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Official Organ of
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The Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal accepts submissions from non-members as well as members of Delta Epsilon Sigma. While student contributions are welcome at any time, each spring issue will reserve space for the Delta Epsilon Sigma Undergraduate Writing Contest winners. We will consider for publication a wide variety of articles, fiction, and poetry. Our primary mission is to serve the Catholic cultural and intellectual tradition, and we favor work commensurate with that aim. Submissions to Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal are peer reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or other specialists. Submissions published in the Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal may not be afterwards published elsewhere without the express consent in writing of both the Executive Director and the Journal's editor.

Submit manuscripts (as Microsoft Word files) via email to the editor: Dr. Claudia Marie Kovach (ckovach@neumann.edu).

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MESSAGES FROM THE EDITORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Note the change of address of Delta Epsilon Sigma: Dr. Claudia Marie Kovach, Executive Director, DES National Office, Neumann University, School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education, BACH 302Z, Aston, PA 19014-1298.

This issue begins by highlighting the timely interview of recent Holy Cross graduate, honor student, and Delta Epsilon Sigma member Billy Chilambula by Justus Ghormley. Dr. Ghormley directs the Moreau College Initiative (MCI), an academic division of Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, Indiana. It offers undergraduate degrees to men incarcerated at Westville Correctional Facility, a state prison in Northwest Indiana. After graduation, Mr. Chilambula remained with MCI for almost two years, serving as a mathematics instructor, teaching assistant, and writing center tutor. A native of Malawi, Mr. Chilambula views his education in the United States as a gift that compels him to find ways to give back to his community in Malawi. Billy Chilambula completed a sentence of over twenty years in March 2025. Upon release, he was taken into federal custody, where he is awaiting deportation to Malawi.

The new FaceBook closed group for Delta Epsilon Sigma members now can be accessed through the name *DES Connections*. Please join and keep the society updated with your chapter news. Additional online and social-media promotion of the society on Instagram and LinkedIn accounts remain under construction. Discussions continue about potential online conferences for chapter advisors and for student members.

To continue robust competition, the Delta Epsilon Sigma Executive Committee invites chapter advisors and their students to continue to participate in the various opportunities membership provides, including the Father Fitzgerald undergraduate writing completion and the Fitzgerald scholarships and fellowships. Undergraduates may also pursue the J. Patrick Lee Award for Service or the Harry R. Knight Undergraduate/Graduate Prize For International Service. Current graduate students may seek one of the Sr. Brigid Brady Graduate Awards (which, upon application, may receive renewal). See the Announcements at the end of this issue to find out more information.

As has become customary, this spring issue publishes the first-place winners of the Fr. Fitzgerald Undergraduate Competition in Scholarly and Creative Writing. The Announcements section of this issue reports the winners of the 2024 competition. Submissions for the forthcoming 2025 Undergraduate Writing Competition remain due on or before Dec. 1st, 2025. Chapter advisors are encouraged to organize their own local contests. *Before sending the winning entries on to the national competition, advisors must require the student-authors to revise to correct all grammatical and mechanical (spelling, punctuation, wordiness) errors in their submission.* Please note that the Executive Board must receive all submissions in Word format (no PDFs) and that submissions are limited to 5000 words maximum. *Submissions that exceed 5000 words shall not be considered.* Use the format of In-Text Citation and Works Cited. **All Notes should be relegated to the submission's back matter as Endnotes (NO Footnotes).** Submissions may not contain copyrighted images (unless these images have been cleared by the copyright holder). For further specifications, see the pertaining section of the Announcements at the rear of this issue.

The Delta Epsilon Sigma website—www.deltaepsilonsigma.org—still invites your active participation. The site features information about the Society and its constituent chapters. It supplies the latest news, current and past issues of the *DES Journal*, instructions, and application forms for the various contests, awards, and other society business. The managers of the new FaceBook page, *DES Connections*, will garner from posted chapter activities appropriate news for inclusion on the website.

All published work in the *DES Journal* remains peer-reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or recognized specialists in the work's subject-matter.

The Executive Committee continues to seek updated postal and email addresses of our membership. Please notify Dr. Claudia Kovach, Executive Director, or Dr. Ronald L. Smorada, Assistant to the Executive Director; Delta Epsilon Sigma National Office; Neumann University; School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education; BACH 302Z; Aston, PA 19014-1298.

