagues and friends, he began a run for the White House in the 1920 election. Not having taken primary campaigning very seriously, spending much less than the other candidates, and doing only modest campaigning, he handily won the Republican nomination anyways. In fact, he spent less than the other major candidates, which helped him avoid accusations of attempting to buy the nomination.

His presidential campaign was taken much more seriously and featured several components that made it especially successful. The first was using a form of campaigning not commonly used since the time of William McKinley, 24 years earlier, a "front porch" style campaign. Harding's campaign even remodeled his house to more resemble McKinley's, going so far as to put McKinley's flag pole in Harding's front lawn (Morello 50). In a front porch style campaign, rather than going around and campaigning throughout the country, he stayed at his home in Marion and gave speeches to visiting delegations. In total, 600,000 people made the trip to his home between July and September of that year (Morello 63). This allowed him and his campaign managers to carefully control who he was speaking to, what he was saying and how the press could cover the event. Harding, having had several extra-marital affairs, was at great risk of saying something that could potentially ruin his campaign. However, in large part to the style of his campaign, he managed to keep it quiet during the election. As a newspaperman,

Harding knew what the members of the press would want and built a small building near his house so that they could work and gave almost daily press conferences to them. The Republican party also hired ad-man Albert Lasker to help publicize him. Together they used Lasker's "reason why" advertising techniques to show the American people that Harding was a hardworking person that they could relate to through speeches, film, radio, the phonograph, and even celebrity endorsements. The long list of celebrity endorsements included "The World's Greatest Entertainer," Al Jolson, and silent movie star Douglas Fairbanks (Morello 54). His campaign also focused on producing targeted advertisements for specific interest groups such as farmers, African-Americans, and women, who had just earned the right to vote in all states. Because of his extensive use of modern communication methods, he was able to insert himself into the lives of millions of Americans, without even leaving his front porch.

With Lasker's management and the front porch campaign, all Harding had left to do was supply a solid and inspiring platform. The root of this was his idea of a "Return to Normalcy" which had great success in relating with the feelings of many, if not most Americans. Having just exited the first World War two years prior, people in the US were facing a post war recession and feeling the consequences of the war. People wished to go back to the times before the war, and Harding played on these concerns with his theme. He called for doing this in a subtle, gentle manner, for tax cuts and for more efficient government. In a speech he declared: "America's present need is not heroics, but healing; not nostrums, but normalcy; not revolution, but restoration; not agitation, but adjustment" (Freidel and Sidey). The war had been a drastic change for Americans, and this statement resonated with them. The universality of his platform allowed him to garner the vote of the people.

James Cox, who was running himself ragged campaigning all across the country, was no match for Harding in the election. Though he put in a tremendous effort, he was not as well advertised as Harding and did not resonate with the post-war feelings of Americans. In all it was his modern campaign, Harding's speaking skills, and his experience as a newspaper man that led him to enter and win the election. In the end, Harding captured a commanding 60.2% of the popular vote, and won in 37 of the 48 states, one of the largest margins in American history.

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## Long Live the Animals: Animal Testing Ends Now

Maggie Chapman

The use of animals in research and testing has been a hot topic of debate for generations. In laboratory settings, studies of non-human animals seek to understand the effects of pharmaceuticals on their behavior and/or their biology. While some people see animals as pets and best friends, others see them as a means to an end in the advancement of modern medicine. No matter the way one perceives animals, the truth is that animals all over the globe are being poked, prodded, and killed by researchers and pharmaceutical companies. In many cases medicines and/or treatments that pass in their animal trials end up failing in their human trials. Activists as well as scientists and researchers alike argue that alternative methods exist that could exclude animal trials altogether. Animal testing in the pharmaceutical industry is not only cruel and inhumane but a waste of federal tax dollars; therefore, testing of these animals should be outlawed.

Experimentation on animals dates back to Ancient Greece. All the way back to Aristotle, animals have been experimented on. Galen, who was a Grecian physician, was one of the first to study animals and their anatomy, especially the central nervous system. Known specifically for his lack of remorse or empathy, Galen was remembered for specifically encouraging his students to “dig in” and tear apart the bodies of their specimens. Because of how early his experiments were done, the animals were given no anesthetics or anything like that. Even in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Arab physicians were using animals as test subjects for different kinds of medical surgeries before they would do them to humans. Later, in the 1890s Emil von Behring was able to isolate the toxin of Diphtheria due to the testing on guinea pigs. Through this research, Behring was able

to create an antitoxin that helped eradicate the disease worldwide. Resistance to animal experimentation initially began in the 1860s when the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was formed and created the American Anti-Vivisection Society. The fight against animal testing and vivisection began to die down immensely in the 1920s. A few of the reasons for the decline of protests were that there were great advancements being made in medicine through animal testing, and also the embellishment of how the animals were treated during these experiments. During this time many researchers would lie and claim that the animals would be treated as everyday pets when they were actually being caged and killed in the end.

Most researchers claim that animal experimentation is necessary because the animals are sacrificed in order to assure the safety of medicines and treatments before human consumption. The flaw in this claim is that animal safety, quality of life, or survival are not taken into consideration at all. The test subjects in these experiments are essentially bred in order to be tested during their short lifetimes, which are spent solely in laboratories, with no thought to their well-being. These animals never live a day that they are not test subjects until the day they are euthanized. Although many claim that animals benefit from these forms of testing, Sheila Silcock argues that "animals may themselves be the beneficiaries of animal experiments. But the value we place on the quality of their lives is determined by their perceived value to humans"(34). Silcock is basically saying here that even though animals benefit sometimes, they are not the center or even reason for these experiments. Despite the advancements made for humans as the results of experimentation on animals, benefits to human health do not justify the torturing and killing of innocent animals.

Other researchers argue that animal experimentation is acceptable because animals do not feel pain and suffering as humans do; animal testing is therefore humane. This argument is invalid because animals do in fact feel pain just as humans do. For example, animals and humans alike scream when pain is inflicted. In an article written by Jonathan Balcombe, he argues that not only do animals register feelings but they can cognitively register people that they are familiar with “when presented with five scents (self, familiar human, strange human, familiar dog, strange dog), dogs' brains registered the strongest delight in response to the familiar human. It appears the notion that the dog is "man's best friend" cuts both ways.” This study shows that animals are in fact able to have feelings much like humans.

In order to help eradicate the use of animals in the laboratory setting, there have been multiple laws put in place to help regulate and decrease animal experimentation. The Animal Welfare Act was passed in 1966 in order to regulate the treatment of animals in research. This act was created in response to a growing fear for cats and dogs that were being used in laboratory settings, especially because there was a boom in reported thefts of family pets that would turn up in laboratories. When the act was passed it was thought to have been the first real fight against animal cruelty and abuse in the laboratory setting in the United States. Although the act did protect many animals, there were also a great deal of animals left out that so happened to be the most used animals in the research field. According to the New England Anti-Vivisection Society (NEAVS) “for the less than 10% of animals in labs covered by the AWA (dogs, cats, nonhuman primates—such as chimpanzees and monkeys—guinea pigs, hamsters, rabbits, and other warm-blooded animals), the law sets minimal standards for housing, feeding, handling, veterinary care, and for some species like chimpanzees, their psychological well-being.” The regulations for the

protection of animals are in fact “minimal” (“Laws”). Even with the laws in place, there is still a lot of room for mistreatment of these animals.

There was quite a boom of interest in animal testing after the WWII and in England the concept of the Three R’s was born. The Three R’s are: replace the use of animals in laboratories and testing environments with alternative means; reduce the number of animals used to as few as possible; and instead of killing the animal after testing, reuse the animal to obtain the maximum amount of information from that one animal. In this way, animals’ pain is minimized and the individual animal’s welfare is maximized. Christoph Reinhardt writes:

Interest in alternatives began to grow dramatically in the 1970s among animal protection groups and among their public supporters. For example, the Humane Society of the United States established a committee of experts on alternatives in the early seventies. The establishment also began to be drawn into the debate, as indicated by some selected events...The first major establishment initiative on alternatives came in 1971 when the Council of Europe passed Resolution 621. This proposed, among other things, the establishment of a documentation and information center on alternatives and tissue banks for research. (Reinhardt 5)

Even with all of the proposed alternatives, animal cruelty is still going on today.

In an investigation funded by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), an undercover investigator worked in a Professional Laboratory and Research Services center that performed studies on dogs and cats that were contracted out by major pharmaceutical companies. Throughout their nine-month time span of working for this laboratory group, the investigator witnessed countless acts of cruelty toward animals:



After a supervisor gave one dog an anesthetic that was past its expiration date (and likely administered too little of it), the supervisor pulled out one of the animal's teeth with a pair of pliers. The dog trembled and twitched in apparent pain, and the supervisor continued with the procedure despite the dog's obvious reaction. Workers repeatedly cut into one dog's tender, blood-filled ear, draining blood and pus but never treating the underlying cause of the dog's suffering and apparently causing the ear to become infected...In one test commissioned by a corporation whose products are sold in grocery stores and drugstores nationwide, a chemical was applied to the necks of 57 cats. The cats immediately suffered seizures, foamed at the mouth, lost vision, and bled from their noses. Despite this, the substance was put on the cats a second time the very same day. ("Professional Laboratory")

After the findings of this investigation were published, the laboratory was forced to surrender all of their animals and close their doors for good. Even further, "a North Carolina grand jury indicted four individuals who worked at PLRS, including a supervisor, on 14 felony cruelty-to-animals charges. This case marked the first time in U.S. history that laboratory workers faced felony cruelty charges for their abuse and neglect of animals in a laboratory" ("Professional Laboratory"). Although there are countless claims that the use of animals in testing is indispensable, there are alternative methods that use better test subjects than animals themselves.

When I suggest the criminalization of animal testing, I am not proposing that medical progress should be halted, or that human patients will be harmed or put at risk. With the ending of animal testing there will be an improvement of quality in treatments in the fields of science and research. There are multiple alternative subjects that are out there, such as cell cultures,

human tissues, computer models, and volunteer studies. In Jamie Davies' book *Replacing Animal Models*, he discusses the advantages of alternative methods to the testing of animals. Davies argues that even though we share a lot of biological similarities with animals that are tested, there is always going to be gap because we are not a 100% match.

Where animals are being used as a proxy for people, for example in the modeling of a human disease, the testing of a drug or the safety testing of a chemical, there is another problem: while evolutionary homology means that the physiologies of different mammals are generally very similar, it does not imply that they are always exactly the same. Where they are not, there is the potential for two opposite types of error, the 'false-positive' and 'false negative' ('false' meaning, in this case, not giving a result that will be true in human). (Davies 6)

Davies also gives us an example where the use of grown cells does better than the use of an animal, due to the ability to view the growth and culture of tissues under a microscope constantly: "cultured organs or tissues can be put under the microscope at any time and even be filmed continuously with the cellular or sub-cellular resolution" (Davies 5).

As well as being more humane and ethical, alternative means of testing is far more financially sound. Billions of American tax dollars are wasted every year on unnecessary animal testing. Michael Bastasch argues that the United States government is one of the largest funders of animal testing each year, "the National Institutes of Health spends between \$12 billion and nearly \$14.5 billion on animal testing every year. According to NIH documents, about 47 percent of research grants have an animal research-based component. This number has been fairly stable over the last decade" (Bastasch 1). With the money that is wasted on these vicious forms of testing, the government could be trying to make a dent in our ever growing debt or using it to

combat the issue of homeless veterans and so forth. With the outlaw of animal testing, the government will be able to better allocate our tax dollars into things that actually need it.

In conclusion, animal experimentation should be outlawed in the pharmaceutical industry because it is cruel and inhumane, alternative methods exist, and it is a waste of federal tax dollars. Animal testing is also unethical because it directly violates the rights of the animals that are tested. Animals have a right to be taken care of and treated with regard, dignity, and love. Researchers cannot justify the countless torturing and killing of hundreds of animals a year just to simply make our lives as humans better, especially when there are in fact alternative methods out there. As humans are the superior species, we should take it upon ourselves to treat animals with respect.

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## Rifles and Wrenches

Dustin Childers

Airframe Mechanics hold a sacred, silent, small place in an aviation team of hundreds who support the logistic and transportation battle the United States Marine Corps fights every hour of every day. This is the same pitch I heard from my recruiter right after high school in 2010. I thought to myself, “you mean to tell me I can be a Marine and turn wrenches on multimillion-dollar aircraft? Where do I sign!?” I went to a vocational school specializing in automotive services for half the day in high school. It did not take much effort to convince me to join a noble cause like that. Needless to say, I was ecstatic to finally get out of my home town and be a part of something bigger than myself.

In order to earn the title of Marine, I first had to complete Boot Camp and Marine Combat Training. Then I went on to attend my ‘A’ and ‘C’ school to become a MV-22 Osprey Airframes Mechanic. How cool of a title is that! After graduating all these camps and schools, and claiming my title of Marine and aircraft maintainer, the final step was to enter what we called the Fleet. In civilian terms, the Fleet is better understood as the labor force. I was feeling rather accomplished at this point. I would later learn that I probably should have paid a little more attention in the classroom. Mercifully relieved of my studies, I was finally in my unit, or squadron, where I would take what I used in school and apply it to a real operational aircraft instead of the ancient mock models we practiced on.

Squadrons are full of strangers that, over time, transmute into something more. They become a band of brothers and sisters, which is pretty ironic considering the public enjoys thinking of us as Uncle Sam’s Misguided Children, also known as, USMC. We clocked more

hours at work than we did at home and when we were deployed, work was home. Strangely, some of the guys would rather be on a deployment. I, however, thought these expeditions were exhausting. I would prefer to be on a beach with a beer in my hand and in a country whose primary language is English. Different preferences aside, we developed into a fraternity with semi-automatic rifles and Snap-on wrenches instead of pastel polos and leather loafers. However, I think the main thing we did have in common with a fraternity house was the love for the four horsemen: Jack, Jim, José, and Johnny. Unlike a fraternity, there was no pledgship or initiation ceremony. My classmates and I were simply tossed to wolves that like to play with their food.

We then discovered the firehose classes in school gave us very little understanding of the aircraft and we had no clue how to apply the scarce knowledge we did retain. With the squadron being involuntarily forced to accept new members of the family, existing members were exceptionally reluctant to accept and teach us the vital lessons we needed to know. Over time, the invisible walls between mentor and mentee began to wither away. I started learning more and taking on responsibilities that, originally, would have been out of my comfort zone. I was out on the aircraft every day with busted bloody knuckles and impermeable black grease worn as war paint, despite the unpredictable and sometimes harsh weather conditions. My performance was improving beyond those of my peers and my mentors were beginning to notice. I was learning to become a wolf.

Once I became a wolf, I needed to join the pack. In order to become a trusted and productive member of my squadron, obtaining certain qualifications on equipment that was needed to test and service the aircraft was required. Along with that, the knowledge of the aircraft and how its components work with one another would play an essential role in progressing further in the Airframes field. However, the tricks of the trade ceased to be written

down in any book or manual. This is where Sergeants Racine, Reeves, and Henry worked as a team and taught me their personal tips and tricks that helped them in the past. One specific stern piece of advice Racine constantly kept telling me was, “do each maintenance evolution step-by-step so I do not have to tell you to go back and do it twice.” Of course that is the nice way to state it. Their guidance steered me clear of obstacles that they had to overcome the hard way and also pushed me to excel beyond what I thought was possible.

Ultimately, they molded me to fit the bill of Collateral Duty Inspector; which is a decorative title for someone who is a Quality Assurance Representative outside of the Quality Assurance department. Only the Marines who are trusted and possess sound judgement, claim this significant title. This means I was responsible for verifying the quality and accuracy of the work performed by those under me. I was the first of my peer group to receive this title, but I made sure I was not the last. Just as my mentors provided me with guidance, I went on to help my former peers fill a Collateral Duty Inspector bill as well. I now consider my Sergeant’s to be my lifelong brothers for their support not only at work, but outside of work as well.

Learning this trade and having the opportunity to meet such wonderful people along the way has shaped me into who I am today. I now hold myself to a higher standard in everything I do and people tend to notice. I also feel as though I am a better person, in a general sense, because of my reinvented respect for others. Though I lacked knowledge in the beginning, the support of my adopted family helped me to fulfill the requirements necessary to move forward in my short career. However, my five-year career technically never stopped.

Following this enduring adventure, I went on to earning my FAA Airframes Certification; which allows me to work on any civilian aircraft at my heart’s desire. From wooden planes to big commercial airliners, I am your man. Even now, my journey has yet to find

its end. I am now attending my freshman year at the University of Alabama to become an Aerospace Engineer in hopes of one day being able to design the aircraft instead of fixing it. The real dream is to continue contributing to the MV-22 Osprey community on the opposite side of the assembly line. I want to make life easier for these brave men and women, by simplifying these complicated modern marvels, one design at a time.



## The Authority of the President

Logan Cummings

When you hear the phrase, “executive action,” what springs to mind? Maybe you think of the publicity that President Obama’s actions received, or maybe George W. Bush’s decision to engage in the Middle East. No matter what comes to mind, most people probably do not understand what executive action entails or why the president has this power. This is unsurprising when you consider that, according to Cody Hagan of UMCK School of Law, there is no explicit mention of the extent of executive power in the Constitution (p. 492). In fact, there is no mention anywhere about executive power, other than it exists. The broad reaching power of the President of the United States is one of the most talked about yet misunderstood aspects of the presidency. Therefore, it is critical all citizens examine what the historical uses of executive action are and why they failed or succeeded, and then form their own conclusions on its authority. When used correctly, executive action is a great tool for accomplishing tasks quickly and effectively, but the president must have the proper justification to use an executive order or it will not be allowed to take effect.

The most pressing question is, where does the president draw this power from? The first line of Article 2, Section 1, of the United States Constitution states, “The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America” (U.S. Const. art. II, sec. 1). That executive power refers to the power to enforce the laws passed by Congress, or to exercise powers specifically granted to the president by the Constitution. Historically, however, presidents have acted outside of the wording of the Constitution or acts of Congress. In 1868, President Andrew Johnson pardoned “all and every person who directly or indirectly participated

in the late insurrection or rebellion,” specifically referring to the Civil War (Gaziano). The Constitution does grant the president authority to pardon individual people, but nobody had ever pardoned an entire group before. This move established that the president may act on implied authority alone. This decision made possible all sorts of executive orders, from President Franklin Roosevelt creating massive construction projects during the Great Depression, all the way to President Obama raising the minimum wage for federal employees.

With the underlying authority for executive actions established, it is now necessary to examine what kinds of executive action have been used in the past and what their effects were. The very first executive order was issued in 1798 by George Washington. It ordered all federal agencies to prosecute any citizen interfering with the war between England and France (Roos). The president has the authority of head of state to conduct foreign policy, which is why Washington could make this order. Another high profile executive order was issued by Abraham Lincoln, suspending *habeas corpus*, the right to a fair trial, for rebel militia leaders (Roos). Lincoln justified his actions by claiming he was reacting to an emergency while Congress was out of session. Congress later passed legislation supporting Lincoln’s decision. Many of Abraham Lincoln’s actions during the Civil War could be considered unconstitutional. He allocated money from the treasury to purchase war materials and placed railroads under government control without congressional authorization, but Congress established the precedent of allowing the president greater freedom during times of war by not challenging him (Gaziano). The actions Lincoln took were necessary to fight and win the Civil War. Rather than wait months for Congress to act, he took it upon himself to act in a crisis. For a more recent example of this practice, Barack Obama used an executive order to expand background checks for people buying firearms. He had to respond to the string of mass shootings occurring around the nation and

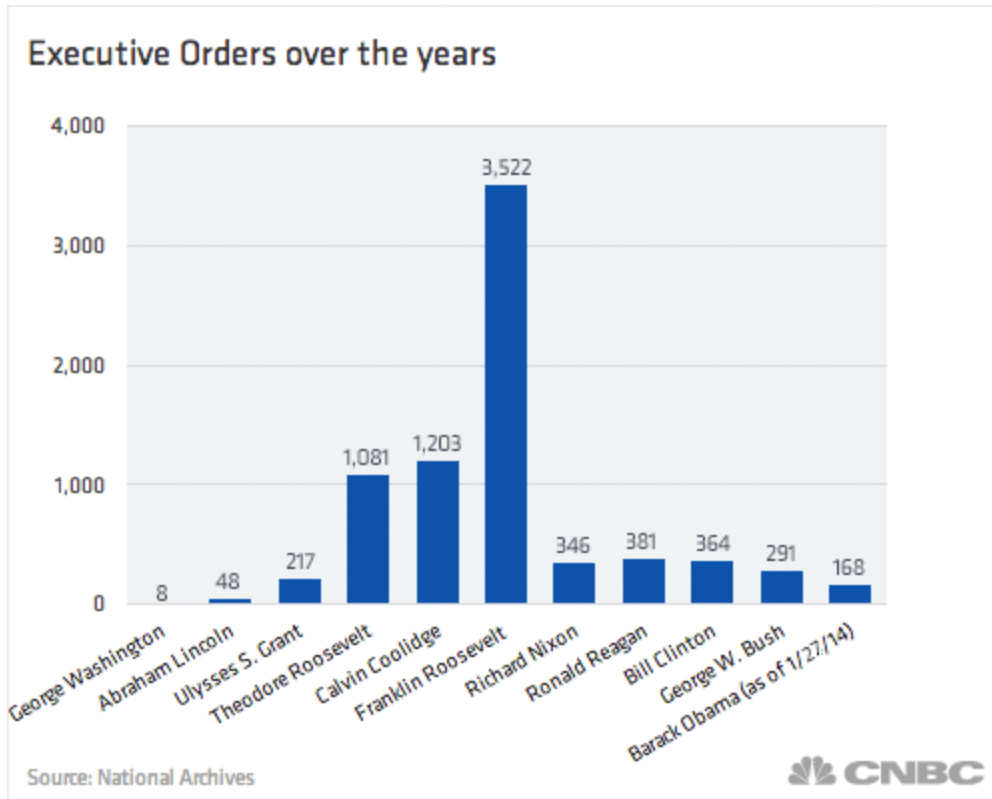
could not wait for legislative action. Obama could do this without Congress because the legislation for background checks already existed. He just directed the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms agency to check additional categories (Bradner, Krieg).

The actions mentioned up to this point have been ultimately successful and, for the most part, accepted by America. Their success is due to two major reasons. The first reason is all of them have proper justification and reasoning behind them. Without justification, these actions would almost certainly be met with uproar from Congress and be struck down by the Supreme Court. Accordingly, it has been the practice of modern presidents to include a citation of whatever legislation or precedent they are using to give grounds for their actions. For example, Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was essentially an executive order. He claimed that he had the authority to free slaves because, as the Commander-in-Chief, he had direct control over all captured territory during the war (Koba) The second reason these actions were successful is that they did not drastically affect the daily lives of most Americans. Americans, and all people in general, tend to feel differently about any governmental action if they believe it changes the way they live their lives. If a president attempted to fundamentally change the everyday life of Americans without any word or authorization from Congress, there would outrage everywhere. This has, in fact, happened once already.

In 1952, the United States was involved in military action in Korea and President Harry Truman thought that the war would cause a dramatic increase in steel prices, which would be detrimental to the war effort. To prevent this, he imposed governmental control over the wages and price of steel. The steel companies and steel workers rejected this and after long negotiations, went strike. Truman then attempted to place the steel mills under government control to prevent a shortage of steel. The steel mill owners and workers were outraged. They

said the move was an illegal seizure of private property and the Supreme Court agreed. Truman's actions were thrown out by the Court as unconstitutional in *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. vs Sawyer* (Koba). The only other executive order blocked was in 1995 when President Clinton attempted to prevent employers from hiring strike-breakers, against the will of Congress. The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit unanimously declared that this was a violation of a previous act of Congress, the National Labor Relations Act, that "undoubtedly" gives employers the right to hire employees to replace striking workers (Gaziano).

These actions are different than the successful actions because they attempted to override an existing act of Congress or a portion of the Constitution. Truman's steel seizure was an illegal seizure of private property and Clinton's directive contradicted an act of Congress. The reasoning behind both of these executive orders was to avoid going through Congress, where they would have almost certainly failed. The actions failed because not only were they outside the historical roles of executive action, but there was no piece of legislation or legal precedent for those actions to be taken. However, just because an action isn't challenged by anyone doesn't mean it is right. In 1942, President Roosevelt, who has the record for most executive orders issued (Koba), signed an executive order that authorized the internment of thousands of Japanese-Americans. This is, without a doubt, the most controversial executive actions ever enacted (Hagan p.494). Yet, at the time, it was believed to be necessary to maintain national security during World War II.



Koba, Mark; <http://www.cnn.com/2014/01/28/executive-orders-what-they-are-and-how-they-work.html>

Executive orders are inherently controversial. There is no regulation on exactly how far they can go. It usually depends on which party is in power at the time. If Congress and the Supreme Court are both controlled by the same party as the president, then the executive action is usually allowed to stand. This partisanship is at the core the controversy surrounding executive power. Our founding fathers anticipated this very problem, which is why we have a system of checks and balances. If the president goes too far with executive action, Congress can pass a law contradicting it or the courts can declare those actions unconstitutional. But which actions should be kept, and which should be thrown out? The fact that Roosevelt's action could be taken without much opposition at the time is why we as a people need to educate ourselves and form opinions on what we will or will not allow a president to do. If the courts and Congress do

nothing, and something is clearly not right or against who we are as a nation, it is our duty to stand up and make ourselves heard. At the time, it may have been what was thought to be necessary for our safety at a dangerous time in our history, but how far can we go in the name of national security? Executive action is a very powerful tool and one that must be kept under very close observation. Whether we like it or not, executive power is here to stay and it is up to us to make sure it is used correctly and with proper justification.

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## The Only True Sport

Rachel Frost

I had tunnel vision. I felt like the entire world had been picked up and dropped on my chest, but there I was, standing at the starting line. I knew there were people around me, not just people, but my teammates. Though I was a mere freshman and had only known them for a few weeks, these teammates were already my closest companions. I knew they were there, but all I could hear was my heart hammering. My coach was in my head, telling me over and over, “Running is 90% mental, and only 10% physical.” All I could feel was the tenseness in my shoulders and the thick soreness in my calves from the excruciating practices all week. The taste of Gatorade was still in my mouth from trying to hydrate all morning, and the beads of sweat from my forehead dripped into my eyes. I could only focus on miniscule, seemingly insignificant details instead of what I should have actually been focusing on. I had a laborious task ahead. Before I could prepare myself, the command “Runners, take your mark,” boomed through a megaphone and the click of the starter gun rang in my ears. I was off. Right foot, left foot, breathe in, breathe out was my mantra. This was my first high school cross country meet, which shouldn’t have been so scary due to my previous experiences with running in middle school, but something about it made it terrifying. Was it the height of the sophisticated seniors who seemed to be decades older me? Was it the pressure of wearing the Hoover High School “H” on my chest? All I could think to myself was, “What have I gotten myself into- again?” There was no turning back after the gun went off, and the sun seemed to singe my shoulders. I ran across a vast field filled with hundreds of athletes- long legged, spindly and tall girls who seemed to mock my short stature.



I am a runner. I had run all throughout middle school, so running wasn't slightly new to me. After trying out sport after sport, from swimming, to softball to dance team, I finally found something I loved: cross country. I liked how it was an individual sport, but at the same time, a team sport. Fast forward two years, and my measly two mile run at meets had turned into a 5K with not just two grades of girls, but four. The pressure I felt had increased incredibly, which was why the feeling of each time my foot hit the gravel seemed to be the most important step of my life. I wanted so badly to make my new team proud--so I ran. Quickly I felt the difference of middle school cross country and high school cross country--just one year had upped the competition more than I thought possible. Despite my shoe coming untied halfway through the second mile and girls' elbows digging into my ribcage as I passed them, I ran to make my new teammates and coaches proud.

Mile two was where I started to feel the immense pain. Cramps felt like someone was twisting a knife in my side, and I was used to finishing the race at that point like I did in middle school. A little after mile two I turned the corner to see my coach- his weathered face and lanky build from years and years of running greeted me with a loud "I know you can do better than that!" and he was right. All I could think about was the months of practice, the blood and more sweat than I ever thought was possible that I had put into this sport, all leading up to this moment. My legs had gone through hell and back and were programmed to be doing what they were doing. The middle of the race is the hardest part- it seems like the final mile is a light at the end of a long, distant tunnel filled with more cramps and blows to the ribs.

Right foot, left foot, breathe in, breathe out ran through my head over and over. My shiny new black spikes crushed the changing course under my feet. From grass to gravel, from flat to uphill, and even through a creek they were somehow still on despite one being untied. I flew over

a hill and saw one of my coaches, Coach Maddox, cheering from the bottom. Coach Maddox had been my inspiration throughout summer training and our first few practices. She was bound to a wheelchair because of a car wreck she had been in during her time at college as a track and cross country star, and was paralyzed. Her love for running pushed her to become a coach, and whenever I wanted to give up, I decided I would run the rest of that race or workout for her. I saw her at the bottom of what felt like Mount Everest and a smile broke out across my face. She yelled to me, encouraging me that I only had three laps around the track left--about three quarters of a mile to go. Never had I felt like I could run harder than that moment. A huge burst of energy came from depths that I didn't even know I had. I was almost done with my first meet and despite my exhaustion, being a little underprepared, and shoe malfunctions, I wanted to finish and finish for her. At the end of the race my most important job was to pass as many people as I possibly could, so pass I did.

I rounded a corner and before my eyes stood the finish chute. A runner's finish is one of the key parts to a race. I kept a steady pace the whole race but for the last 200 meters, my job was to sprint and advance past as many people as I could so I could earn more points for my team. My feet dug into the ground, kicking up chunks of dirt and grass sending them flying everywhere. Accustomed to running long distance, my body was now sprinting and the race clock loomed large, right before my eyes. I soared under the clock, hearing my parents and teammates cheering my name; I had finally finished. I felt a sense of accomplishment stronger than I had felt in any of my years of high school. My legs were shaky, my jersey was sweaty, and my arms were weak. But when I saw Coach Maddox sitting at our team tent, I smiled to myself, knowing I had finished my race for her. When I got to our tent she greeted me with immense congratulations on finishing my first meet.

Last year, Coach Maddox passed away due to health complications. Her quality of life was not the best, so when she passed, the team grieved but also celebrated because we knew she was finally able to run again. Now when I run, whether it be a short jog or a half marathon, I run with Coach Maddox in my mind even more than I did beforehand. My first high school cross country meet is something that will stay with me forever, and the seemingly insignificant details at the beginning of the race proved to be hugely significant.

## Being Black in America: How Race Plays a Role in Police Brutality

Kristen Gochett

The recent increase in deaths of unarmed African Americans at the hands of law enforcement officers has sparked the Black Lives Matter movement. Black Lives Matter attempts to emphasize the importance of black lives in a racially discriminatory criminal justice system. Black Lives Matter is not implying that all lives do not matter; the movement highlights the injustice that African Americans face in present day America (decades after the Civil Rights Movement). Trayvon Martin, a seventeen-year-old African American youth from Sanford, Florida, was shot and killed by George Zimmerman, a community watchman, while walking down the street with Skittles and an Arizona iced tea because he was deemed “suspicious.” Tamir Rice, a twelve-year-old youth from Cleveland, Ohio was fatally shot by police after playing on a swing set at the park with a plastic pistol. Michael Brown, an eighteen-year-old African American man from Ferguson, Missouri was shot in the back six times and killed after an altercation between him and officer Darren Wilson. Eric Garner, a forty-three-year-old African American man from Staten Island, New York, was placed in a fatal chokehold that led to his death after reports that he uttered “I Can’t Breathe” eleven times. Walter Scott, thirty-three years old and from North Charleston, South Carolina, was shot in the back and killed after fleeing from police after a traffic stop from a non-functioning tail light. Finally, Sandra Bland, a twenty-eight-year-old from Walter County, Texas was taken into custody after a minor traffic violation and was later found hanging from the ceiling in her jail cell. All black, all unarmed. After the verdict of no indictment from their deaths and numerous others, the African American community has taken action to demand justice in a criminal justice system that fails to protect its people of color.

In recent discussions of police brutality, a controversial issue has been whether race contributes to the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers on African Americans. On the one hand, some politicians argue that law enforcement officers use necessary force to subdue those who are in violation of the law regardless of their race. From this perspective, Heather Mac Donald, an American political commentator and journalist, suggests police officers target African Americans only if they commit crimes. On the other hand, African American political scientists and professors from colleges around the nation charge that race is the primary factor in law enforcement's use of excessive force. In the words of Sundiata Cha-Jua, African American Studies and History professor at the University of Illinois, "police brutality is the current form of state-sanctioned violence against people of color" (par. 1). According to this view, recent reports of police brutality are a continuation of the 500 years of violence African Americans have endured in the United States. In order to address the police's abuse and improve the public's opinion of policing, common ground must be reached between those who are for and against the use of deadly force, and there must be reform in the policing profession.

The Black Lives Matter movement arose as a response to the continued murders and brutal arrests of African Americans through the excessive force of police officers. The movement started from a social media post expressing outrage in response to Michael Brown's death. After a vivid rant of injustice, a user used the hashtag followed by the three now-famous words "Black Lives Matter." These three words became a rallying cry from the African American community to demand recognition as human beings in a society of racial disparity. The deaths of Martin, Rice, Brown, Garner, Scott, and Bland highlight the need for justice in the criminal justice system. In the film *Black Twitter After Ferguson*, Black Twitter activist Johnetta Elzie asserts that "It doesn't matter what black people do. We are walking targets just because." The film

explains the atmosphere of the African American community on Twitter after the death of Michael Brown. The death of Brown resulted in mass demonstrations in Ferguson, Missouri, with protestors demanding justice as human beings in a nation that claims to treat every man equally regardless of physical characteristics or socioeconomic status. Although riots proved not to be the most efficient way to demand the justice Black Americans wanted, the riots created a media frenzy that brought nationwide awareness to the Black Lives Matter movement, which eventually led to the question: how many more unarmed African Americans must lose their lives in this ongoing battle for equality?

While Elzie explains the toll the death of Brown had on the African American community, John A. Powell's recent article in *The Washington Informer* provides overwhelming statistics of racial injustice in federal, state, and local government. After several verdicts of no indictment from a continuation of murders of unarmed blacks, the African American community faced the harsh reality of no punishment for the officers who took the lives of innocent citizens. Police continue to murder Black Americans without consequences for the actions committed. In his article "Let's Have a Real Conversation About Race," professor of law and African American studies at the University of California, Berkeley, John A. Powell asserts that "our young black males are at a twenty-one times greater risk of being shot dead by police than their white counterparts" (par. 2). Similarly, Jennifer Eberhardt, social psychologist and professor at Stanford University explains that "black defendants who have what are considered stereotypically "black features" serve up to eight months longer and receive more death sentences than their white counterparts" (par. 6). ProPublica, a non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in public interest, also gathered statistics for means of determining what factors influenced police brutality. According to the gathered statistics, "1,217

deadly police shootings from 2010 to 2012 captured in the federal data show that blacks, age 15 to 19, were killed at a rate of 31.17 per million, while just 1.47 per million white males in that age range died at the hands of police.” The statistics in these studies are evidence that race does play a role in the unequal treatment of citizens in the American criminal justice system.

Given the documented statistics of racial injustice in the criminal justice system, it can be inferred that police are intimidated by African Americans resulting in the use of excessive force. Recent findings from national statistics prove that racial bias is the deciding factor when a law enforcement officer decides if use of deadly force is necessary. In his article, “Why Police So Often See Unarmed Black Men as Threats,” journalist German Lopez suggests that “everyone carries a subconscious prejudice ... this implicit bias contributes to the many racial disparities in law enforcement” (par. 2). University of Colorado Boulder psychology professor Josh Correll ran tests to prove racial bias in police shootings with a shooter video game. Correll argues that “officers generally did a good job of avoiding shooting all races...when shooting was warranted, officers pulled the trigger more quickly against black suspects than white ones” (par 9). The evidence in these studies is further explained in a national study from the Federal Bureau of Statistics in 2007. The findings showed that black and white low class citizens were equally likely to be stopped by police, but blacks were more likely to have had excessive force used against them. These statistics support the claim that race is a motive in deciding when and when not to fire a gun or act excessively causing harm to the citizen.

While the statistics from various studies involving race and excessive force conclude that race does in fact play a role in police brutality, the definition of deadly force marks the primary division between those who approve and oppose it. Police define use of deadly force as shooting to kill. There are arguments that use of deadly force is very much necessary to ensure the safety

of law enforcement officers. From this perspective, Oak Ridge, Tennessee Police Department Sergeant Randy Tedford proposes, “Cops don't shoot to kill. If we have to shoot, we are shooting to survive” (par. 10). According to Tedford, police utilize of deadly force when absolutely necessary. Tedford also explains that police have a dual job each day. They are forced to protect the citizens of our country and maintain healthy relationships with their families. He also asserts that they sometimes fear if they do not use deadly force when they feel threatened, they may not make it home to see their families at the end of their shift. He explains that guns are the last resort in attempting to detain citizens, not just African Americans. According the federal use-of-force continuation, police are supposed to determine their level of force in any situation based on the actions of the individual they are in contact with. Although this may be true for some officers, not all abide by this standard. If police only shoot to survive, how can the deaths of unarmed African Americans who pose no threat to law enforcement officers be justified?

While there are various citizens around the nation who approve of the use of excessive force by police officers, there are also those who oppose it. *Debate.org*, a public opinion web site, ran a poll to ask the general public if police should be allowed to use deadly force. Although sixty-two percent who answered the survey chose yes and thirty-eight percent chose no, it is clear that there is division among citizens regarding deadly force. An anonymous user answered the question proposing that “Police should be forced to retreat from a situation just as any other civilian...they make a bad situation worse when they arrive and usually are the reason the person completes the act they're threatening.” The proposed opinion suggests that there are better solutions to handling a situation in which force is necessary. The anonymous user goes on to suggest, “I would even offer only carrying less lethal weapons and reserving deadly weapons for



specialized trained officers.” The user argues that it is justifiable for police to use force to detain individuals; however, deadly force only makes a bad situation worse.

Given the opinions of those who are for and against the use of deadly force, or any force at all, it is understandable that this is a heavily debated topic among politicians, law enforcement, and the public. In the article “Law Enforcement and Violence: The Divide Between Black and White Americans,” many researchers from the University of Chicago contributed to statistics from both Black and White Americans and their opinions of policing. According to the statistics, “Blacks and whites agree that changes in policies and procedures could be effective in reducing tensions between minorities and police and in limiting violence against civilians.” Everyone has their opinions, whether for or against force. However, finding an adequate solution to the problem is not as simple. In her article in *The Huffington Post*, politics reporter Julia Craven avers, “we want a world where police don’t kill people (par. 1). According to her view, black activists around the nation are proposing solutions to bring a better name to policing and to mend the broken relationship between law enforcement and African Americans. Of the proposed solutions, community policing and body cameras appear to be the most promising ways to reform policing and boost the public’s image of the profession.

Community policing is a way that the police can interact with the ones they serve in their respective communities. In *Police*, a publication for law enforcement officers, the article “Community Policing Can Be Effective If Properly Practiced” explains that community policing “emphasizes the individual initiatives and skills of officers as well as interacting with local citizens to build relationships” (par 1). This is an attempt for the public to regain their trust in policing, and it also reforms policing. In community policing, the officers form a relationship with the citizens they are meant to protect. Another solution for boosting the public’s morale is

the use of body cameras. Body cameras record an officer's routine procedures and arrests that can be used in case of claims of police misconduct. According to his article "Mixed Messages: Body Camera Rules," former attorney-general Eric Holder acknowledges that "body cameras tend to reduce the number of complaints and are a very useful tool in trying to determine what was the nature of action between someone in the community" (par. 1). Body cameras record officer-citizen interaction and provide visual evidence in a case of injustice. These solutions black activists proposed could possibly be the solution to the ongoing tension between police and African Americans.