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CATHOLIC IDENTITY IN ACTION AT HOLY CROSS COLLEGE:

An Interview with Billy Chilambula

JUSTUS GHORMLEY *

The Moreau College Initiative (MCI), an academic division of Holy Cross College (HCC) in Notre Dame, Indiana, offers undergraduate degrees to men incarcerated at Westville Correctional Facility, a state prison in Northwest Indiana. HCC, committed to Catholic Social Teaching and the corporal works of mercy, understands its work through MCI as essential to its Catholic identity and mission. In addition to offering academic courses, MCI seeks to create within the prison the full undergraduate experience, with extracurricular clubs, workshops, career development, and even service opportunities. Central to offering this full undergraduate experience is MCI's involvement with Delta Epsilon Sigma ($\Delta E \Sigma$ or DES). In the past six years, ten MCI students have been inducted into DES. These students take their induction seriously, seeing DES as an opportunity for intellectual community and as a higher calling to service.

As the Director of MCI, I sat down with a distinguished DES member and MCI alumnus, Billy Chilambula, to hear his thoughts about DES. Mr. Chilambula was inducted into DES in October 2022 and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from HCC in May 2023. As the top student in his class, he was invited to offer the student address at the commencement ceremony within the prison. After graduation, he remained with MCI for almost two years, serving as a mathematics instructor, teaching assistant, and writing center tutor. A native of Malawi, Mr. Chilambula views his education in the United States as a gift that compels him to find ways to give back to his community in Malawi. Billy Chilambula completed a sentence of over twenty years in March 2025. Upon release, he was taken into federal custody, where he is awaiting deportation to Malawi.

Here is our conversation:

Dr. Justus Ghormley: Mr. Chilambula, what did induction into DES mean to you?

Mr. Billy Chilambula: While being inducted into DES is a formal acknowledgement of my hard work and dedication to academic pursuits, as well as service to others, it is also an invitation to join a select group of people who accept a momentous challenge to uplift others through enlightenment. For me, this induction is a reminder that I will get the utmost fulfillment from education when I can extend the learned knowledge to others.

Dr. Ghormley: Can you say more about fulfillment from education?

Mr. Chilambula: Because of the gift of education and of being inducted into DES, I am emboldened for service, for hard work—especially for those with less opportunity, those in Malawi. The end of this hard work is happiness, satisfaction.

* Justus Ghormley, on the faculty of Holy Cross College (IN), received his doctorate from the University of Notre Dame. He serves as Director of the Moreau College Initiative prison program. The Moreau College Initiative (MCI) is an academic collaboration between Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame, in partnership with the Indiana Department of Correction. College students incarcerated at Westville Correctional Facility earn credits towards a Holy Cross College Associate of Arts (AA) degree. Students who complete the AA degree have the option to seek admission to a Holy Cross Bachelor of Arts degree program either at WCF or, upon release, at the Holy Cross College main campus. Classes are taught by Holy Cross and University of Notre Dame faculty. MCI is a member of the Bard Prison Initiative's Consortium for the Liberal Arts.

Dr. Ghormley: DES is committed to fostering scholarly activities. How would you describe the scholarly opportunities at MCI?

Mr. Chilambula: MCI provides a space where activities aimed at intellectual growth are exercised. These activities include classroom work, gardening, and symposiums on various topics. I have been in classrooms where we read and discussed classic and contemporary texts that are the bedrock of mind development. I was part of a long journey that touched on works by Aristotle, John Rawls, Isaiah Berlin, and many others. These works attempt to answer some of the most difficult questions about life concerning morals, equity, our purpose as human beings, and more. I have also been a participant in a variety of colloquiums where our classroom work is extended by listening to speakers who focus on particular topics, such as the plight of Puerto Ricans and their non-statehood status, or how religions react to the onset of modernity. This is only a snippet of the vast array of scholarly activities that I have had at MCI.

Dr. Ghormley: DES is also committed to building a sense of intellectual community among its members. How have you experienced a sense of intellectual community at MCI? Have you shared intellectual community with other DES members at MCI?

Mr. Chilambula: The MCI community is characterized by discussions and debates among its members. These debates are aimed at seeking some truth about some phenomenon. During my time at MCI there have been six DES members. I have shared the intellectual community with these members in a span of five years. Our discussion range is vast. It includes philosophy, mathematics, history, and much more.

Dr. Ghormley: What are some of your memories of community with fellow DES members?

Mr. Chilambula: They are the guys you go to first with your questions. They have the joy of learning, discovering. They are willing to say, "I don't know." It was an oasis, a brotherhood. We called ourselves the "delta force."