In the final analysis, the best solution for decreasing police brutality against the African American community and changing the public's opinion of policing is for common ground to be reached in deciding the differentiating factor of what is considered deadly force and what is not to reform policing. The police are meant to protect our well-being. However, there is evidence that police do not always abide by moral standards. The deaths of Martin, Rice, Brown, Scott, and Bland serve as reminders of the injustices that the African American community have faced. They sparked a movement that demanded justice for better treatment of African Americans. Although their deaths prompted a divide within the nation, it also allowed citizens to reach mutual agreements as to what needs to be done to ensure these types of fatalities will never happen again. In the end, we, as well as law enforcement officers, must fulfill our duties as United States citizens to ensure safety for all and more unified nation.

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## A Wash with UA's Machine

Janna Hood

From SGA to Homecoming Queen, and throughout the campus of the University of Alabama, there are students upset about a racist Machine destroying the democracy and integration on campus. For many years, the University has been known for its deep southern roots in segregation. Being an institution at which the first African American students had to be escorted in through the doors, amidst the speech of Governor George Wallace attempting to prevent integration, segregation has left its scar across campus. Not only is the problem with racial prejudice, but also political prejudice on campus. The Machine is a very private and secretive, campus-wide, political organization, which usually chooses the campus's winning candidates by using its power to gain control over voters. The fact is that the Machine is made up of all-white, Greek-system members, and the racism on campus will not stop until the members of the organization are found and prevented from allowing their political agenda to plague campus any longer.

The Machine began as a fraternity called Theta Nu Epsilon, whose Greek initials spell out ONE since the Greek letter Theta is shaped like the English letter O. Theta Nu Epsilon's goal was to teach its members how to gain and use power to be the pinnacle political leaders (Weiss). Today, its members allegedly make up the majority of the Student Senate, which votes on topics relating to campus student organizations. If the Machine chooses a student running for a campus office, or social position, and the many members support this student, he or she will most likely win the seat and use the position's power to implement the Machine's objectives. The power does not stop there, however, because organizations now try to please the Machine by supporting

whomever it supports in order for their candidates to be supported in the next election. The Machine runs on power and scare tactics, such as social excommunication and incidents of violence in past years, in order to maintain their control over campus democracy (Smith).

One example of such wielding of political power was the 2015 vote for Homecoming Queen at Alabama. One of the African American, Alpha Gamma Delta sorority members, Halle Lindsay, was running for Queen when the Machine chose to support a Caucasian member of the Court instead, Katelyn Katsafanas. This led all of the Greek system members to vote in favor of the Machine candidate, including Lindsay's own sorority sisters. One quote from a social media thread between the sorority's members read, "We are supporting [Katsafanas], we have to support what the Machine says to support" (Mosely). Despite Lindsay having many admirable qualities that set her apart from the other contestants, the Machine chose not to support her. While many see this as a racial controversy, others see it as a blatant lack of the freedom to vote for whomever the voter thinks is the most deserving candidate. In an interview with Lindsay herself, she states, "The greatest disappointment I feel is seeing my sorority sisters oppressed and unable to individually express themselves because of the politics involved. The goal for any election is to do your research and vote to support whom you believe is most qualified" (Enoch). The Alpha Gamma Delta members felt the need to choose between their own sister and a social presence on campus, which resulted in a win for Katsafanas and the Machine.

While much of the University's students and faculty are taking steps to become more of a diverse and integrated campus, the Greek system remains quite segregated. One CNN interview with a journalist from the Crimson White spoke about two African American women being blocked from pledging a sorority despite their 4.0 GPAs and outstanding credentials from public service work (Baldwin). Another example of this same thing happening was with Melody

Twilley, when she decided to rush at Alabama but failed to be admitted two years in a row. She was a daughter of an upper-middle-class family in the black belt of Alabama, and was picked out of her high school to go to a prestigious academic boarding school in Mobile, the Alabama School of Math and Sciences. Being completely eligible to join a sorority, she wanted to rush with all of her friends and join a family of women who would become lifelong friends and make her college experience great. However, by day three of the rush week, she was informed that she had been dropped. Despite being “bright, attractive, and a member of the upper class,” she was dropped on what appeared to be an only racial basis (Zengerle).

In recent years, more African American women are being allowed to join typically all-white sororities, but there is still work to be done to integrate a system that should have been integrated when the rest of the school was working through desegregation. However, instead of the University Board demanding all sororities allow African American students, students of color chose to form their own Greek system on campus. Alpha Kappa Alpha’s Theta Sigma chapter is the only house on Sorority Row devoted especially to African American women who want to have the same experience their fellow Caucasian women do (Theta Sigma Chapter). Now, there are about nine sororities and fraternities on campus devoted solely to African American students; however, even they allow some Caucasian students to join with less hassle than a person of color joining a traditionally white Greek organization. On a campus as ethnically diverse as the University of Alabama is, the fact that the Greek system is still as segregated as it is raises the question of why that is so.

While many advocates for racial integration are battling for a less segregated Greek system, it is unfortunate that one organization, the Machine, is attempting to halt their progress. The Machine’s members consist of chapter presidents and officers from twenty-eight of

Alabama's sororities and fraternities, and they use this influential power to sway political votes for the members they support. Members of the Machine have also infiltrated the Student Senate, which votes on topics brought to it by the student body. This makes passing any policy that could potentially punish members of the Machine for telling people how to vote nearly impossible, despite how many students request solutions to the issue.

One possible solution to the dictatorship that is the Machine is a campus hotline for any suspicion of voting fraud, and a punishment for any members found to be associated with the Machine. Hotlines have been used for many issues where callers wish to anonymously help someone, or confidentially receive help for themselves. One example is the Domestic Violence Hotline put in place by President Bill Clinton, following the passage of Violence Against Women Act of 1994, to provide twenty-four-hour access to trained counselors (Off Our Backs). The University of Alabama itself implemented a Hazing Hotline in 2001, which has proven to be helpful in making campus a safer environment. Just last semester, September of 2015, five fraternity brothers were arrested for hazing due to an anonymous call to the hotline (CW Staff). Although the risk of being caught did not prevent the act, the hotline provided a way for action to be made to stop the hazing, catch the hazers, and punish them for their actions. If there were a way for witnesses of Machine work to anonymously call, text, or email their allegations to a task force committee, there would be a greater chance of finding members of the Machine and preventing them from influencing elections.

Along with the hotline, there should be a form of punishment for those found to be involved with the Machine's political regime. While revoking their right to vote in campus elections would not be ethical democratically, placing a probation on, or even removing members from their seats on the Student Senate, and not allowing them to run for a Student



Government Association position for an allotted number of elections, would be possible punishments for those found to be associated with the Machine. While this will not stop the Machine from functioning altogether, knowing that any attempt to further the political agenda of the Machine could promote an anonymous call with potential consequences would take the power away from the Machine, and give it to the voters.

Many colleges have been criticized for being steeped in traditions which have, over the years, become increasingly outdated. Whether working to change racist mascots, buildings named after historical people with less than moral backgrounds, or even student-led organizations whose sole purpose since their founding was to gain and keep power, there are many ways universities can change for the better. The problem might be solved by implementing a hotline to find members of a group such as the Machine and stop them from corrupting campus democracy. The people's vote should be that of individual opinion and not based on an organization who chooses candidacy based on ethnicity or popularity. Slowing the progress of the Machine will not immediately integrate the University of Alabama's Greek systems, but by creating more equal opportunities for every race and ethnicity in Greek life, Student Government Association, and everyday campus life, the university will be more accepting of the diverse student body already present on campus. While there will always be amoral people and organizations, if the majority of the people come together for one common goal of fairness and equality, the few left behind will only remain in the past with the traditions they fought so desperately to preserve.

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Metaphor, Flashback, and Point of View in Leslie Jamison's *The Empathy Exams*

Rudi Johnston

Empathy is a word everyone throws around but no one really catches. We've all heard the phrase, "you can't understand another person's experience until you've walked a mile in their shoes," and we've replaced empathy with this idea. We've decided that we can empathize with someone if we've shared a similar experience. In her book, *The Empathy Exams*, Leslie Jamison explores the idea of empathy and what it truly means. Jamison has multiple stories of personal experiences that have shaped her understanding of empathy. In two of the small essays, "The Empathy Exams" and "La Frontera," she uses metaphor, flashback, and point of view to illustrate what she believes empathy to be.

"The Empathy Exams" is an account of Jamison's time spent working as a medical actor, performing as a patient for medical students' exams. Throughout this essay, Jamison goes back and forth between her present working this job and her past experiences with an abortion and a heart surgery. She utilizes flashback to reminisce about when she first kissed her past boyfriend and times spent focused on him, as well as all of the time she spent in a doctor's office. Jamison describes her situation juggling the two procedures – abortion and heart surgery – as a time when she realized just how frail she was. She was scared, as her frail body was put in the hands of men and "dependent on the care of a man [she] was just beginning to love" (7). Jamison put her heart in the hands of the doctors and the hands of a man from whom she wanted more. She wanted him to help her in this difficult time. However, she felt disconnected from him; her thoughts were sprinting around her head. "Couldn't he just trust that I felt something, and that I'd wanted something from him?" she writes. "I needed his empathy not just to comprehend the emotions I

was describing, but to help me discover which emotions were actually there” (10). Jamison was longing for someone to empathize with her. She wanted someone to know her perspective without having had to step into her shoes. She didn’t expect Dave to understand, she just expected him to try to.

Jamison explores the meaning of empathy further and further when she steps into the office of her cardiologist. Jamison recalls how her doctor would ask simple questions every time they met and then “when she left the room to let me dress, I could hear her voice speaking into a tape recorder in the hallway” (17). Jamison never felt a strong connection with her doctor, as Dr. M. was rude and inconsiderate towards Jamison’s feelings. So she learned about fake empathy. Dr. M. would quickly record what she’d learned from her standard questions just so that she could listen to the recording five minutes before their next meeting and seem to actually care. Jamison recognized this and learned more about how empathy is a form of caring. Jamison’s first-person point of view throughout the essays helps to establish her interpretation of empathy. When she is feeling down, she recounts that “[she] wanted him to hurt whenever [she] hurt, to feel as much as [she] felt. But it’s exhausting to keep tabs on how much someone is feeling for you. It can make you forget that they feel too” (19). Empathy is oftentimes a two way road with one side blocked off. She wanted her boyfriend to empathize with her without thinking about how it could be hard for him to. His girlfriend was pregnant. His girlfriend was having a heart surgery. Through her personal experience, Jamison learns more about what empathy is and how to be empathetic.

In “La Frontera,” Jamison recounts her time traveling through different cities in Mexico near the United States border. She visits cities that have been overtaken with violence, and cities that are practically suburbia. Jamison tries to connect with each city individually, as she’s trying

to really understand what's happening beneath the surface. She consistently uses metaphors to explain what she's beginning to understand empathy to be. She travels to Tijuana, a place that used to be completely overcome with violence but was beginning to become a little bit safer. She notes that there are many cheap tourist stands lining the streets but not many tourists for them to cater to. She assumes that the past violence scared away most of the tourists, those who focus on the surface. Jamison explores the truths about tourism, that we believe that "bringing our bodies somewhere draws that place closer to us, or we to it" (59). She realizes that this is not true, but it is what most people think: it's a "quick fix of empathy" (59). Jamison notes that it's almost something to just make us feel better, like drugs or alcohol or a one night stand. She notes that "sometimes the city fucks on the first date, and sometimes it doesn't. But always, *always*, we wake up in the morning and find we didn't know it at all" (59). We pretend to be empathetic on the surface, but we're really only escaping ourselves.

Jamison's description in "La Frontera" alludes to the fact that many people try to be empathetic to feel better about themselves, to feel like they're being a good person. In reality, true empathy is about others. Jamison meets a man named Marco on her journey and talks with him about his home. Marco recounts how the morning before he left for the *encuentro*, he woke up and hit the snooze button just to be woken back up minutes later by a grenade explosion followed by machine-gun fire. Marco finds it normal, "Like a conversation," he says, "one voice and then the response" (62). That's part of his daily life. Later, Jamison expands on this thought, realizing that the conversation is the constant violence. She visits many different cities and experiences different types of hurt. She leaves and knows there's no way she could do anything about it; she can't even begin to understand how these people live. "So the conversation continues" (68). The violence continues. Grenade explosions are answered by gunfire. Drug

lords continue to send their messages on dead bodies. Poets continue to try to explain. The conversation gets them nowhere because everyone is trying to talk the loudest; and with a jumbled mess of words, how could any outsider understand what these people are going through?

Jamison uses different techniques throughout her book to explain what she believes empathy to be. In the essay “The Empathy Exams” she uses mainly flashback and point of view, and in “La Frontera” she uses mainly metaphor. “The Empathy Exams” is a more personal account, as Jamison shares her past struggles and heartache. She was vulnerable and needed someone to understand her emotions for her: “couldn’t he just trust that [she] felt something, and that [she’d] wanted something from him? [She] needed his empathy not just to comprehend the emotions [she] was describing, but to help [her] discover which emotions were actually there” (10). Those flashbacks are effective in demonstrating how Jamison was seeking empathy and exactly what she was wanting. She was waiting for someone to understand her while realizing that he couldn’t know exactly how she felt. The metaphors used in “La Frontera” are more of an attempt to characterize how the general public views empathy and how these views are flawed. Her metaphor of the tourist cities as one night stands is effective in showing how our ‘quick fixes’ of empathy don’t mean anything. She says that “always, *always*, we wake up in the morning and find we didn’t know [the city] at all” (59). The general view of empathy is feeling for someone in a hard situation. Jamison’s view of empathy is something much deeper. We have to understand someone’s pain without understanding their circumstance, and that in itself is understanding.

Both “The Empathy Exams” and “La Frontera” are used to interpret empathy. Jamison uses different strategies to bring forth the same concept: there are things that cannot be

understood by an outsider, but that outsider should still try to understand. Through her flashbacks of her own times struggling with desiring empathy and her metaphors for cities and violence within them, she successfully defines empathy as something everyone wants but barely anyone is able to give. It is something that requires selflessness and acceptance that understanding is not possible in every situation. Leslie Jamison throws the word empathy around, and actually catches it.

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## City Café

Anna L. Jones

My first memory that I have of City Café is sliding into the slick, brightly colored booth with my mom and sister sliding in across from me. I remember seeing my chubby, curious sister, at the terrible age of two, drink a random cup of sweet tea that had been left on the table from the last customer. I remember my mom automatically jerking the cup from my sister's chubby little hands while silently praying that the last customer wasn't dying from some terrible, incurable disease that would be passed on to my screaming sister. As I began to lose interest in the drink catastrophe, due to my five-year-old attention span, I started to notice the posters on the wall with every University of Alabama sports team one could think of. I can remember looking at the 1970's poster of the Crimsonettes and trying to find the one I thought was the prettiest, while admiring their sparkly outfits. The old, vintage look of the restaurant has continued for as long as I can remember. As I sit here today on the slick, blue, worn leather bar stools, conversing with the owner and staff of City Café, I think of how City Café has affected my life, and through conversation, find how it has also affected many other people's lives.

Let me begin by giving a little history about City Café for those who are unfamiliar with this amazing restaurant. According to the plaque that is outside of City Café, the building that City Café is in today was in 1926 a store that was built by C.R. Maxwell. In the 1930s, the store became a hamburger stand that was owned by Ned Powell. A few years later, until 1942, Jo Knight opened a little café called "Jo's Café." In 1946, "City Café" was established by Hoyt Brasher and Bill Hitt. In 1974, Joe Barger, who had worked at City Café during his high school years, took over the business, and Joe, along with his wife and daughter, continue to run the

business today. However, as amazing as the history of this glorious building is, it's not just the history that I care about, but the way that the restaurant has impacted me, along with many other lives, in its almost seventy years of business.

Part of the history includes some of the greats that have passed through City Café. While conversing with Geanie Brown, the daughter of Joe Barger, I asked her if any famous people had ever eaten at the restaurant. After a few minutes of asking around to try to recall the names of the greats who had eaten here, Geanie and waitress Tracy Malone were finally able to figure out names: Some of the greats include Marty Stuart, Sela Ward, and Ed Bradley. For those who do not know who these people are, no worries, I didn't know either. I looked them up. Marty Stuart is a country music star, five-time Grammy award winner, and historian ("Marty Stuart Biography"); Sela Ward is an actress, former homecoming queen, and former cheerleader at the University of Alabama ("Biography"); and Ed Bradley is a former journalist and anchor of the T.V. news series "60 Minutes" ("Ed Bradley Biography"). While all of this is an amazing part of the restaurant's history, as I was talking with the lovely ladies at City Café, the conversation turned to their personal experiences in the twenty-plus years of working at City Café.

Each one of the ladies had their own memories and stories that were personal in their own way. Geanie was the first one to respond, eager to tell one of the main memories that she has made in the forty-one years that her family has owned the business. Geanie shared her memory of when she and her sister would sleep in a van at the back of the restaurant because her parents had to be at the restaurant so early. "Me and my sister would sleep in that van, get ready for school in that van, and walk up the hill to school when it was time," Geanie proclaimed. When I asked Geanie how early they have to arrive at the business now, I was absolutely astounded by the answer. Geanie told me that they have to get there between 1:00 a.m and 2:00 a.m., they open

at 4:00 a.m., they close at 3:30 p.m., and they leave between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Now that, my friends, is true dedication to a business! After Geanie shared her amazing story with me, I became a little distracted, and I asked what their reason was for opening so early. Geanie told me that they open so early for the men and women who had early morning shifts, and for the college students who have been through yet another all-nighter. I then asked the question that many City Café fans would like to know: Why close on the weekends? Geanie responded with the very wise answer: “We are family people; we want to be with our families; money isn’t everything.” This answer took me by surprise. Before my interview with the staff, I always thought that in the world we live today, money is everything to most businesses.

The next person who was eager to tell a story was Martha Sellers, a waitress who has been at City Café for twenty years. Martha’s story took place years ago, but she told me that she would never forget it and that it continues to impact her today. Martha began to describe a humble young man, a student at the University of Alabama, who came to eat at City Café at 2:30 p.m. every single day the restaurant was open. “He would always sit by himself, in the same booth, at the same time, and he always ordered a chicken and cheese sandwich with macaroni and cheese,” Martha explained to me. The man, like many college students, struggled financially, and he never had the money to tip Martha, and sometimes he would not have the money to eat. “He would just give me a look when he couldn’t pay, and I would let him know I understood.” Martha proclaimed. This went on for four years until the young man graduated, and I did not see him again.”

Ten years later, Martha was working one day, and this man came in. “He had a huge beard, and he had a pretty young lady with him,” said Martha. “He kept looking at me, and every time I would walk past him, he would nudge me on the shoulder.” Martha said she was confused

and could not figure out who this man was until she saw his smile. “When I saw his smile, I knew who it was, and I could not believe that after all these years he had come back,” Martha said. The man then proceeded to introduce his wife and told Martha about their upcoming child. He and his wife, also his former boss, owned their own business together in South Carolina and seemed to be pretty successful.

“Before he left, he handed me an envelope,” and he explained to her that it contained all the tips he could never leave for her while he was in college. “The last words he said to me were ‘I will never forget the hand that fed me,’ and I will never forget that,” Martha said. As Martha ended her story, I felt the tears start to come to my eyes and the chill bumps start rising on my skin, but I was finally able to get myself together. All I could do was hug Martha and smile about the wonderful story she had just shared with me.

As our conversation began to wrap up, I hugged both Geanie and Martha, and I thanked them for the wonderful stories that they shared with me. On the drive back to campus, I began to reflect on how City Café has affected me and my family throughout all the years we have eaten there. One word that I would use to describe how City Café makes me feel is safe. In a world where I am constantly hearing of all the bad things that are happening, the staff of City Café have always reminded me that there are still some amazing, kindhearted people who truly do care about the wellbeing of others. The City Café staff makes sure that no one feels like a stranger at the restaurant, whether they are from Tuscaloosa or not. Those of us that have gone there for years have formed our own little family with familiar waves, greetings, and smiles that we send each other from week to week. In case you ever feel the urge to eat at my favorite restaurant, I recommend the fried chicken breast fillet, fried green tomatoes, mashed potatoes

and gravy, and macaroni and cheese. Oh, and for all those out of town students looking for a home cooked meal, head on down to City Café; I promise you will not regret it.

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## Ending the Electric Car Evolution

Jager Kukowski

To many people's dismay, the presidential campaign has dominated headlines across the United States over the past year; consequently, some very important current events are flying under the radar. In the grasslands of America, a battle between law enforcement and "tree-huggers" has been escalating for weeks, and it has slowly evolved into a physically harmful war. The Dakota Access Pipeline Project is planned to span over one thousand miles from North Dakota to Central Illinois and provide exponentially more domestic gasoline throughout the country. Although it is predicted to boost local economies nationwide, protestors can see the numerous environmental dangers that can be associated with this project, resulting in an all-out-war with legislators and builders. This is the current attitude of many citizens. People are starting to realize how important the environment is and are looking for ways to protect it now and for future generations; however, like the Dakota Pipeline Project, there is not enough support to ultimately make a difference. The automobile industry is a sound example of this dilemma. Despite the growing awareness that the current amount of renewable energy is not satisfactory, gasoline-using cars will continue to outnumber the amount of electric cars in the upcoming decade because of the high-prices associated with a clean car, the overall lack of convenience for consumers, and the ever increasing deficit that primarily green companies, such as the trailblazing company Tesla, are posting.

Although there are a few costs, such as purchasing gasoline, that are eliminated by owning an electric car, there are numerous factors that can actually empty the pockets of electric owners faster than typical car owners. The initial purchase price per automobile is a glaring

example. For example, Ford Motor Company offers three different versions of their four door sedan - the Focus. The base model consumes only gasoline starts at \$21,900, while the completely electric model starts at \$38,700 (Trop). That difference of over \$15,000 can easily change the minds of even the wealthiest of car buyers and encourage them to stick with the original style of car.

Not only are the prices of the car greater for electric vehicles, there is not as much of an incentive for car owners to transition away from gasoline. In the late 2000's and early 2010's, gas prices climbed to five dollars a gallon in the majority of the country; consequently, the incentives of avoiding gasoline were obvious. With gas prices leveling out and settling around two dollars per gallon in 2016, society is no longer apprehensive towards prices (Ulrich). The Federal Energy Information Administration estimated that the typical United States household saved around \$700 on gasoline in 2015 compared to previous years in the decade (Sommer). Because of the high initial cost of purchasing and plummeting prices of gasoline, people that are looking to save money are no longer part of the consumer demographics for electric vehicles.

While there continues to be a monetary concern for many individuals, there is a large population of people that are not concerned about the price tag on cars, rather they are troubled by the user-friendliness. According to the article "A Hankering for a Hybrid" in the New York Times, "Manufacturers are fighting an uphill battle to win over consumers worried about the distances they can travel before recharging a purely electric car" (Trop and Vlastic). Numerous electric cars allow for only 75 to 125 miles per charge; contrastingly, gasoline-using vehicles typically travel anywhere from 300 to 400 miles on a single tank. This massive difference in distance capability will push those that need to travel large distances away; however, the recharge time is even more of a concern among consumers.



California, the state that is the leader in the green revolution, is witnessing chaos that is the result of electric plug-ins. Throughout major metropolitan areas, the amount of charging stations is dwarfed by the amount of gas stations. Currently, there is around one charging station for every ten electric cars on the road. Because of this scarcity, owners are experiencing unnecessary drama and disturbances when trying to charge. Don Han, a Silicon Valley resident, has fallen victim to this multiple times. After plugging in his Nissan Leaf near his office this past summer, he witnessed a similar car pull up and unplug his car (Trop). Luckily, Don caught the thief red-handed and was still able to charge his car; however, he could have returned to his car hours later with a car lacking any fuel. This is an unnecessary headache that many will see as easily avoidable by staying away from electric cars.

Despite all these problems, companies are continuing to spend billions on research and development to increase fuel efficiency; however, their yearly sales are not remotely close to equalizing their yearly research. It does not require one to search hard to find a company exhibiting this. Tesla Motors, the golden-child of both the automobile industry and renewable resource industry, has continued to lose money over the past year. During the second quarter of 2016, Tesla reported a loss of \$293.2 million dollars (Vlasic). If the current trend continues, the company will have lost over one billion dollars by the end of the financial year. Although their product is in high demand and coveted by their consumers, Tesla will not continue to run on a deficit. This could be damaging to the amount of electric cars on the road today. Over 30% of the current electric cars on the road today are from Tesla Motors. Removing their business would be the death of the electric car revolution and gasoline-using vehicles would remain supreme.

It is a pretty clear problem that is happening at the moment. For the average consumer, green cars are not cheap nor are they convenient. For the manufacturers, green cars are not

profitable. Although there are millions of people recognizing the global climate change and want to make an impact, these problems will keep them sidelined from helping. Unless new technology comes to light in the upcoming years, a small fraction of cars on the road will be electric, and gasoline will remain the leading fuel source consumed by drivers.

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## I Hate Reading

Kevin Langley

As I sat in my AP English class junior year, I thought about how much I hated reading. I was going through the syllabus that Mr. Maguire had just handed me. I read through the list of authors and titles I had heard of before but had never really read, ranging from Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* to Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. "I really hate reading," I thought again, expecting another year of the same boring, long, "canonical" books.

I didn't always hate reading though.

In sixth grade, while sitting in my lilliputian chair, I heard Mrs. Moon announce my favorite part of the day: silent reading time. I loved this time so much because it gave me the opportunity to be alone with my thoughts and travel to a different world every day. Some days I would read the simple *Magic Treehouse* books, traveling throughout time with the main characters. Other times, I would read about Percy Jackson and his demigod friends while they fought Hades throughout New York City. Some of my classmates thought silent reading time dragged on and on and would much rather go to recess or just learn another subject to avoid this dreaded half hour every day. I was one of the "weird ones," perfectly content with sitting at my desk all day, just reading some latest adventure I had picked up off the bookshelf in Mrs. Moon's classroom. I excelled in most subjects at the time, but reading time gave me the freedom to just relax and get caught in another world.

Three years later, I sat in my first high school English class with Mr. Dalton. He was a large, older gentleman who didn't do a great job of teaching us, and, while kind, really let us do

whatever we wanted. While I was still a relatively avid reader at the time, part of me began to dislike reading, partially because of the “canonical” reading lists. That summer, we had to read John Knowles’s *A Separate Peace*, about an all-male boarding school in New Hampshire during World War II. The book had some interesting parts, but to me these parts were few and far between, dispersed by stretches of my boredom, just describing random aspects of the school. Later on in the year, we read “a classic”: *Romeo and Juliet*. Now, I can understand the cultural significance of this piece, but at the time as a fifteen-year-old male, I had absolutely no interest in reading a love story. “Oh Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou my dearest Romeo?” classmates would mock from across the room. Mr. Dalton would try to calm us down, “Gentlemen, gentlemen, I understand this is very exciting stuff, but please return to your seats.” Of course, no one listened, and I enjoyed seeing my classmates make fools of themselves, rather than read about the Montagues and the Capulets.

Many of the books that we were given to read were written in old and middle English, which were basically another language to me. While reading these books, I would be confused, no matter how many times I read it. Once I got to class, I would say to the teacher, “Oh, I had trouble understanding this part, can you go over it?” Most of the time, the teacher would gladly explain it. My sophomore English teacher, Mr. Plunkett, would not. He would tell me to read closer, and we could not use any form of translation or summary in common English just to understand the reading. That is like going into a French class for the first time, and being given a book to read. Now, you’re not going to understand it, and that is what the teacher is supposed to be for, except the teacher won’t teach you French. He just says, “read more carefully.” Eventually, you will have a growing animosity towards anything written in French, and that is how I started to feel about reading.

Years passed, draining my love of reading through the assignment of boring books written in what seemed like a foreign language. Then, I somehow found myself in Mr. Maguire's class. I expected more of the same: Hawthorne's hard-to-comprehend, romantic style of writing, followed up by Hurston's even-harder-to-understand novel written in African-American vernacular English. One day Mr. Maguire told us, "Guys, don't forget to bring in *Slaughterhouse-Five* tomorrow," as he held up a book with a yellow cover and a red skull and crossbones on it. I went to my locker after class and dug through the four months' worth of discarded notes, books, and math tests until I found it: the book that would change my life.

Mr. Maguire walked into class the next day holding up the book, and in his usual tone (you could never tell if he was serious or not), he said: "This is like no book you've ever read before." I remember being a little scared, because that is not always necessarily a good thing. The novel by Kurt Vonnegut was indeed like nothing I had ever read before, and it was most certainly a good thing. The book focused on a chaplain's assistant in World War II, Billy Pilgrim. Billy was the usual, extremely cowardly soldier. What made this book interesting was the fact that Billy did not live his life in a linear fashion. Within the first few pages of the book, it was 1976 and Billy was dead. But then he was behind German lines in 1944. Suddenly, Billy was on an alien (Tralfamadorean) ship in 1965, after being abducted. The next moment, it was 1945, and Billy was in a Nazi POW camp in Dresden as it was bombed. This captivated me as a reader, as it built suspense. I wondered where Billy would end up next. Moreover, I had never experienced a writing style like that. I had experienced flashbacks in books before, but this was different; we were living these life moments with Billy, just out of order. This was thrilling to me, Vonnegut's ability to constantly change up the story, while still following the same character.

Now, I am sitting in my dorm, looking at my books, while trying to formulate my thoughts as to how I can close this essay on the importance of *Slaughterhouse-Five*. I look up and see two of my favorite books on my bookshelf, *The Things They Carried* and *Going After Cacciato*, both by Tim O'Brien. At the beginning of my junior year, I could not fathom having one favorite book, let alone two. My next goal, *American Sniper*, sits right next to them. Without Kurt Vonnegut, I would not have taken any books with me from Massachusetts. Now, my relationship with reading is too far gone for one book to completely bring it back, but because of Kurt Vonnegut, I can no longer say "I hate reading."

## Gasping for Air

Alex Mazzaferro

In movies, asthma doesn't seem too bad. In the movie *It*, based on the novel by Stephen King, the loveable, nerdy kid runs a few paces, pretends to wheeze, whips out his handy-dandy inhaler, takes one puff, immediately exhales, and he's good to go. Not too bad, right? Well, after running a few minutes, my esophagus starts to close, my chest gets tight, and I start wheezing. I usually have to sit down because I can't breathe at all. I reach for my rescue inhaler, pull off the cap, and shake it for a few seconds. I exhale as hard as I can, so I can empty my lungs. I have to follow this routine because I need to prepare myself for the following gigantic gasp for air. I suck in as deeply as humanly possible with my extremely inadequate lungs, while I squeeze my inhaler and a cloud of white, dusty air enters deep into my diaphragm. I hold my breath for twenty agonizing seconds, and at the last second I cough out the stale air. At this point, my vision may go dark or I might get light-headed, but I'm not done yet. I have to wait sixty seconds then repeat the process to take another dose. On top of everything, my inhaler doesn't provide a clean, seamless transition from choking to easy breathing. That would be far too convenient; I usually spend the next minute or two coughing my brains out so that my body can clear its passages.

The media is at fault for not showing the varying severity of many cases of asthma. As a result, people always assumed that I was faking my symptoms so that I would get out of sprints for football practice, or so I wouldn't have to run the mile in gym class. Coaches would shake their heads in disapproval, and my peers would stare as I slowed down to a stop and took a puff in the middle of a workout. One time, while I was holding in a breath after using my inhaler, my gym teacher came up to me and said, "You know that there are Olympic athletes with asthma,



right? It's not a good excuse to quit. Get out there and quit messing around." If only he knew that there are varying degrees of the disease. The Olympic athletes that my teacher was talking about were probably never hospitalized after an asthma attack in the middle of the night like I have been.

My coaches and peers probably didn't know that I truly could not breathe during a sprint. They probably thought that a small wheeze was the only symptom I had. In reality, I couldn't participate because it felt like someone was sitting on my chest and strangling me more and more with each breath. The only way to experience a similar feeling would be to run while only breathing through a straw. If my coaches could try it, I bet they wouldn't get very far before spitting the straw out. Probably they'd get as far as I would get before needing to use my inhaler.

During practice, I wanted so badly to fit in and be able to run like everyone else without drawing a ton of attention every time I experienced an attack. However, keeping a low profile was difficult when my lungs made a noise that drew every eye within a fifty-foot radius. Nearly every day, I'd have to decide which would be more embarrassing: walking off the field alone to use my inhaler as my peers and superiors watched, or continuing to wheeze and choke.

Before I joined football or baseball, I used to see my inhaler as a safety net. If I ever got into a life-threatening situation, I could always count on the cold cloud of Albuterol to rescue me. As time went on, I started joining organized sports, and my inhaler went from being my safety net to a spotlight that highlighted my worst quality. I was so embarrassed because I didn't want to be different. I projected all of my frustrations that stemmed from my asthma onto it. I didn't realize that my inhaler wasn't the thing that set me apart from everyone else, but it was easier to blame my problems on a physical object. I tried hiding it, or not using it when I needed it because it made me feel inferior. People didn't understand my condition, so I looked to my

inhaler instead of the people who were really at fault for my embarrassment.

As for many lucky people, my symptoms started to vanish with age. My awful wheeze has been tamed, I don't get winded after a walk up a flight of stairs, and my lungs have strengthened. I'm free to live a healthy, active life. Nowadays, I can go for a run, and I feel safe leaving my inhaler at home. Unless I get sick, I don't ever struggle to breathe. I almost forgot how bad I had asthma until I grabbed my inhaler to describe it. Even though movies have incorrectly portrayed the use of inhalers, they've nailed the aesthetics. The actual medicine in my inhaler is in a metal cylinder with a small plastic nozzle at the bottom. The cylinder is the thickness of a piece of sidewalk chalk and about two inches long. It slides into a blue, plastic case which creates the mist I inhale. My inhaler fits in my hand comfortably. It has a modern, almost futuristic style, and it's very pleasing to look at. Whenever I look in my medicine cabinet, my inhaler usually catches my eye. For a fleeting second, I feel a barrage of emotions. I remember all of the situations in which using my inhaler made me feel so different from everyone else. I remember all of the trips to the nurse's office after running around at recess, or all of the stares I would get while taking a break in the middle of sprints. But now when I look at it, I feel stronger since I've outgrown my asthma and I'm no longer dependent on it.

I've had many years to think about the people who have passed judgment on me. I've decided to forgive them because it's not their fault for being misinformed. Society is more to blame than any individual. If movies and television could accurately depict the struggles of asthmatic children, they may not be treated as harshly. I hope that things change in the near future, and coaches across the country become more informed.

For the longest time, my inhaler was the symbol of my inadequacy. Now my inhaler is a dusty trophy that I have for beating my asthma. I don't have to keep it in my pocket or backpack

at all times, and it serves as a reminder that I will no longer ever be held back due to a physical condition. Instead of being embarrassed about it, I can brag about how terrible my asthma used to be and how far I've come. I respect my inhaler now, and realize that it wasn't at fault for all of my asthma related issues; misinformed people as a product of our society were.

## Are Black Girls Really Magic?

Jasmine McQueen

Over the last year, the ideas and assumptions of black girls have sky rocketed and taken the world by storm. African American women have been portrayed as loud, ratchet and very rowdy. In television shows and movie roles, the idea of the black woman has involved loud, lip-popping, lip-smacking, and neck-rolling, g roll when in reality, most black women do not naturally do these things. However, with the increase of black feminism and black women in power, African American women have become the “thing to be.” The phenomenon “Black Girl Magic” has stemmed from the black women in power and their success in the majority, if not all, of their endeavors. However, in “I Have a Problem with #Black Girl Magic,” in *Elle* magazine, Linda Chavers examines the perspective that the term may be demeaning to African American women. Chavers’ argument is very successful, effective, and easy to agree with and support.

Chavers’ comments at the beginning of the article consider the possible value of the phrase “Black Girl Magic.” Chavers states,

I first noticed the popular term "Black Girl Magic" as a hashtag on Facebook and Twitter, attached to posts by girlfriends celebrating themselves, their loved ones, their babies, their lives. I've seen it on t-shirts spread out on the tummies of little smiling black girls, showing all of their teeth. These are statements and images of pride in blackness and girlhood, created and celebrated by black women and girls, and that's a positive thing.” (Chavers)

When I first read Chavers’ article, I thought that she liked the phrase. Her comments stated nothing but the positives and confidence that the phrase brings to black girls, young and old.

However, as the article goes on, Chavers is able to effectively share negative opinions of the phrase. She states, “Black girl magic suggests we are, again, something other than *human*” (Chavers). The idea of black women being inhuman allows for others to feel the same about themselves and expect that black women can and will successfully endure any obstacles thrown at them. For example, Michael Brown’s mother was expected to sober up, defend her son, and take only days to mourn her son’s death. But in reality, she was a mother and human being. Mourning is timeless. Chavers’ comment at the beginning of her argument states the good that the phrase brings, but with the comment about African American women being looked at as something other than human, or almost animalistic, the reader is able to see the argument for what it is and hold a different perspective.

Chavers does not flip flop throughout her argument but opens the conversation for her readers to make their own opinions and arguments if they chose to. Chavers states, “We woman up” (Chavers). Those three words open the article up to all women and comfort those who also hold an issue with the phrase. By removing the detail “We woman up” designating black or white, Chavers grabs the attention and support of all women reading her article. Chavers is successful in this strategy. However, Chavers makes sure to go back to the argument being made and states, “And perhaps black women tend to do it better than most but that's because we *have* to, not because we're magical” (Chavers).

Chavers then addresses the idea of strength. Black women have to work ten times harder and be ten times smarter than the white woman or man to even be considered for certain positions throughout life. While Chavers does a great job with staying true to her idea of black women having to be stronger and work harder, she does an exceptional job at relating her ideas to her audience. She successfully supports her argument by stating, “One of our most collectively

celebrated images of a black woman is the black woman who perseveres, who survives, who continues on” (Chavers). She uses the popular television shows *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Grey’s Anatomy*, and *Scandal* to further support her argument. In these shows, black women are expected to fight harder and uphold this idea of “Black Girl Magic.” When they do not uphold the status, black women are looked down upon and expected to get back up and fight harder than the average woman.

Chavers supports her argument that “Black Girl Magic” does not accurately address the lifestyles of African American women with facts. She brings in the sensitive yet serious events that happen and have happened to black women. “The ‘strong, black woman’ archetype, which also includes the mourning black woman who suffers in silence, is the idea that we can survive it all, that we can withstand it” (Chavers). Chavers notes past events that black women have gone through. She calls out the past events done by the medical field that allow the reader to raise an eyebrow while raising awareness. She relays the facts that black women were not given full if any anesthetics when they went under surgery. She states that Henrietta Lack, a black woman, was unaware of the cancer cells taken away from her cervix, while other black women were not given sterile surgeries and not taken care of as well as the white women next to them.

According to Chavers, the phrase “Black Girl Magic” assumes that black women can withstand any and everything thrown at them. She asks us to think about who came up with the idea or assumption that black women are superior in tragedy but inferior in most social contexts in the western hemisphere. Chavers also touches on the present day acts of women being raped, beaten, and treated like objects. Chavers does an exceptional job at questioning the events of Daniel Holtzclaw raping and stalking black women, as well as the police officers who were

recorded body slamming and slinging young black girls, expecting them to get up, fight back, and recover like magic.