Dr. Ghormley: MCI is named after Blessed Basil Moreau, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, which seeks to educate in the faith by developing the mind, cultivating the heart, enkindling a zeal for service, encouraging hope, and uniting with others as family. How will you live out the mission of the Congregation of Holy Cross in the next chapter of your life, after leaving MCI?

Mr. Chilambula: I would like to provide a meaningful education to under-privileged Malawians, an education that would liberate their minds as well as uplift their welfare. I am a recipient of such a generous type of education and I would like to see it extended to my fellow Malawians. I did not have to wait too long to begin experiencing the benefits of this education. I have interrogated and appropriated long-held beliefs to make them my own. To this end, I would like to say that the mission of the Congregation of Holy Cross within the Catholic tradition separates itself as being compassionate and inclusive. I intend to promote this tradition by offering my services in the area of education, especially to young women who, due to cultural beliefs, tend to be left behind.

Dr. Ghormley: Young women do not have many educational opportunities in Malawi?

Mr. Chilambula: There's a limited number of high schools. My mom was a very smart and capable woman. She worked for her brother's company managing a fleet of buses. And she could tell me all about the world, the velocity of the earth around the sun, for example. But she had no chance for formal education. How many more girls don't have this chance either?



Billy Chilambula



Justus Ghormley

MOTHER

BETHANNIE HARTMAN*

“Your affinity for cleaning has always made me uncomfortable.”

Eden forced a smile. Her mother’s words were lighthearted and jovial, passed blasé through the straight teeth Eden did not inherit. But they both knew Vivian wasn’t joking.

Vivian sat at the dining room table, watching her daughter scrub at moldy dishes. It would be better to just throw them away, but Eden didn’t feel like triggering a screaming match. Instead, she moved to the cupboard, pulling out expired baking soda to sprinkle over the contents of the sink, followed by vinegar so old its pungent smell lost its strength. Eden looked and felt ridiculous—her hair pulled back tight beneath a hat, a long apron, and bright blue gloves up to her elbows. Not taking any chances. She watched the bubbles hiss and pop, the sound battling with the throbbing migraine inside her head.

“Do you plan on staring at the dishes all night? Or should we do something productive?” Her mother’s words, dry but never brittle, snapped Eden from her thoughts. “We could do a puzzle or write some letters! No one does that anymore.”

“I’m just waiting for the solution to break down the stuff on the plates so it’s easier to wash off. You taught me that trick,” Eden reminded her. While she waited, Eden moved to the wall opposite the sink, shifting her eyes over the hodge-podge collage of pictures, notes, and Christmas cards from the last several decades: Sun-faded photos of Vivan at the pet shelter, holding mangy cats with the biggest smile, one of her with the church outreach group, one with a great beaming smile as she dished out meals at the soup kitchen. Little reminders were etched on the sticky-notes, requests for more milk or butter if her dad had a chance to stop by the store. Eden’s heart fluttered as she recognized her father’s handwriting scrawled across a pastel yellow sheet, requesting pot roast for dinner.

She glanced at her mother, who sat with her back facing the wall of memories, bent over a crossword. Eden turned back, all the little scraps forming a mosaic of her parents’ life. Further to her left, more pictures of Vivian at the community center, some with the grandkids, fliers and advertisements for volunteer opportunities or requesting donations. With all that she had going on all the time, Eden wondered, did she ever have a chance to make Dad that pot roast? If she hadn’t, did she regret it now?

Eden shook her head and returned to her work, opening the dishwasher and bending to pull out a rack. The smell of rot burned at her nose, and she recoiled, knocking into the pile of dishes in the sink. Cups and utensils rained down from the overflowing basin, vinegar splashed over her legs, and Eden hopped around to protect her toes. Forget dignity. There was none left in this place. “Mom! When was the last time you ran these?”

Vivian waved a hand, shuffled one of many stacks of papers on the table. “Oh, I don’t know. Your dad never could teach me how to turn it on. I was going to ask Travis when he came by for Elvira’s birthday gift, but I must have forgotten.” Elvira’s birthday was six months ago. Eden collected the fallen dishes, her throat tightening. She started the dishwasher with a generous amount of detergent and excused herself to the bathroom.