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## The Magic of Self-Healing: A Lost Art

Chandler Nichols

Throughout time, magic has been a sought-after yet feared phenomenon. Historically, scientific and mathematical concepts developed, extinguishing magic and labeling it a fictitious power, a way of interpreting anything with unfamiliar causes or functions. Science, in turn, was said to explain everything. Yet, what if magic were needed to explain science? The powers of the subconscious mind are yet to be understood. Theories—logical, medicinal, psychological, and historical alike—attempt to discover how subliminal thoughts are able to manifest physical change.

Imagine a man, muscular and healthy, who devoted his life to health and fitness yet suddenly deteriorated from an unexplainable, severe case of congestive heart failure. Such a nightmare happened to R. Larry Nichols in the summer of 2012. Within several months' time, Nichols went from performing his daily exercise routines to not being able to stand on swollen feet. He had never smoked and was never obese or even overweight. An otherwise brief visit to the doctor was prolonged when he was told his heart was failing, thus causing the edema, or swelling, in his legs and abdomen. He was admitted for open-heart surgery. His surgeon performed miraculous work, although he did not expect Nichols to survive the operation. His doctors said his condition was unexplainable, with the only possible causes being viral or genetic. Nonetheless, Nichols survived and returned to an almost normal lifestyle. Unfortunately, his condition attacked once again in the summer of 2015, this time with a vengeance. Nichols' health declined so rapidly that in a few months, he had so much swelling that he could not eat nor walk. He was admitted to the local hospital where his first cardiologist worked. The use of

high-powered diuretics was not helping, and Nichols' condition continued to deteriorate, due to lack of food. The cardiologist suggested having an LVAD (Left Ventricle Assist Device) implanted, even though such a device is hindering and often a last resort, and, at the time, Nichols was too weak for surgery. Worse, his congestive heart failure began shutting down his organs, causing liver cirrhosis. Things were looking dire.

The doctors told Nichols and his family that the best course of action would be to deactivate his defibrillator and let him return home and live out his last days in peace. Nichols, headstrong and determined to live, refused. His cardiologist transferred him to a faith-based hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, where cardiac specialists performed vigorous tests to determine the root cause of his condition. Meanwhile, he fought mentally and physically to survive, while friends and family sent love, prayers, and positive thoughts his way. Suddenly and miraculously, Nichols' ammonia levels decreased and the fluid retention was pulled from his body. He began to eat. He began to walk. Soon, he was sent home, and he is currently recovering.

Nichols' condition is extremely rare but what is even more peculiar is what healed him. The medicines he was given were mild; no further extensive surgery was performed after his heart surgery. Even the doctors doubted his survival, and yet he defied their predictions. There are more "magical" than scientific factors at work here, as it seems most of his healing was the result of willpower, faith, and persistent optimism. Hence the question arises: What is the true power of the mind?

Firstly, it is important to understand the concept of thought. Thought, a power of the mind, can be separated into two states: mind, which is subjective, and brain, which is objective (Schimmel 488). This categorization, known as the double aspect theory, describes how mental activity has both physical and metaphysical properties, and though the two can collaborate as

one, they are ultimately individualized. Furthermore, the mind consists of intellectual and active powers, the former consisting of understanding and the latter involving will (Jaffro 197). Jaffro elaborates on this by explaining, “[Intellectual powers] are powers to conceive, perceive, remember, believe, judge, reason, etc. [Active powers] are powers to produce changes in the world, to move our body, to direct our thought” (197). And, again, just as the mind and brain are separate yet collaborate, so are the powers of will and understanding. Will, the origin of action, must therefore have a source of understanding that the action will occur. An idea or thought is created from experience into consciousness; then, the subconscious mind utilizes will to bring forth an action inspired by the idea.

The idea of willpower spread rapidly in the nineteenth century when Spiritualism appeared. Spiritualists and likeminded psychiatrists promoted the idea that the mind was not limited to the body or bound by the physical self (Alvarado 98). Rather, the subconscious mind was capable of powers such as mediumship, hypnosis, telepathy, creativity, and even self-healing. Divine healing, an idea brought forth during the Faith Movement, suggested that faith in God and constant prayer would cure illnesses (Pretorius 2). The “force of faith” is a category within the “power of the mind” (Pretorius 5). Denying symptoms and meditating on the promise of renewed health was a step-by-step process that the Faith Movement promoted (Pretorius 4). This seemingly spell-like ritual works thus: people are convinced they can be healed, and so they are healed. Faith is a key ingredient in self-healing, and along with optimism the subconscious mind begins to manifest the will to heal.

The belief of willpower and self-healing dissipated after the nineteenth century, and was dismissed as a false, as it was not provable by science. However, long before, the ancient Greeks utilized placebos as a sincere form of healing. Better known today is Hippocratic, or naturalized,

medicine, which administers physical cures such as medicines or surgeries to patients to heal them. Asklepiian healing, which was a religious healing, did not combat this idea, but was rather utilized in collaboration with it to optimize recovery (Collins 33). This form of healing took place in temples that were built on sacred grounds, providing an atmosphere of mystery and enthusiasm for the healing that awaited inside. Visitors would arrive with the expectation of being cured. They would enter a chamber and sleep, and then their dreams would be interpreted to determine what cure they would need (Collins 35). There are two important factors here: one, the patients arrived optimistically, and two, the subconscious mind (through dreaming) was utilized. The conscious mind recognized an illness in the patient, who then turned to the Asklepiian temple for help. By entering the temple with optimism and the enthusiasm to be cured, the conscious experience would translate into the subconscious mind, which would activate powers of self-healing.

Placebos are now seen to have real effects, based on the brain and nervous system. The word placebo translates from Latin, "I shall please." Placebos and will are a way for thoughts to be interpreted and converted into action. In the 1980s a study by Dr. Daniel Ellis Moerman tested placebos explicitly. Two groups with stomach ulcers were given pills; one group was given actual medicine, and the other a placebo. Dr. Moerman found that the placebo produced a result in at best 90% of cases, which was more than that of the pharmaceutical. Furthermore, the ulcers tended to reappear in the patients that were given the drug, but did not return with the patients who took the placebo (Sachs 344). In fact, medical research has shown that placebos, when actual medicine is absent, work 33% of the time (Collins 38). Martin Ingvar used PET brain scans to monitor reactions of the brain in an experiment. One group of test subjects was given a painkiller medicine, while the other group was injected with saline solution

and told it was painkiller. In both groups, a hot rod was contacted with the hand. The brain scans were very similar of both groups, showing that both groups felt (or imagined) the same level of pain, even though one group was not even given the drug (Sachs 344).

Desires fuel willpower, yet will is also the “ability to resist temptations, to suppress feelings of desire, to practice self-denial, [and] to overcome habits” (Kugelmann 484). Self-control is constituted of control of the physical body and its reactions, and is especially evident during times of adversity or illness (Kugelmann 485). Will also allows an individual to endure and persevere, especially through adversity. Furthermore, it is a tool that can be used to influence others. Therefore, the attitude a healthcare professional has with his or her patient is a major factor in determining the outcome of the patient’s recovery.

Willpower, I believe, is the source of the placebo effect; and faith, steadfastness, positivity, a compassionate environment, denial of symptoms or negativity, and expectation are the ingredients necessary to activate it. Similarly, Sachs argues that energy can be focused into one part of the body to cure illnesses (343). Activating a placebo effect can therefore be written into a formula of sorts: 1. An experience is observed by the conscious and analyzed by the subconscious mind; 2. The subconscious mind, in conjunction with the conscious brain, finds a purpose in the experience and develops reasons to overcome or submit to it; 3. If the adversity is to be overcome, optimistic emotions, the belief that one will prevail, faith, and perseverance will form subconsciously; and in reaction to a positive environment and denial of negativity, the conscious brain will also add purpose; 4. With a purpose to live or overcome adversity defined, willpower will activate the nervous system to invoke self-healing. Comparably, Pretorius mentions:

The process of obtaining healing is as follows: have faith in the Scriptures, which declare that healing comes through the atonement of Christ; deny any symptoms of sickness, but instead confess the Word that declares healing; and persist with the confession, over and over, until healing manifests itself (5).

This manifestation of healing is seen in the case of Mr. Nichols. He managed to utilize self-healing by following the placebo formula. Though this formula exists, and there are certain ingredients needed to activate it, he had not studied the subject. This demonstrates that having a conscious understanding of the placebo process is unnecessary for the process to work, thus showing that will and placebos act subconsciously, even though the conscious mind is necessary to understand the situation (as explained by the double aspect theory).

When faced with grave illness, Nichols refused to succumb to the inevitability of casualty. Instead of letting negativity flood his mind, he developed positive emotions, and even directed anger towards his condition, rather than himself, because he knew he was not the cause of his heart failure. “In the Asklepan tradition, it was the supplicant’s willingness to engage in the healing process with enthusiasm (to be divinely inspired) that created a deep sense of openness and provided a means of activating their endogenous resources for healing” (Collins 41). He convinced himself that he would live and return to a normal life. He fought because he told himself he had more to do and see in life, and it was not yet his time to go. His friends and family also supported him through love and faith, which in turn may have inspired his own faith. “The possession of healing comes through the exercise of faith... ‘Name it and claim it’ and ‘Believe it and receive it’. Faith is defined as speaking or confessing with authority in the full expectation that what is spoken will happen” (Pretorius 4).

It is interesting to observe the differences between the two hospitals where Mr. Nichols

was cared for during the 2015 incident. In the first hospital, he and his family were told his condition would be impossible to improve, so the best course of action would be to turn off his defibrillator and go home to pass in peace rather than prolong suffering. During this time, Mr. Nichols developed liver cirrhosis and accumulated life-threatening ammonia levels. His health declined rapidly. Yet, after he asserted his will to live, he was transported to a faith-based hospital in Nashville. The atmosphere was a stark contrast to the previous hospital, as the healthcare professionals there were as optimistic as he was. Though no new medications were prescribed, Mr. Nichols healed in the short time he spent there. The positive relationship established with the doctors, as well as the spiritual atmosphere, provided more of the variables presented in the placebo formula. He thought positively, was now surrounded by others who shared his compassion and perseverance for recovery, and was convinced he would live. All of the ingredients to activate self-healing were present, allowing his willpower to bring about the action and repair his heart, liver, and the rest of his body. The process is continuing as he gains healthy weight and returns to living normally. He still has the determination and other factors in his subconscious mind to allow his body to continue to heal, and as long as this is so he will keep improving.

The case of Mr. Nichols shows the importance of healthcare professionals' attitudes towards their patients. If a patient shows the will to live, it is the duty of the healthcare professional to support that will in every way he or she can. This does not mean lying to the patient, but presenting the patient with the facts while also supporting any decisions to fight an illness. For example, cardiologist Dr. Bernard Lown told one of his patients who had a serious heart condition that the heartbeat was "a wholesome very good third-sound gallop." Though this is not good in medical terms, the patient interpreted it to mean that his heart was "as strong as a

horse.” Because of his imagining that his heart was strong, he expected to recover, and he did indeed heal. “It is humbling to imagine that a man who was expected to die of a heart condition recovered, because his imagination connected with the idea that he had a heart as strong as a horse” (Collins 39).

Multiple Disciplines, from history to psychology to logic, have attempted to explain the mysterious placebo. From this information, ingredients needed to activate the placebo effect can be identified and thus be arranged into a formula: optimism, faith, denial of symptoms, compassionate atmosphere, determination to heal, and expectation to heal. Essentially, all of these ingredients can be simplified to positive thinking. By devoting oneself to the thought of healing, the body can heal itself through a conscious-subconscious relationship, known as the double aspect theory. Mr. Nichols overcame dire circumstances by healing himself. An experience alerted his consciousness of adversity; his conscious thoughts provoked subconscious analysis; the subconscious found a purpose through the object of experience; willpower, along with other ingredients, activated self-healing. Mr. Nichols defied his doctors’ predictions; he defied science. Currently, placebos are not understood in their entirety, and are thus considered “magic.” Yet, I believe that placebos will become scientific in the near future. The power of the mind, including will and self-healing, is increasing in popularity as an area of study. Just as thoughts can be manifested into action, what was once considered a figment of imagination is now becoming reality.



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## The Goat

Ryan Patterson

To an outside observer, sports fandom might make no sense at all. Why would any person dedicate years of his or her life to following the performance of some team out on the sports field? What drives tens or even hundreds of thousands of people to make a gameday pilgrimage to Bryant-Denny Stadium, Michigan Stadium, or Wrigley Field? Lastly, what causes sports fans to perform such arbitrary rituals in order to help their team win a game? The passion that sports fans show for their team can manifest itself in many different ways, and under the wrong circumstances fandom can even show the ugly side of sports.

The idea of curses and jinxes is not uncommon throughout collegiate and professional sports. The Boston Red Sox endured eighty-six years without a World Series win, following the trade of baseball legend Babe Ruth, in what became known as the “Curse of the Bambino.” The Chicago White Sox suffered through a similar drought in the eighty-five years following the Black Sox Scandal. The Detroit Lions have experienced utter futility following the 1958 “Curse of Bobby Layne,” winning just a single playoff game since then. The most famously “cursed” team in sports, however, is the Chicago Cubs. As of the conclusion of this most recent postseason, the Cubs have now gone 107 years without a World Series title and have not even made a World Series appearance since 1945. Both of these droughts are the longest active droughts in North American professional sports.

During Game Four the 1945 World Series, local tavern owner Billy Sianis, who attended the game with his pet goat, was asked by the Cubs owner to leave the game due to his goat’s foul odor. Outraged, Sianis cursed the Cubs, saying that they were never going to win again. The

Cubs would go on to lose the game and the series and have not been back to the World Series since, creating what became known as the “Curse of the Billy Goat.” Some fans also blame the collapse of 1969, a season that saw the Cubs lose a seventeen and a half-game division lead on an incident that occurred when a black cat ran across the field in front of the Cubs’ dugout (*Catching Hell*). Most rational people would argue that the reasons for the Cubs’ struggles over the years are poor play, management, and ownership. Why, then, do fans look to certain superstitious reasons as the cause of their team’s demise?

Superstitious behavior is not exclusive to humans. During B.F. Skinner’s operant conditioning of pigeons, a punishment-reward based style of conditioning, he observed that the pigeons would perform tasks that Skinner was not training them to do but the pigeons believed would lead to receiving the reward of a food pellet. If this concept is applied to sports fans, one can see the relation between the superstitious ritual of the pigeon and the relatively pointless superstitious rituals of sports fans that they believe will help the outcome of a game (Whitbourne, “Why We’re So Superstitious”). According to a study done at Kent State University, this superstition stems from “the uncertainty hypothesis, the notion that when people are unsure about an outcome, they try to find a way to control it” (Whitbourne, “Why We’re So Superstitious”). According to a separate study involving sports fans and their rituals, “several fans gave the rationale that their personal rituals were a means of creating an attachment to the game, to help them feel that they were actually participating in some way, that they were involved” (Eastman & Riggs). While these studies give insight as to why fans possess certain superstitious rituals, they do not provide the answer to why sports fans feel so passionately about their teams.

Sports fans can be drawn to their team for a number of reasons, whether due to proximity, the style of play, a certain player, or some other type of personal connection. No matter what the reason for choosing a team, the reason some fans feel so strongly about the team may also have a physiological element.

Research shows that on the day after a team's win, people feel better about themselves.

They say "we" won, and by "we," they don't mean themselves, personally. The closer you identify with the team, the more likely you are to BIRG [Bask in Reflected Glory].

People who BIRG also are more likely to wear their team's regalia on the day after a victory. (Whitbourne, "Psychology of Sports Fans")

This self-identification with the team can raise morale in a victorious fan. On the flip side, when a team loses, fans may feel badly, not only about their team, but also themselves. "A study in Georgia has shown that testosterone levels in male fans rise markedly after a victory and drop just as sharply after a defeat" (McKinley). Sports fans also experience a strong sense of community. When forty thousand Cubs fans pack Wrigley Field, or express their fandom via social media by getting #FlyTheW trending on Twitter, they demonstrate the group's coordinated ritual behavior, a sign of solidarity among the fan base (Cottingham). This solidarity and sense of community in turn improves the well-being of the fans, who then experience a greater sense of belonging (Almendrala).

The 2003 season for the Chicago Cubs had all the potential to be a special one. The Cubs went into the year with a lineup that included one of the most feared home run hitters in the game, Sammy Sosa, and after having made the July acquisitions of outfielder Kenny Lofton and third baseman Aramis Ramirez. During the prior offseason the Cubs also hired new manager Dusty Baker. Behind the stellar pitching of starters Mark Prior and Kerry Wood, the Cubs were

able to make a run down the stretch and clinch their first division title in fourteen years. During the National League Division Series, the Cubs were able to defeat the Atlanta Braves for their first postseason series win since the 1908 World Series against the Detroit Tigers. This put the Cubs just four wins away from their first World Series appearance in fifty-eight years. The Cubs would lose Game One in extra innings after a go-ahead home run by Marlin Mike Lowell in the eleventh inning, but roared back to win three straight games to take a three-to-one series lead. Marlins ace Josh Beckett allowed just three base runners and no runs in Game Five to bring the series to a three-games-to-two Cubs lead, as play returned to Chicago. The events of Game Six, however, would go down in infamy.

Steve Bartman was an anonymous Cubs fan from the Chicago area that no one had ever heard of. He was just a normal Cubs fan who was able to get seats along the left field foul line for an opportunity to see his Cubbies clinch their first World Series berth in his lifetime. Mark Prior was on the mound for the Cubs, and over the course of the first seven innings, had not allowed a run, allowing the Cubs to take a three-run lead into the eighth inning. With just six outs to go, Wrigley Field was buzzing with the possibility of a National League Championship, and finally breaking the “Curse of the Billy Goat.” After the first batter of the inning flew out, the Cubs were left with just five outs to get before clinching the series. The next batter, Juan Pierre, hit a double to reach second base, bringing Luis Castillo to the plate. With a full count, Castillo hit a high fly ball down the left field line. Cubs left fielder Moises Alou ranged over and leapt up against the wall in an effort to catch the ball and secure the second out of the inning. While the ball was coming down, several fans in the area reached for the ball, and it bounced off of Steve Bartman’s hands and into the seats. An irate Alou violently slammed his glove into the ground and began to yell at the fans along the wall. The Cubs players adamantly argued for fan

interference, but the umpire ruled that the ball had already travelled out of play. So instead of out number two, Castillo would return to the plate with a full count. Castillo drew ball four on a wild pitch that allowed Pierre to reach third, creating a situation with runners on first and third with one out.

The following sequence of events spiraled out of control for the Cubs. The next batter, Ivan Rodriguez, hit an RBI single to put the Marlins on the board. After that, the Cubs' normally sure-handed shortstop, Alex Gonzalez, misplayed an easy double play ball that would have ended the inning and put the Cubs just three outs away from the win with a three-to-one lead. After Gonzalez's error, the Cubs' misfortune snowballed, as the Marlins would go on to take an eight-to-three lead. Throughout the inning, the FOX television broadcast repeatedly showed Steve Bartman sitting in the stands, to the point that fans at home were able to identify him to friends and family who were at the game. The result was a barrage of threats and insults, including multiple "asshole" chants in his direction. After one angry fan threw a beer at him, Bartman was escorted from the stadium by security for his own safety, while still meeting a wave of jeers from the fans he walked by. Scared Bartman was forced to take shelter in the home of one of the security guards until the mayhem on the streets had settled down.

The Cubs would go on to lose Game Seven the next night, and Steve Bartman became Chicago's public enemy number one. Media flocked to his house in an effort to get an interview with him, but Bartman stayed inside his house. The circus grew to be so out of control that then-governor of Florida Jeb Bush even offered Bartman asylum. For Cubs fans, Steve Bartman became the scapegoat. It was his fault that the Cubs had lost. It was not the fault of manager Dusty Baker, who perhaps left Prior in the game too long, nor that of Alex Gonzalez, whose costly error failed to end the inning. It also did not matter that Alou may not have caught the foul

ball or that the Cubs failed to take advantage of another opportunity to win in Game Seven with Kerry Wood on the mound. The Cubs fans' experience is consistent with several studies that show that even the most ardent fans are not only less likely to abandon their team when they do poorly, but also likely to blame the failures on poor officiating and bad luck rather than accept the result as a consequence of either teams' play (McKinley). Cubs fans felt that they deserved to win that game, but it was stolen away from them by their "curse" in the form of Steve Bartman. Cubs fans experienced a knee-jerk reaction to defend their team, regardless of whatever evidence may have pointed to sound defeat (Simons).

The Steve Bartman incident is one of the most extreme cases of the passion and superstition of sports fans combining to have a negative outcome. The longstanding superstitious narrative of the "Curse of the Billy Goat" combined with the Cubs fans' blind "homerism," and failure to acknowledge the real cause of the team's demise resulted in Steve Bartman taking the blame for Chicago's eighth-inning collapse. If Steve Bartman hadn't reached for the foul ball, most of the blame would have probably fallen on Gonzalez or Baker, but instead, superstition and the "Curse of the Billy Goat" made Bartman the scapegoat.

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## The True Enshrinement of American Ideals: The Electoral College

Gavin Reid

Imagine that you have just cast your vote for president, and you are sitting in your living room impatiently waiting for the results of the election to come in so that you can know who will be the next president of the United States of America. All of the results come in and you are excited to see that the candidate you voted for won the majority of votes across the country...but then you realize they somehow lost in the Electoral College. This was a reality for citizens who voted in the presidential election of 1824, 1876, 1888, 2000, and now the presidential election of 2016. This fact can stir a lot of emotions and understandably so. It can seem incomprehensible that a candidate can win most of the votes and yet still lose the election. However, we must analyze the Electoral College and its purpose before we jump to any conclusion about the fate of the Electoral College. Many news articles have recently declared that the Electoral College should be done away with. However, the Electoral College must remain because it was instated by the nation's founding fathers for very good reason, solidly embodies the ideals of the United States of America, and its benefits strongly outweigh any possible shortcomings.

The Electoral College was instated by our nation's founding fathers to prevent one region from controlling the course of the country. A prominent fear of small states at the time was that the new government would allow the larger states to force their will upon them. At the time of our country's formation a majority of the population was concentrated within a few states and these few states would be able to dominate the government if the government were a pure democracy. Because of this population disparity, many small states feared that the larger ones would force them to conform to any laws and legislation that the larger states desired. The

founding fathers recognized that a pure democracy could lead to this tyranny of the majority, so they put multiple measures into place to avoid this tyranny. One of those measures is the Electoral College, which allows each state a more equal voice while also reflecting the opinion of the population. The Electoral College consists of multiple groups of electors from each state. The number of electors for each state is equal to the sum of the number of the state's representatives in the House of Representatives and the two Senators granted to each state. There are 538 total electors. Each state legislature nominates the electors for the state, and the people choose which group of electors they want by voting for their presidential candidate ("U.S. Electoral College: What is the Electoral College?"). This strategy gives each state a more equal voice, grants each state two electors regardless of population, and grants additional electors based on each state's population. Without the Electoral College, urban areas could potentially dominate politics. If the president were simply decided by the popular vote, then vast regions of America wouldn't be properly represented and would be ignored. The founding fathers also appreciated the quality of votes as opposed to the quantity. Michael Uhlmann, a political science professor in the Department of Politics and Policy at Claremont Graduate University, states that the Electoral College "teaches us that the character of a majority is more important than its size alone." While a majority vote of the population could come solely from urban areas, Richard Posner, a past judge on the United States Seventh Court of Appeals, a professor at the University of Chicago, and a Harvard Law School graduate, states that "The Electoral College requires a presidential candidate to have trans-regional appeal." The president can't win the election by earning the support of simply one geographic area or demographic of the population. The Electoral College forces the future president to appeal to people of various demographics, regions, and subcultures.

The Electoral College, despite popular belief, solidly embodies the ideals of our government. Many Americans believe that since the Electoral College does not always reflect the will of the majority: that it is, in effect, undemocratic. The short response to that comment is, “Yes, it is absolutely undemocratic.” The longer response requires a more thorough understanding of the founding of our nation. Anyone who tells you that the United States of America is simply a democracy is completely misinformed. The framers of the Constitution formed a government that consists of aspects of a democracy, a republic, and a federalist system. While a democracy focuses solely on the will and desires of the majority of a population, a republic allows the people to elect representatives who will represent the population in legal matters by doing what they believe is best for the nation. A federalist system, in turn, separates the powers of a government into multiple tiers to ensure that more local areas are governed in a way that more accurately represents the local population. While the Electoral College may seem to contradict the ideals of a democracy, it accomplishes the goals set forth by a republic and federalist system. Representatives chosen by the public ultimately are the ones responsible for electing the president and the state legislatures assume responsibility for nominating the members of the Electoral College. The founding fathers were wary of majority rule in a democracy and wanted to ensure that their country was protected from itself. A memorable quote from Thomas Jefferson is that “Democracy is nothing more than mob rule, where 51% of the people may take away the rights of the other 49%.” The American people must be aware and cautious of this mob rule and strive to protect and secure the rights of the 49%. America is the great country that it is today because the founding fathers promised American citizens certain unalienable rights, and we must be cautious of any political reform that could possible jeopardize these rights.

Opponents of the Electoral College would argue that it should be removed due to its negative effects on our country. A prominent argument is that presidential campaigning focuses on certain key swing states and “has just taken a lot of states off of the presidential map” (Dottinga). Bypassing or abolishing the Electoral College would supposedly “allow long-ignored states to get attention again in presidential campaigns” (Dottinga). While the concentration of campaigns in certain states is upsetting, it is unreasonable to assume that candidates would then give equal attention to every region of the country if the Electoral College were abolished. If the Electoral College were done away with, then campaigning would shift its focus to regions with multiple high population urban areas such as the northeast and the west coast. Although candidates may have to adjust their campaign strategies, large sections of America, especially rural areas, would remain ignored. Another argument is that abolishing the Electoral College would make every vote more important and would open our political system more accommodating of third parties. Instead of ignoring the votes that do not align with the majority of voters in each state and the opinions of voters supporting third parties, every individual’s vote would have an equal effect on the outcome of the election and allow third parties to become more significant. Uhlmann states that, “What the people would get by choosing direct election is the disintegration of the state-based two-party system.” He notes that removing the Electoral College would allow “the rise of numerous factional parties based on region, class, ideology, or cult of personality.” Although this may be true, we must again look back at the initial purpose of the Electoral College and not let the appeal of the statement “every vote counts” overshadow the purpose and intentions of the Electoral College. Just because a system has flaws does not mean that reform would make it a more just and reasonable system. As long as government is organized by mankind and humans continue to be imperfect creatures, we must accept that our

political system will be flawed to a degree and decide whether or not reform would truly be beneficial. It is too easy to simply make a decision that sounds pleasing to the ear and makes us feel good. We must closely analyze each consequence of our choices before we decide on a course of action.

The United States of America must keep the Electoral College as a part of its government structure. Although the complaints against it are understandable, we must analyze and study the profound reasons that it was initially created; to ensure a proper representation of each state, region, and people of the United States in the presidential election. The Electoral College prevents regional tyranny in our government, maintains our current government structure, and embodies the ideals embedded in our government system. As appealing as a direct election may sound, we must remember what the founding fathers had in mind for our country and how the institutions they put in place were created for the protection of our freedom and way of life.

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## The Importance of Knowledge: Holocaust Education

Jordan Sapier

On September 16, 2015, Ahmed Mohamed, a 14-year-old boy from Irving, Texas, was arrested after bringing a homemade clock to school. Ahmed had a strong interest in robotics and engineering and wanted to show off his skills to his teachers at his school but after showing it to the first teacher, Ahmed was advised to put the clock away and not show it to any other staff members. Ahmed's English teacher heard his clock go off in class, and, when he went to show her the clock at the end of class, she took it away from him. In his sixth period class. Ahmed was arrested and accused of making a bomb and was threatened with expulsion unless he made a written statement (McCormick). Ahmed's father, Mohamed Elhassan Mohamed, came from Sudan and is known for arguing against anti-Islamic policies. "He just wants to invent good things for mankind," said Ahmed's father, "but because his name is Mohamed and because of September 11, I think my son got mistreated" (Biggs). Because of prejudice against Muslims, Ahmed was accused of bringing a bomb to school.

One of the most infamous genocides in history is the Holocaust, in which eleven million people were killed. Six million of those victims were Jewish. Eleven million people were targeted by Hitler and the Nazis because of their sexuality, religion, and race, along with other factors. Prejudice and discrimination were what led to the mass killing, and from Ahmed's case, along with many of other cases due to prejudice, it seems as if no one has learned from the mistakes that caused millions of people to suffer. If we fail to educate ourselves of the history and memories of the Holocaust, the past is doomed to be repeated. Holocaust memory and history is valuable and urgently needed in twenty-first century American classrooms because it

teaches critical human rights messages; it engages the dangers of “othering,” mass agreement/a single story, and forgetting, which are all relevant to the current growth and developmental habits of millennial Americans.

Any action by which an individual or group becomes mentally classified in somebody’s mind as “not one of us” is defined as “othering” (“Othering 101”). The Holocaust was caused due to the “othering” of Jews and others because of their race, religion and sexuality. “By successfully creating an image of Jews and other non-aryans as subhumans, the Nazis were able to round up massive amounts of people and displace them” (“The Holocaust and the Othering of People”). The “othering” of individuals is one of the main causes of this mass genocide, and is important to the twenty-first century education system because of the growing diversity in American classrooms. According to the National Education Association, 2014 was the first time in U.S. public schools when the percentage of Hispanic, African American, Asian and students of other color surpassed the percentage of white students. This is creating a majority-minority system that reflects the different cultures, languages, religions that characterize our nation (Brabowski). Because of such a large diversity in the American classrooms, it is necessary to teach the history and memories of the Holocaust to show how “othering” impacted the lives of many who were looked at as inferior to the Nazis. Although “othering” is defined as an action by an individual or group, it can also happen through the power of words.

Holocaust history and memory teaches the dangers of agreeing to discriminate based on a “single story,” and it is relevant to twenty-first century American classrooms due to many students’ fears of being ostracized and “different.” It is important to know that the Holocaust was caused due to the discrimination and prejudice against the Jews, along with many others who were believed to be inferior to the Germans. The discrimination or “othering” of Jews was not



only caused by the actions of Germans but by the single story told by many including Adolf Hitler. Hitler targeted his audience by tapping into soft spots of the German psychology: the terms of the Versailles treaty, high inflation, the instability of democratic government, and the economic position of the Jews. Hitler's story led to the ostracism of Jewish people and others (Houle).

Holocaust education in schools is necessary to show young adolescents the importance of treating everyone equally and the dangers of "othering." In American classrooms today, students are victimized by characteristics that make them "different," such as their race, religion, ethnicity and sexuality. Out of a sample of 1200 ninth grade students from Los Angeles, forty-one percent of them reported experiencing discrimination by peers based on their ethnicity ("Research"). In U.S. schools, young adolescents struggle with wanting to be "individually" the same, meaning that they want to be their own person, but they also fear the criticism of individuality. Many Germans did not agree with Hitler's choices of Nazism and ostracism of the Jews, but they never spoke up because they feared they would be punished and excluded. They conformed in order to "fit in" and not been seen as "different" in the way Hitler saw the Jews. In American schools today, many kids and teens desperately want to conform to the ways of others so they are not rejected. Therefore, they agree to discriminate as long as they are able to fit in. By teaching the Holocaust and the consequences of agreeing to discriminate and listen to a single story, young adolescents will be more aware of "othering" and decrease the amount of children who are bullied because of their race, religion or sexuality.

The Holocaust should be taught because of the human rights messages; dangers of "othering" and dangers of agreeing to discriminate, but should also be taught in order to ensure it is not forgotten. We have begun to condition in students the perspective that the Holocaust was

merely a time in history when millions of Jews were killed, but we do not educate them on the reasons behind this event or the lessons to take away from this genocide. We condition many to forget the times in history that were traumatizing, like the Holocaust or 9/11, by avoiding the violence of the events through deletion of pictures and text that show the violent truth behind these tragedies. In America, we condition people to “forget” and avoid “violent topics,” such as the Holocaust, which encourages a repeat of history. Winston Churchill said that “those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it,” and that’s exactly what will happen if the memories and the history of the Holocaust are not taught in American classrooms. President Obama issued a statement on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz on January 28, 2011 which stated, “We are reminded to remain ever-vigilant against the possibility of genocide, and to ensure that ‘Never Again’ is not just a phrase but a principled cause” and “Let us honor them, and those we lost, by building a more peaceful, just and tolerant world” (Mozgovaya). The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum states: “Silence and indifference to the suffering of others, or to the infringement of civil rights in any society, can—however unintentionally—perpetuate these problems.” If we do not see these events for what they truly were then misfortunes like the Holocaust will happen again.

To never forget the Holocaust, we must not rely strictly on memorials, museums and preserved sites to educate us on one of the worlds biggest genocides. We must educate within the twenty-first century American education system so that students begin to learn from the mistakes that caused this event and begin to educate others in order to build a world free of prejudice and discrimination against different races and cultures. The Holocaust was a tragic event in history that was known for the inhumane killings of eleven million people because of who they were. Today, Holocaust education is more relevant than ever, due to the growing diversity and

developmental habits of millennial Americans. Holocaust memory and history not only teaches the background of this event; it also teaches us lessons about human rights that are critical to American classrooms: the dangers of “othering,” the dangers of agreeing to discriminate based on a single story, and the dangers of forgetting and repeating history. These lessons are urgently needed and are extremely valuable in today’s American classrooms in hopes of decreasing and eliminating prejudice/bullying and increasing the mutual respect between races and cultures. Let “Never Again” be motivation to teach Holocaust education in twenty-first century American classrooms and resolve race issues between countries.

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## Andrew Johnson: Lonely at the Top

Chris Savage

The date was December 19, 1860. The United States was on the brink of civil war as rumors of a possible South Carolina secession began to spread (Stryker 58). Senate was in session, as a relatively unknown senator from Greenville, Tennessee took the floor to argue on the constitutionality of a possible secession by southern states. This man was Andrew Johnson. A southern man since birth, Johnson owned several slaves. Why on earth would he argue on behalf of the Union? (Russell 619). Johnson went on to deliver one of the most impassioned, and courageous speeches to ever be vocalized on the United States Senate floor. Citing letters sent by James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and Alexander Hamilton, Johnson argued that not only was secession fundamentally wrong, but it was also against the Constitution that was thoughtfully constructed by the founding fathers who helped construct our great country (Stryker 59-60). He offered an emotional appeal to the border states caught in the middle of this terrible conflict reminding them that:

When we look around in the four states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and Maryland, there are things about which our memories, ... linger with pride and pleasure. Go down into the Old Dominion, ... Where in 1781 Cornwallis surrendered his sword to the immortal Washington. In the bosom of her soil are deposited her greatest and best sons (Stryker 61).

With this speech, Johnson drew a line in the sand. He stood for the Union. He gained both the support of the North and the disdain of the South (Kaufhold). His life would forever be changed.

Two central questions remain: Why is Andrew Johnson so maligned as a politician today? Additionally, why was he chosen as Abraham Lincoln's running mate? After all, Abraham Lincoln is one of the most revered politicians in American history. According to the statistical website FiveThirtyEight, which uses an aggregate of scholarly presidential rankings, Lincoln is ranked number one, while Andrew Johnson is ranked number forty (Azari). Nevertheless, Lincoln and his party had many good reasons for choosing Johnson. In fact, the move is seen to have been a major factor in helping Lincoln gain reelection (Kaufhold). At the time, the decision seemed reasonable, yet it would eventually undermine Johnson's political career and the reconstruction of the country. Just six weeks into his second term, on April 15, 1865, Lincoln was assassinated, forcing Johnson to take over as President (Russell 622). Although never elected by the people, Johnson's rise to power can be explained in terms of his courageous actions, his vast experience, and his political relationship with Abraham Lincoln.

The story of Andrew Johnson's life is a true rag to riches tale. Raised in Raleigh, North Carolina, his family would not have been considered poor, that is, until his father's death in 1811. (Russell 618). With his father's death, Johnson was forced to take on an apprenticeship with a tailor at the age of ten. Although he received no formal education, Johnson managed to teach himself how to read and write on his own. Johnson's apprenticeship ended when he was sixteen years old, and afterwards he bounced around various states hoping to find work. At age nineteen, he returned to Raleigh, taking his mother with him to move out west to Greenville, Tennessee where he started his own tailor shop in hopes of beginning his life anew (Stryker 2-3).

As Johnson grew older, he strived to gain more knowledge and power. The people in town took note, and he soon became a well-respected member in the community. With a solid political base, Johnson sought office. In 1828, at age twenty, he was elected alderman. Just two

years later, he became the Mayor of Greenville (Stryker 5-6). His rapid rise to political power would not slow down. Johnson ran in seventeen elections, beginning in 1828 and ending in 1857 with his election as a Senator of Tennessee. He lost only one election during this time (Russell 619).

By the time he made his speech to the Senate in 1860, Andrew Johnson had become a venerable politician, especially in Tennessee (Kaufhold). By siding with the Union, Johnson risked his political career. As the only southern Congressman to not withdraw from his seat after secession, he became hated overnight, even amongst his former supporters. He was even burned in effigy in Memphis (Kaufhold). His stand for the Union was not just a political stance; it also threatened the safety of his life.

As the Civil War raged on, Lincoln looked toward Johnson to help reconstruct the nation. If the confederate state of Tennessee could be successfully readmitted back into the Union, so too could other states. In 1862, Lincoln chose Johnson to become Military Governor of Tennessee and preside over Union territories in the state (Kaufhold). With the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Lincoln clearly defined the goal of the war: free the slaves (Stryker 102). In letters between both Lincoln and Johnson, it is clear that Johnson supported the emancipation of the slaves in Tennessee. In the letter Johnson asserts that, "Now is the time for settlement of this question...I am for immediate Emancipation" (Johnson, "Andrew Johnson to Abraham Lincoln"). Lincoln exhorted Johnson, knowing that time was of the essence, as it was unknown if Lincoln would serve a second term (Lincoln).

As the war continued, Johnson's and Lincoln's friendship strengthened, and he was chosen as Lincoln's Vice President in 1864 on the second ballot at the National Union Party Convention (Kaufhold). In the election of 1864, Lincoln and Johnson coasted to victory,

capturing 212 of the available 233 electoral votes (Leip). Two months after the election, Johnson appeared in front of delegates in hopes of abolishing slavery in his home state. The amendments proposed passed by a landslide (Stryker 163-164). Tennessee was now a part of the Union.

However, tragedy struck six weeks into Lincoln's term. Lincoln was assassinated and the presidency had been thrust upon Andrew Johnson. The odds were not in Johnson's favor, as he was a southern Democrat with a Congress made up of many Republicans (Russell 622). Many in Lincoln's party believed that nominating a southern Democrat, as well as one with political wartime experience, would be seen as beneficial for the healing country (Kaufhold). The move had now backfired. Johnson's first measure was to enact Lincoln's reconstruction plan. This called for southern states to accept emancipation, and exclude Confederate leaders from government. Southern states defied Johnson and elected back many Confederate leaders, who instituted "black codes" to further disenfranchise former slaves (Russell 623-624). Johnson was embarrassed politically, and when Congress resumed, they passed their own reconstruction plan that called for military officers to preside over certain districts of the south and oversee elections. Johnson vetoed this act and declared that the power given to these officers "amount[ed] to absolute despotism" (Johnson, "Johnson Veto"). From then on Johnson and Congress would be at odds.