Maneuvering by memory, she wiped at her eyes as traitorous tears eked out. Eden steered around the stacks of boxes, the tables, chairs, and bookshelves teeming with books and loose papers and random assortments of fabrics and decorations. Tumbleweeds of dog hair drifted over her black

* BethAnnie Hartman, a student at Loras College, won first place in the short fiction category of the 2024 Father Edward Fitzgerald Undergraduate Competition in Creative and Scholarly Writing.

sneakers and stuck, adorning her feet with unwanted puffballs. The walls here were plastered with expired coupons and faded cartoon strips, adhered with yellowed, flaking tape. She passed the sliding glass door, casting a sidelong glance at the fifteen suncatchers dangling from the curtain rod, and past, to the backyard, where Rubbermaid totes littered the lawn, alongside rusted bikes and broken furniture.

The walkways were narrower than the last time she'd been there, more books and papers and boxes had made her childhood home their final resting place. A dozen Russian nesting dolls peered at her from the top shelf. Everything was covered with a thick layer of gray dust. Her mother's lifelong mantra echoed in her head: "I'd rather die than dust."

Eden barely blinked at the mess now. It bothered her as a kid, coming home to rooms continually filling up. But now she was a grown-up, and she blocked it out, and pushed past a stack of boxes to the bathroom, steering around the teetering stacks of books. It, like every other room in the house, was painted a pastel shade—this room, light blue. The ivory trim had turned to yellow, and the blue to green with constant sun exposure. Expired beauty products and empty bottles of cologne spilled from the overstuffed cabinets, but the floor was cleared, and the sink, shower and toilet clean enough. Ever since her father passed away, her mother's habits had declined from bad to worse. All her father's belongings stayed where they had been before his death, and her mother continued adding to his collection of ties and wristwatches. Eden didn't understand how she could still live on her own in these conditions.

"You do know," Eden chided herself, splashing cold water from the tap onto her face and drying it with a towel that felt a bit crunchier and smelled a bit funkier than she wanted to admit. The only person more stubborn than Eden was her mother. She huffed, pressing her cold fingertips to her eyelids. If she had her way, she'd toss a match and walk away.

It hadn't always been this bad. When she was younger, it was cluttered and messy, but it was nothing like the sea of trash and trinkets that she now waded through. It stung, with each visit, watching her childhood room get consumed by unmarked boxes and random curbside furniture, the mold-like growth of pictures and random newspaper snippets that spread from the fridge to cover every open wall space in the house. Frustration bubbled over when Vivian gabbed about her latest volunteer work, providing her ample opportunity to further neglect the house. Eden remembered finding a box of her belongings from high school covered with mice poop. That had been her breaking point. She just wanted her mom to reach that, too. It was all wishful thinking. Her mom wouldn't leave the damned house even if it was on fire. She needed her things, her half-finished projects and craft supplies and clothes intended for grandchildren, long outgrown.

More or less composed, Eden wove back through the labyrinth of boxes to the kitchen, where Vivian made yet another to-do list, filled with her sweeping, swoopy letters. "I'm going to volunteer at the church again next weekend," her mom said, not looking up from her paper. "They're hosting another rummage sale and need someone to handle the cash box. When I went last month, they had the most darling little figurines that I just had to get. They were these chubby little polar bears... or wait, were they snowmen? I don't remember. I wonder where I put them. They'll be perfect for Christmas." Vivian turned back to her writing, muttering to herself. "Maybe they were penguins. I thought I had put them on the chair by my sweater so I wouldn't forget them—how could I, in such an odd and random place?" She scrunched her nose, freckled with age and liver spots, and scanned the room. "Oh, I forgot I bought that swaddle for the new baby. I'm guessing she's outgrown it by now. I wonder how they're doing. I think I got them some new baking trays that were on sale when Yonkers closed. I wonder where I put those..."

Eden suppressed a sigh, her mother's ramblings fading to a dull buzz. Some things never change.

* * *

The clatter of her husband's keys on the table made her flinch. Her cold coffee jumped from the mug, and Eden wiped it up with a washcloth.

"Can you please put those on the hook?" she asked, her voice quiet, thin.

Miles obliged, placing the key ring in its rightful spot. Unlike her childhood home, everything in Eden's house had a place for everything and everything in its place. Not that there was much of "everything"—she was a big fan of minimalism.

"How did it go today?" he asked, knowing the answer, sitting down to listen anyway. He watched as the muscles in her neck tightened, quivering as she fought back tears. He didn't reach for her. She'd reach out when she was ready.