Popular opinion began to turn against Johnson. After vetoing most bills that came to his desk, newspapers began to call him "Sir Veto," and the public began to lose confidence in him (Kaufhold). Not once, but twice did Congress attempt to impeach the President. The second time was over the violation of the Tenure of Office Act. This act, whose constitutionality was questioned, declared that the President could not remove members of his own cabinet without



Senate approval. Johnson was sent to trial by a vote of 128 to 47. Johnson avoided conviction by the Senate by just one vote (Kaufhold). Although he barely escaped removal from office, his legacy was forever tarnished.

Many can question whether or not Johnson's criticisms are completely deserved. It was certainly a tough task to replace one of the most revered presidents of all time, right after the Civil War. Admittedly, Johnson could have been less stubborn and sought the help of more moderate Republicans in Congress, yet he refused to do so. Additionally, many criticize him for the speeches he would often make that targeted certain members of Congress (Kaufhold). However, in hindsight, historians believe that Radical Reconstruction ultimately hurt the recovery of both former slaves and the southern economy. Many argue that Johnson's policies would have been best for the country at the time (Russell 626). Although you cannot change history, in spite of his presidency, Lincoln's choice of Johnson as Vice President was the best option in the midst of the Civil War.

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## A Glorious Meal at Victory Grille

Daniel Schmidt

*Editor's note: Bob's Victory Grille has closed since Mr. Schmidt wrote this piece. For similar fare under the same ownership, visit Baumhower's Victory Grille and Baumhower's Restaurant, both in Tuscaloosa.*

When game day comes, many fans of Alabama football head out to find a good restaurant to sit and enjoy a simple meal while they cheer on their favorite team. While some of these fans are older residents of Tuscaloosa, many of the people going out to eat on game day are college students, who spend time with friends, eat food like spicy wings or juicy burgers, and show their Alabama pride with loud cheers every time a good play happens. Although game days can make the customer service a bit slower than usual, I believe that the restaurant that best exemplifies the game day dining experience is Bob's Victory Grille in Midtown Village.

Bob's Victory Grille, located at 1800 McFarland Blvd in Tuscaloosa, Alabama was established with the mindset of creating an environment perfect for watching an Alabama football game, and it clearly shows in its atmosphere. From 11:00 A.M. to 10:00 PM, the restaurant's doors open to greet customers with crimson-framed posters of team pictures, players, and coaches plastered all over the walls, acting as a timeline for the history of Alabama football. Flags fly down from every inch of the tall building, showcasing the victories and awards from years past that Tuscaloosa's favorite football team has achieved. Televisions glow brightly in every corner of Victory Grille, which would normally showcase multiple different sporting events on every other day, but on game day focuses primarily on the Alabama football game. To the corner of the building, a large news stage is still set up, and many press conferences with

Nick Saban and other coaches have happened in this very dining establishment, adding to the vast amount of history shown in the establishment.

When I walked into the building, I was immediately greeted with a line of people waiting to be given a table, making me question how I would possibly get a seat after already dealing with an hour wait from Buffalo Wild Wings. I walked up to talk to the waitress at the front, which asked me to give her a phone number to call when the table was ready for me. I walked out of the building with plans to go walk around Midtown Village, however, I was instantly alerted to my phone vibrating with a phone call, telling me that my table was ready! Rushing back inside, the waitress guided me to the outdoor seating, adjacent to one of the many screens that were showing the Crimson Tide football game against the Arkansas Razorbacks.

As I thanked my waitress and sat down, I began to glance over the moderately sized menu. My eyes were greeted to an orderly and simple design that made it easy to see the many different types of pizza, burgers, fries, hot dogs, wings, and other essential game day foods. Each of the items seemed to be very well priced, with a meal for one person being under the \$20 range, including choices like the Americana burger for only \$9 or a pound and a half of wings for only \$12. Unfortunately, the large crowd inside the restaurant that came to watch the game just like myself caused my waitress to not come until after most of the first quarter had gone by, and the growls of my stomach were only drowned out by the cheer of all the other fans as I waited. When the waitress finally arrived, she offered me a warm apology, before taking my order and running straight to the kitchen to try and get my food to my table as quickly as possible.

The first portion of my meal arrived around the beginning of the second quarter. I ordered a wing sampler, so that I could try three variations of their different flavor combinations and heat

intensities. For their wings, Victory Grille offers 13 different flavors, ranging from common flavors like buffalo to more obscure flavors like peanut butter and jelly. For every flavor, one can choose between heats such as mild, hot, “X hot,” and “feel da’ pain.” For my meal, I chose to stick with the mild Buffalo, “X hot” BBQ Seoul, and “feel da’ pain” Bangkok Baby, and I was certainly feeling the pain of the heat for the last one. Each wing had a very unique and vast taste, with well-cooked meat being surrounded by different spices and sauces to help create the different heats. After I finished enjoying my wings, I drank some water to cool down my burning throat; I also crunched on the celery given on the plate of wings. Then, I was treated to the sight of my second part of the meal. As the waitress laid the plate down and took my older wing basket, I looked down at the massive “patti melt” I was given, that blew my expectations of the size out of the water based on only the price of \$11. Along with a side of warm and crisp french fries, the “patti melt” was a large sandwich served on two pieces of rye bread, with cheese and juice dripping from the side of the hamburger that was partially sticking out of the sides of the sandwich. One bite of the sandwich instantly brought me back to a flavor that could only be described as “home cooked”; a flavor that I would expect to taste from something that my mother and father had just finished cooking on the grill or stovetop. I was too lost in the enjoyment of the meal to stand up and cheer when Alabama scored yet another touchdown in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, only being able to watch the play happen and stomp my feet with the rest of the crowd as a large “roll tide” cheer went around the restaurant.

After a very satisfying night at Bob’s Victory Grille, I paid my bill and made my way home, making sure to take the last portions of my meal with me so I could enjoy it again later. If I were to describe Bob’s Victory Grille, I would genuinely describe it as one of the best game day restaurants in Tuscaloosa. For a college student, the restaurant is a great place to get a well-

cooked, generously portioned meal with a smaller budget in mind, making it great for many of the students who spend each day living off the Lakeside diner or the cup of noodles in their pantry. Each piece of meat is cooked to perfection, allowing each piece to be juicy and tender so that every bite can be savored, and the pairings of good sauces and good seasoning make the meal all the better. The atmosphere perfectly exemplifies what Alabama football represents every game day; a tradition of victories and achievements that are celebrated and an example of why watching a football game for the University of Alabama will always be an exciting and community-connecting event for both the generations before us and the generations to come. Although the service was not as quick as getting a pizza ordered to the dorm room for game day, the waiting staff at Bob's Victory Grille still do their absolute best to make sure that everyone gets their meal in as timely of a fashion as possible, all with a smile on their face. With a building hosting hundreds of fans on a game day, that is no easy task to accomplish. The friendly and welcoming staff, decorations that show off the history of Crimson Tide Football, and food that is delicious and plentiful, while also not being too hard on one's wallet make Bob's Victory Grille a restaurant that I will be recommending to any student or Alabama fan looking to have a good meal and a good time as they watch the next game.

Hey...

Hunter Stanley

A topic difficult to talk about, often unaddressed, impossible to explain, and uneasy to console is depression. Many face it. The crippling reality of depression is there is no good 'fix'. It is insurmountable to relate to unless you have walked in those shoes, leaving the already afflicted person even more alone. Nonetheless, George Watsky aims to lighten the burden of those who have, or have had, depression with a song about the ailment. With soft, simple, and soothing melodies, a smooth lyrical rhythm, and truly inspiring words, "Hey As\*\*\*le" addresses the all-too-common mental illness, depression.

The song begins with beauty. High pitched melodic intervals play a simple melody as the wonderful Kate Nash softly sings. An acoustic guitar plays a simple progression as an accompaniment to the sweet chorus. Even though the lyrics address someone and themselves as a posterior profanity, the mood of the piece is established as sweet and melancholy. This mood is essential for captivating the hovering and sympathetic tone often associated with those under the influence of depression. Throughout the song, the gentle melody can be heard playing in the background, standing as a constant in an otherwise rapid yet fluid song.

Following on the coattails of the chorus is the rapping of our songwriter, George Watsky. Laying a simple vocal percussive with his words, he sings, "I know I should be grateful, I know I'm good and able, But I don't have the strength to get up from the kitchen table. This kind of shot comes once; Another opportunity of a lifetime just slipped away, And that's the fifth this month..." (Watsky). Already he begins to explain the shackling effect depression has on individuals. Even so, he appeals to our sense of rhythm, rhyming several words on the same



verbal structure. Later, he transitions into a faster and more exhaustive rap. Adamantly, Watsky raps:

Telling myself it'll happen when I'm happy  
But I'm climbing up a ladder that has got no end  
Hung up on a rung I'll never make it to the top  
I'm looking at the bottom and I must descend  
All I want to do is buck this trend  
Everybody need a buck to spend  
And I'll be working on myself, til I work on someone else  
Til I get there Ima just pretend. (Watsky)

Watsky says this entire stanza in only 12 seconds. He allows the natural oration of these words to create a syncopation that pushes the emotion of this piece. Again, he rhymes most lines using the “ABCBBDB” structure. This lets the listener feel the pulse of the song and the intensity of his emotion drift into the tapping of their foot or the nodding of their head. Not only does he engage the audience's' brain with his imaginative use of words and their body with his movement-inducing cadences, but he invokes their heart and soul with his inspiring lyrics.

At the conclusion of almost every stanza, Watsky adds phrases of encouragement to establish hope and perseverance in his listeners. He intentionally finishes every segment of the song with positivity, reflecting the theme that there is always light at the end of the tunnel. At the finale of the first fast-paced segment he raps, “Don't you ever forget why you get up and you put one foot in front of the next” (Watsky). In his song, he is trying to clarify the overbearing thundercloud of doubt and lack of self-worth while simultaneously hoping to provide an umbrella for those caught underneath it. This illness is an uphill battle. Watsky relates to this

expression when he says, “Spent a half an hour sitting at the bottom of my shower/Lettin the water run over my body and dammit I wanted to get up,/But I didn't have the power” (Watsky). Depression can be debilitating and this quote does a sufficient job of explaining the absence of desire while within its grip. However, he implores the hearer to continue to fight. In a final effort to inspire and uplift, his last lyrics are:

I've been huffing and puffing up to the top of the summit  
And I'ma rough it if I have enough steam  
I'll keep on coming and coming until I'm coming with the stamina of a salmon  
Who's heading upstream. (Watsky)

This song ensures that hope is not lost. Even though the battle is uphill, underwater, out of breath, or darn near close to death, there is success.

This optimistic opinion is not universal. Some may find the lyrics and overall tone inherently sad instead of finding the morsels of hope scattered within the artistry of this song. After all, the title of this song is indeed an expletive. Many of the song's lyrics elaborate on the crippling effects of depression. There is mention of a lack of energy, low self esteem, incapability, and denial. Others may say the tune itself is gloomy, mistaking the sweet overtones for a miserable melody. The rap could be construed as the pinnacle of the heated argument between battling wills inside the mind of someone living under the conditions of the disease. Although some may choose to view this song as morose, one could also arrive at the conclusion that it contains the tools of living with and eventually conquering depression. The message of hope lying within every stanza is a continual reminder to its listeners that they are stronger than their adversary.

“Hey A\*\*\*\*le” addressed the pains of depression with its use of a soft melodic motif, a consistent and unfailing beat, and inspiring lyrics. Many people throughout the entire world struggle with this ailment and George Watsky intended to give his two cents to the world about it. Through the melody and chorus we feel the bitter-sweet melancholy quality of the illness. Within the rhythms and raps we feel the pressure and dulling feeling many scuffle with. Contained in the meaningful lyrics we feel hope and inspiration addressed to those caught in the grips of this ugly pain. This song does a noble job of bringing awareness and compassion to those afflicted by depression.

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## Mother in Boots

Kaci Thomas

Danger. Risk. Heroism. That's what most people think of when they picture the military lifestyle. For me, the image was slightly different. As a young girl, each quiet morning I would watch my father march down the stairs and follow a specific routine. His mornings started early with a mandatory workout, and then continued with a full day's work. I remember watching my father lace up his combat boots, making sure they were tight and secure enough to keep up with a day in the life of a military man. My mother, on the other hand, made sure that all aspects of our household were stable and kept together. Her routine consisted of waking my siblings and me, cooking breakfast, and making sure the house remained intact while still managing to get herself ready for work.

I lived in a world where these two careers were separate from one another. Never had it crossed my mind that my mother would someday consider taking the same steps my father did while still maintaining her throne as "Mom." So you could imagine my surprise when the woman of the house announced that she would be entering the service as well. During this period of time in my life, I grew up in an environment with an understanding that men usually took on the career fields like that; for me, it was virtually unheard for a woman, let alone my mother, make that transition as well. As a young girl this opened my eyes to the world of possibilities and opportunities that the world had to offer. And it shone a light on the stigma the world places on women, especially those within the military.

Sitting next to my mother on a Sunday morning, I began to ask her questions about her opinions on the challenges a woman faces within the service. My mother has always been

outspoken. Biting her tongue on topics she felt passionate about was the least of her concerns. “In the military, as an individual you are working to prove yourself,” she said while looking into my eyes. “But as a woman, you have this added obstacle of not only proving yourself as a someone who is capable of being a competent soldier, but as a *woman* who is a soldier.” I listened to her tell countless stories of how she had to overcome prejudice for not only her race but her gender as well. She explained to me a time while in basic training her drill sergeants were very disrespectful. Not only would they call women “not good enough,” but they would continuously invade their very personal, private spaces. “It made me really think, you know?” my mother said. “Is this how they treat the men too?” A lot of the woman felt that they couldn’t speak up “because they didn’t want to seem like tattle tales or snitches,” she admitted to me. It later came out that their experiences in training did not follow protocols and are virtually illegal now.

I have seen firsthand what a military woman looks like. That is how I know that they are strong, independent and just as exceptional as any of their male counterparts. I just wish that the public viewed military women in the same way that I do. Women in the military are sometimes seen as fragile, delicate, and unfit to serve in comparison to their male peers. A woman who undergoes the same training that a man does is often seen as inferior to him just because of her gender. Only up until recently have woman been allowed the opportunity to even attend certain schools and trainings that were previously restricted to males. On countless occasions she’d been passed up for promotions and school opportunities against male soldiers simply because it seemed as if they could handle the challenges better. “It’s frustrating because not only did I have the experience and the ability to perform the tasks, I was not given the opportunity simply because of my age or my sex,” she stated.

In addition to all of obstacles that military women face, my mother also had to deal with the differing opinions of our family. One of my most vivid memories comes from a heated argument I overheard between my mother and grandfather regarding her decision to enlist. “You will never succeed in that field. Women aren’t built for the military; you might as well give up now,” my grandfather warned. My mother couldn’t believe my grandfather would even say anything like that, especially to his own daughter. Instead of heeding her father’s warning, she took his words as a challenge. When I asked her how she felt about his comments, she responded, “It really took me back to hear him say that, you know? But there were always people telling me that I couldn’t do this or I couldn’t do that. ....Or I had to be this person.. and I was tired of it. So when he said that, I just knew I had to show him.”

Even though his confession was most shocking, my grandfather wasn’t the only person that she needed to prove wrong. All of the women in my family have jobs in educational fields and believed that my mom needed to apply herself in a way that was related to their own beliefs. They didn’t think she could juggle the job of being a present mother and a soldier. I watched my family’s assumptions and beliefs about military women unravel in front of me. And even though I heard many negative opinions, some bright ones shined through. My grandmother was one who supported my mother wholeheartedly in her decision to become a soldier. Sitting across from me at our dining table, my grandmother confessed something I had never heard before. “I was very proud and supportive of your mother because I grew up in a time where serving wasn’t very feminine or socially acceptable.” She began to profess how she dreamed of joining the service, but couldn’t, because of the culture she grew up in. That culture would have never supported her in that role.

Although some of that culture still exists within our society today, my mother ignored their opinions, overcame adversity, and stayed true to herself and her decision. “When you have to do something without the support of the people you love, it can be really hard. It’s hard. Especially as a woman, a black woman who is trying to make something of herself and her children. But it’s possible. You just have to ignore the cant’s because that doesn’t do anything for me or you.”

Listening to her say this really set something in motion inside of me. Pursuing a dream without support or encouragement is one of the hardest things a person can do, and my mother not only achieved her goal but excelled in ways beyond my family’s expectations. My mother has since been promoted five times and now holds the title of NCOIC (supervisor) at her medical clinic. She holds an airborne title for her accomplishments and experience overseas when she represented her department in Africa.

Seeing my mother accomplish these things opened my eyes to all of the things that I as a woman can achieve. I now understand that the stigmas that would have limited her are sexist. I now understand that such beliefs are shared by those who fear change and those who fear the strength of women. A woman can be just as competent if not more than her male counterparts. My mother has shown this through her accomplishments and hard work as military woman. She is my mother in boots.



## Hillary Clinton: Trailblazer, Role Model, and Grandmother

Madeline Turner

In the early morning of November 9, 2016, presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton conceded the 2016 election to the new President-elect Donald Trump, thus ending a historical race between the two. While Clinton did not make history in becoming the first female president of the United States, her campaign and journey to election day inspired millions of women nationwide to become proactive in American politics. The lack of women involved in politics and businesses is a problem in America. However, since Clinton's defeat to Trump, a businessman who had no political experience and ran a questionable campaign, more and more women have stepped up and disclosed their interest in running for political office both on the national and local level. Women in America have the unique opportunity to learn and grow from the loss of the 2016 presidential election. Clinton has encouraged women in many different ways: to take a chance and be more involved in politics, to have confidence in themselves, to stand up to bullies, and to know that winning does not always justify success. Clinton boldly addressed the saddened and angry crowd during her concession speech. She stated, "And to all the women, and especially the young women, who put their faith in this campaign and in me, I want you to know that nothing has made me prouder than to be your champion." She is and will continue to be a champion for all women from 1 to 99, and her many achievements in politics should encourage women to get involved.

Hillary Clinton was certainly not the only trailblazer for women in politics; however, her efforts to fight for equality in America will put her name down in history books. The first woman who held an elected office position in United States politics was in 1887. Her name was Susanna

Salter and she was elected to serve as the mayor for her small town of Arkansas. Nearly 100 years later, Hillary Clinton stepped into the political spotlight in 1978 as First Lady of Arkansas, and in 1992 she became First Lady of the United States. After her days as First Lady came to an end in 1998, Clinton shocked the nation by announcing her candidacy to serve as a senator for New York. Women had been members of the United States Senate so having a woman run did not come as a surprise; instead, having a former First Lady of the United States run was quite surprising. However, there was no question about whether or not Clinton was qualified to be a senator. As First Lady, Clinton was fairly active politically in policies dealing with women's rights and healthcare. Before First Lady Clinton, the first lady's job was often to coordinate parties, look pretty, and always support their husband. The fact that a first lady was interested in politics and working with her husband was something this country had never seen before. After serving as a senator for the state of New York for two terms, Clinton announced that she would be seeking the Democratic Presidential Nominee in 2008. This is where Clinton, First Lady, lawyer, and senator, took her first loss. The party nominated Barack Obama as their presidential nominee, who would later become the first African American President of the United States. Clinton did not shy away from the public's eye after this devastating loss. Obama appointed her to be his Secretary of State. She served on the Obama administration's cabinet for both terms. In 2015, Clinton once again announced that she would be seeking to be the Democratic Presidential Nominee. Little did Clinton know she was about to enter one of the most historical election seasons this country had ever seen.

After months of hard work campaigning, advertising, hosting fundraising parties, and debating alongside Donald Trump, the campaign season came to an end. It was now election night, a night Secretary Clinton hoped would end in her becoming the first female president of

the United States. However, in a sudden and surprising turn of events, many of the swing states that political scientists thought for sure would vote as Democrats voted Republican instead. The result was another loss for Hillary Clinton, and some even considered it a loss for women nationwide. An extremely qualified woman candidate was defeated by an openly sexist businessman with no political experience. However, in the months that have followed Clinton's defeat, there has been a surge of women wanting to get involved in politics, both locally and nationally.

The surge of women wanting to become involved has been most noticed on a local level. A fundraising group in Maryland that raises money for potential democratic, woman candidates, found that nearly 175 more women signed up to attend the event after Clinton lost (Wiggins 1). The increase in women getting involved may seem like a very minuscule change, but it makes a difference. One must take into account the fact that this is on a local level and that this is a group aimed towards a very specific cause. Research from Jennifer Lawless from American University shows "women are less likely than men to show interest in running for elected office [...this] is a tendency among women to doubt their qualifications. Watching Clinton lose to Trump, despite her extensive political experience, could reinforce those doubts" (Foran 1). Losing to any candidate would set women in politics back, but losing to a candidate like Donald Trump discouraged women even more. Trump was very vocal about his negative views on women and ran his campaign for the white men in America who "wanted their country 'back'" (CNN 1). The country elected an underqualified man who has referred to women as "pigs" as their president, as opposed to Hillary Clinton, who was extremely qualified and made sure she did not say anything blatantly negative about her opponents. After Clinton's loss, if women were not getting involved in politics, then they were showing their support in different ways, such as protesting. In the days

that followed Secretary Clinton's loss, many organizations protested Trump's win. One group in particular was composed mostly of women. The "Not Our President" protest movement held peaceful rallies in many large cities across the country, as well as protesting via social media. Anyone who kept up with the news during the 2016 election cycle would know that Secretary Clinton was far more qualified for holding the most coveted elected position in the United States than her opponent. Even though there has been a small influx in Maryland, the question still remains: how, after such a devastating loss, can women be encouraged to get involved in politics? The answer is simple; women must learn from Secretary Clinton's loss and use it to their advantage to empower one another.

Now, nearly six months after the final votes were counted and Clinton conceded to President Trump, it is time for women to fight back and honor Secretary Clinton by empowering one another. The United States was founded by men, causing much of US history to be about the powerful men who founded this great nation, but what about the women? In order for women to become more involved in politics, there needs to be a change in the way educators portray women in history. Instead of focusing on just the male politicians who have made a difference, more effort needs to be put into the female politicians who have made a significant difference on US history. For example, public elementary schools across the state of Alabama teach Alabama history in the fourth grade, and while Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black is in the curriculum, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is omitted from the curriculum (ALSDE.com). This could cause young girls in Alabama to think that only men write history and that only men can be powerful and hold a political office. If public school curricula were to be modified nationwide to include more history on the impacts women have had on the US, then in years to come those

students would be more likely to run for office knowing that another woman has run and has been elected. Fear is a large factor in preventing women to run for an elected position.

It is normal for women to have a healthy and nervous fear before entering into any workplace dominated by men. It is not normal, however, for women to be so intimidated by men that they do not try to enter into the workplace at all. The latter of these two feelings is what most women who have considered running for office and then backed out have felt. One of the fears includes being judged. According to an article published by *The Atlantic*, “both men and women judge [powerful women] more harshly than they judge powerful men” (Beinart 2). The fear of being in the public eye and then being scrutinized more so than their male counterpart is enough to discourage women to run for elections. In order for this problem to be solved, there needs to be laws limiting the power journalists have on public opinion, without breaching any of the rights given in the First Amendment. Claire Landsbaum gives another reason women are fearful to enter politics. Landsbaum writes, “[women have] concerns that a career in politics will prevent them from having children” (1). The solution for this is simple: implement a maternity leave into the job contracts of both members of the House of Representatives and the Senate. This maternity leave would be available for both male and female congress members. Women should no longer have to pick between having a career and having a family. Secretary Clinton’s loss should not be considered a failure. Her positive strides for women in politics should be appreciated by women all across the nation.

Secretary Clinton has stayed away from the public light since her concession speech. She has been able to spend time with her husband, Bill, her daughter, Chelsea, and her granddaughter, Charlotte. According to the article “The Iconic Hillary Clinton,” “Clinton’s transgressions may be largely forgiven by her supporters and largely forgotten by the public”

(Frazier 2). Secretary Clinton will not be remembered as a loser, or a liar with a closet full of skeletal emails; instead, she will be remembered and cherished as a feminist icon.

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## A Different Process

Benjamin Viestenz

For most people, preparing a special dinner begins at the grocery store: picking out groceries, paying for them, and taking them home. For them it is simple and easy, but for my family the process begins a little differently. Our special dinner starts in a field of corn before the sun rises with a deer rifle in hand.

Every year in November my father, my brother and I drive to our farm in Northwest Missouri for Deer Camp, a family tradition of deer hunting and camping. Deer Camp marks the start of getting the ingredients for my father's famous venison (deer meat) roast. And it's a time when my brother and I find a lesson from him around every corner. My father grew up working on a farm in "the country," which made him into the hard-working, self-sufficient, dependable man he is today. In contrast, my brother Luke and I grew up in the city, where, according to my father, "City-slickers are afraid of an honest day's work." So, he uses hunting and deer camp to teach Luke and me the proper skills needed to succeed in life. His rough and calloused hands are a testament to his willingness to put in the work, and he was also willing to put us to work. As soon as we hit the ground at the farm we began. He told us, "Ben, start chopping some wood," and "Luke, start a fire"; this started his long list of chores for us. These chores didn't teach us just how to work hard--they also contained valuable lessons within them.

After we "acquired" the deer for our family, my dad, believing in learning through mistakes, had my brother and I take turns "dressing" the deer. Dressing the deer is the process of gutting, skinning, and separating the meat from the bone. My father made sure we knew what to do, but then let us make our mistakes so we could learn from them. "Take your time," he said. "There's a tool for every job and you wouldn't use a hatchet for surgery. Take your time.



Anything worth doing is worth doing right.” He would often tell Luke and me that life can be very much like making his venison roast: If you don’t put in the time and effort you’ll never find satisfaction in the result. On the final day of deer camp, after cleaning and packaging the venison, we reflected on the weekend. After spending three days in nature, we were dirty, grimy, cold, sleep-deprived, but mainly appreciative for what we had done. Our trio braved the outdoors and grew a connection with our food supply.

The next step to create Viestenz Venison requires a trip to our Uncle Paul’s to help harvest the potatoes and carrots. A series of dirt roads brings us to a log cabin on a hill with a stretch of green grass and wide open spaces all around. Behind the log cabin, our uncle dug five trenches each thirty yards long of rich soil colored black as night. All the family members fit enough to work got to it. With our legs spread on either side of the trench and bent over at odd angles, we knew a long day’s work was ahead of us. If you grow your own potatoes you probably know how different the experience can be from your local grocery store: The potatoes sometimes rot underground and sometimes they get infested with insects. You only find out whether they are good or rotten by putting your hands in and grabbing them. You know as soon as you touch a bad one by the soft squelch of mushy potato giving way in your fingers. Despite how gross it sounds (and smelled), we never complained due to another one of dad’s lessons: “Don’t spend your time complaining. It only wastes your breath and the patience of those around you.” We also didn’t complain because the hard work of today makes for a big payoff tomorrow. In exchange for our effort our uncle rewarded us with carrots, potatoes and onions so we can make our homegrown meal.

I always loved spending the day with my father and learning from him as he prepared this meal. I would wake up to the smell of strong black coffee (the type of coffee that puts hair on

your chest) and run downstairs where, like always, he'd ask, "How many eggs and how strong do you want your coffee?" After breakfast, we began. Together we picked out which roast, potatoes, carrots and onions we wanted. My father believed in the "sanctity" of the meat, and knew that if he added too many spices and ingredients, it would compromise the true flavor of the wild game. So, we only used the smallest amount when peppering the meat. Next came the onions. Chopped and diced, they filled the whole room with that pungent aroma and stung my eyes. The onions found their home layered over the meat to give it that extra flavor. Once all the ingredients were ready, my dad would place them all in beef broth in the crockpot on low heat to cook all day. This is the last step to prepare the meal and it is the hardest. The smell penetrates every corner of the house seemingly on purpose to send hunger pangs to those around. My father insisted that by giving the family a smell for it but not letting them eat it makes the meal taste that much better once dinnertime comes. Then, we can satisfy our cravings.

My family gathers around and my father serves us. Then we say grace to thank God for providing the food in front of us. My father tells us to "enjoy." And the frenzy begins. Every family member puts table manners aside with only one goal in mind: Inhale all your food before the others do so you can get more. The first bite of venison can hardly be called a bite—instead it's an experience, the venison so tender when placed in your mouth. It melts away leaving behind the distinctive taste of pepper, onion and savory meat. The beauty behind the meal comes from the connection to the food. It tastes natural and simple. This meal tastes better than any five-star restaurant and it always will because this meal took work. As my father says, "Satisfaction comes from a hard day's work and a full stomach."

## *Hansel and Gretel: Behind the Story*

Simon Wilding

*Hansel and Gretel* is one of the most famous tales told by the Grimm brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm. It was first published in the 1812 collection of German tales for children “Kinder- und Haus-Märchen.” The story is about a woodcutter, his wife, and their two children, Hansel and Gretel, who live in harsh conditions as a famine sweeps over the country. As the father struggles to provide food for his family, his wife develops an evil plan to better the situation for her and her husband. The children will be led out to the forest and left there to starve. After the siblings are left behind and wander around the wilderness for days, they discover a house made out of bread and sugar, which in turn lures them into the arms of a witch. Hansel and Gretel escape their imprisonment by killing the evil woman and returning home to their father with arms full of jewels found in the witch’s house. Although it is commonly referred to as a fairy tale, the original 1812 version is a realistic portrayal of German society and culture at that time.

The Grimm brothers’ depiction of the children’s parents truthfully portrays German society in the 19th century. In the second edition of *Hansel and Gretel*, published in 1819, Wilhelm Grimm changes the biological mother to a stepmother, which reflected a common practice in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany: fathers remarrying because many mothers died during childbirth. (However, the change could also have had a more personal reason for the authors, as Jack Zipes refers to in his book *Happily Ever After*: “Is it possible that because he [Wilhelm] and Jacob revered their own mother, they did not want to depict a biological mother abandoning her own children?” (49) ). During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, major famines hit the country and left numerous families with little to no food behind. This led to a rise in child abandonment across the nation

and forced many parents to desert their little ones in order to provide food for themselves. The new change brings up similarities between the stepmother and the witch, with both depicted as evil and cold-hearted. One of the ways Wilhelm Grimm accomplishes this connection is when he lets both women use the phrase “lazybones” to wake the children (*The Golden Age*, 127). This image of the evil stepmother continues on and is still around today, as seen in modern day literature and media. Moreover, an evil element is often considered an essential part of a fairy tale; take, for instance, the bad wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* or the Evil Queen from *Snow White*. In this story, the wickedness we see comes in the form of the cold-hearted mother/stepmother who encourages the abandonment of her children to the witch. While there were no actual witches eating children in Germany, these evil women represent the poor guardianship some of Germany's youth had to endure.

In addition to the mother and witch symbolizing evil, the forest is arguably a symbol for Germany and its dark outlook in the 19th century. For the most part, the story of Hansel and Gretel takes place in the forest, a widely used scene in the fairytale genre, which is suitable, given that forests once comprised the majority of Germany's landscape. Forests in literature have always been a somewhat dark and gloomy place that humans avoid at any cost. As seen in other tales like *Little Red Riding Hood* or *Baba Yaga*, the wilderness is home to many terrifying creatures. Whereas castles, towns or homes generally stand for security and certainty, these values are lost in the forest. When Hansel and Gretel are left behind in the woods and experience this loss of values, they undergo a character transformation, which is a common theme in Grimm's tales, by killing the witch and overcoming their present struggles. Grimm's description of Hansel and Gretel's hopelessness when lost in the forest (“They walked another day, but they could not find their way out of the woods”) symbolizes the desperation Germany faced during

that time (Zipes, *The Golden Age*, 125). Just like the two siblings, the nation seemed to be unable to find a solution for their struggles. There are clear similarities between Germany and the forest Hansel and Gretel are trapped in, as both cannot provide for the well-being of their inhabitants. Once the siblings overpower the witch, “They filled their pockets [with jewels], then ran away and found their way back home” (Zipes, *The Golden Age*, 126). In order to receive the typical fairytale ending, Hansel and Gretel found the resources they needed to live a happy life ever after. Similarly, the upswing in German economy led to an accumulation of wealth and restored the nation’s prosperity. Hansel and Gretel found their way out of despair by overcoming the suffering of the forest, while Germany found the solution to its problems in itself.

Furthermore, *Hansel and Gretel* represents the struggle of historic Germany is the need for nourishment, which was particularly caused by major famines during that time period. Just like Hansel and Gretel’s family, a major part of the German population suffered under those conditions and had trouble providing food on the table. This struggle is reflected in the harsh decision of abandoning their children many parents had to make. The tale depicts this conflict in the nightly discussions Hansel and Gretel’s parents had. Grimm tries to transmit the importance of bread to people at that time by continuously mentioning it in the tale. The mother of the two siblings emphasizes the importance of rations and self-control, stating, “Here’s a piece of bread for each of you. But be smart and don’t eat it until noon” (Zipes, *The Golden Age*, 123). This further intensifies the desperate decision Hansel makes to use breadcrumbs as waymarkers, as that loaf of bread doesn’t just represent a day’s provision, but is symbolic of an entire nation’s need for food he is giving away. While commonly assumed the witch’s house is made of gingerbread, it was actually regular bread that was used in the original version. The relief the siblings experienced when stumbling upon the house of bread is illustrative of the simple desire

of most every person at that time: basic nourishment. People didn't long for fancy meals or exotic drinks, but rather looked for the fundamental satisfaction, which brings the focus back to one of the core symbols of this tale, bread. This mentality is still evident in today's German culture compared to other nations like America. While the United States is known for its lavish high-life, endless aisles at grocery stores and its wasteful nature, Germany has kept its modest attitude. Even though there are exceptions to every generalization, it could be argued that tales like Hansel and Gretel somewhat shaped and reflect the country's outlook today.

To conclude, the story of the two abandoned siblings Hansel and Gretel accurately depicts some conditions in Germany in the 19th century. Grimm emphasizes on the shift in traditional family life by relating Hansel and Gretel's desertion to the actual rise in child abandonment in Germany. Moreover, the symbolism of the dark and gloomy forest in place of the suffering country shows the deep sense of reality Grimm wanted to include in his fairytale. In the same way, the nation's desire for nourishment is illustrated throughout this story through the illusion of bread and the gluttony the siblings have as they stumble over the witch's house. Through these examples, Germany's present values and culture can be related back to the struggles Hansel and Gretel had to endure in their adventure in the forest.

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## The Necklace

Isabella Zitron

When I take a moment to reflect, I can remember sitting across from her: those deep blue eyes and hair as white as the clouds. Clear as day, I can remember the jewelry she always wore. Heavy rings covered her hands, and the exquisite bracelets that lined her wrists were constantly changing. But around her neck hung the same necklace I had seen her wear for as long as I could remember—such a simple piece in comparison to her other jewelry. She perplexed me; her history was a mystery, and she intended it to stay that way.

One thing that had remained the same was her necklace. Its modest size and character were sensible in comparison to her distinct Eastern European appearance. It is the ideal balance between prudent and elegant, just like she was, as if it was made insignificant in a beautiful way. It has a simple oval structure, fixed in a white gold setting on a thin silver chain. The back of the necklace, where the clasp is, is slightly worn down from years of hands fiddling with it. The contrast of the red against her pearly smooth skin amplified its depth of color. The stone would cast a prism on the wall when she would stand at the window, a history only she could unlock.

The stone itself has remained un-weathered and smooth, as I assume it has always been. In this way the necklace is an immortal time capsule that formerly hung around her neck and has withstood the ages. At the same time, the stone is an unspoken history. I remember constantly asking her where she got it, from whom? When? But she would simply answer with, “Not now. We will discuss it another time.” It seemed to be always “Another time” or “Later,” until there could be no later. My grandmother passed away. Gabriela McCulloch, the woman of mystery. To me, she left the necklace.



Devastated by the loss of my grandmother, I have clung to the necklace as a means of not letting go of her. Now the necklace has become an extension of me. I have had it for approximately six years, only taking it off when absolutely necessary. It is there when I sleep, when I shower, when I eat, when I run. It is my constant companion. I don't even realize it is there until I look in a mirror or happen to feel it. When I see it, it makes me think of her, like a portal to memories that are usually ignored. Once in a blue moon, I can see her face as clear as day, but most often it is a faint image in the back of my mind.

When I think about the necklace, I think of the hundreds of thousands of days she wore it, of the good memories and painful times she went through with it. I focus on the horrible past and her time during the war so much that I neglect to realize that there were happy times too. She married. She had my mother and her two sisters, and with her husband out of the picture she lived a quaint life in America. Her husband, Charles McCulloch, was a cruel, atheistic, cheating man from Scotland. He swept my grandmother off her feet and then left her for the only thing he could truly love: his job. He also had a mistress, and my grandmother knew about her, but for whatever reason she never said anything, or at least that is what my mother told me. I have strong doubts that he gave my grandmother the necklace.

So did she wear it to remember the war? To remember the time before the war? Perhaps her intention was to disassociate from the devastation of her country, her past, or so it always seemed, to focus on the present. My grandmother was born in a small town called Pabianice, Poland, as Gabriela Heinrich, March 1, 1927. Poland was invaded by the Nazis in 1939, when she was 12. Whether she was still in Pabianice, or even still in Poland at the time, is a mystery. The story, as far as I know, picks back up in 1956, when she first stepped foot in the United States, where she built a family. There was mention that she had lost both of her parents at a

young age. From years of asking around, I learned that her father left home before she was born. Her mother remarried, and her real father never came back. Everyone who knew her father always said she walked like him and held herself just as he did, but nobody would speak about him other than with small remarks. Sometimes I think that he gave her the necklace, that she didn't talk about its origins because she didn't know them.

The necklace that I wear has untold stories, and I feel left in the dark. I want to know her life, her world, the people she knew, and her crazy love affairs, but I remain uneducated on all things Gabriela McCulloch. The necklace could hold the truth, it could hold lies—I have the impression I will never know. It is my key to the past, to my grandmother's past, but it is a key with nothing to unlock

I have tried countless times to obtain information from my mother, but I think she may be as in the dark as I am. When I ask her about the necklace or my grandmother's time growing up, I get, "Ask your Aunt; she knows more," or "Oh, another time," just as my grandmother had said. My mother's oldest sister knows the most about my grandmother, and I pick her brain for information. Sometimes I get a fact or two, and other times I get nothing.

Wearing the charming little thing often reminds me of my grandmother. This pretty but small object carries a great deal of emotion and history. The necklace elicits grim periods of her time but cheerful ones as well. When it was given to me, it was a necklace from a woman I called my grandmother, someone I felt was a stranger. I have searched high and low for a piece of the past, something that could help me make connections in my grandmother's past. We hold onto pieces of the past to remind us of the people we have met, the things we have done, and the places we have been. And now, writing this, that piece of the past is sitting around my neck. The only real connection that I need to make is my connection to my grandmother through this

necklace. I have decided to put the necklace in my will to my oldest granddaughter. But when the time comes, will she ask me about the necklace? What happens if I never have a granddaughter? Does the necklace disappear? But if I do, should I tell her the truth? The truth is, I have no idea of where it came from, who it can from, or when it came from. Should I fill her head with fantastic stories about what I imagine the necklace's origins are? Sometimes I imagine that my grandmother was given the necklace by a past lover who was lost during or before the war. Sometimes I imagine it is a family heirloom that I could use to reopen the past. Sometimes I imagine that her long lost father gave it to her to remember him. Sometimes I imagine it is just a pretty object she wore simply because, well, it's pretty.