"It's so...hard," she started, voice cracking. She paused and tried again. "Being there. It makes me feel like a little kid again. Like it's still consuming me." She stood and poured her coffee out in the sink, rinsing the cup and moving to put it in the dishwasher. Eden's hands shook, one still holding the cup and the other braced against the counter. She hadn't looked at him once, instead studying the ceiling fan above her or the spaces just to the left of his head. Miles would never tell her, but Eden copied the mannerism from her mother. Vivian never made eye contact when she spoke, her eyes following the same mental trail that her words meandered on. "It makes me want to rip my hair out and peel my skin off." She rolled both her wrists, the joints making sick cracking noises as she did so. A nervous tic. Also from her mother.

"Why did you go back?" Another question he knew the answer to.

Eden scoffed. "Because I thought I could fix it. Fix her. The problem." Another tendency maternally bestowed. "How did it get this bad, Miles? I mean, it was always bad, but never like this. God, Miles, the smell. I have four siblings and no one else has tried to help her? Am I the only one willing to help her?"

The coffee mug hit the ground and shattered, pastel blue shards of ceramic spraying out across the kitchen. Miles pulled away from the accident, hand flying up to protect his face. Eden barely flinched. She looked at her hand, at the fragments littering the floor. She sidestepped the mess, grabbed a broom from the closet, and began to sweep it up.

"I was afraid to eat the food in my own kitchen, Miles." She swept while she spoke, the glass bits scraping along the tiles. Her words were flat, her eyes glued to the floor. "When I got older, I tried to take matters into my own hands. I tried cleaning the kitchen once. I threw away a single plastic cup, Miles. I threw away a plastic cup and she screamed at me, her voice all shrill and horrible and saying that I was an ungrateful bitch who didn't deserve any of the nice things she brought home." The debris was all collected in a small, uniform pile, but Eden continued brushing at the floor. "All that for a damned cup that she fished out of the trash."

She gathered the pile into the dustpan, dumped it into the trash. Rinsed out the pan, tapped the broom clean over the edge of the bin. Wiped down the handle with a wet paper towel. When she spoke again, her voice was small, but hard. "Why did she love that stupid cup so much more than me?"

* * *

Eden sighed, pulling her keys from the ignition slowly. She didn't know why she had come back. It wasn't worth it, risking her already-tense relationship with her aging mother. And yet, she was back again, armed with bleach and baking soda.

Vivian had her nose buried in a book when Eden entered the house, greeted by the smell of must and animal dander. Her mother glanced up, her glasses perched on the end of her hooked nose. "Back for more?" she inquired, glancing at the tote of cleaning items. Her salt-and-pepper hair was

twisted back in a braid, frizzed as if she'd slept in the hairstyle. She returned to her reading, which Eden accepted as permission to begin.

She unloaded the dishes she had started yesterday and scrubbed at the inside of the dishwasher until the rotten smell dissipated. She wiped down the counters and cleaned the sink again. Eden moved through the house, hitting the most manageable areas. She emptied the garbage bins. Swept the hardwood and vacuumed the rugs. Cleaned the windows. Cleared trash from the kitchen table.

Hours passed. Eden felt a frenzy of anxiety at her surroundings and satisfaction by the slow progress, watching as dust was wiped away and small sections of the house tidied. She shoved boxes aside and cleared space in the living room, scrubbed at coffee stains on the table. Eden didn't open a single closet, instead creatively organizing the endless items rather than attempting to put things away. She feared what might linger between the closed doors, and knew that the cascade of junk set free by her actions would trigger an emotional avalanche within her as well. She had to keep it together. She tried not to think about how it would look in a week. For now, it was an improvement. Small, but an improvement.

Vivian read silently, much to her daughter's surprise. Normally, she fussed and bickered when Eden messed with her mess, but she allowed her to work peacefully for once. Until she saw the black trash bags heading out the door. "What's in those?" She attempted to keep her voice even, but came across quite shrill. "What are you throwing away?"

"A bunch of dirty paper towels, Mom. I promise." Eden had expected this. Her mother might bring in a million things that she couldn't remember, but nothing left the house without her close inspection.

"Let me look." Vivian stood, her words almost desperate. She held out her hands for the bags, but Eden yanked them back. "Stop. You're hiding things in there. Let me see."

"Mom! Let me throw it away!" Vivan tugged at the bag, pulling with surprising strength until the black plastic stretched and thinned and eventually tore, spilling soiled cloths and clods of dirt and hair onto the floor. Eden's patience was gone. She dropped the bags, pressing a hand to her pulsing temple. "You know you can't bring him back by holding onto all this shit," Eden spoke low, sharp words. "Dad's not coming back, even if you hold on to every single thing he ever touched. This is garbage, Mom. Let it go."

Vivian's face twisted, her lips set in a grim line. Had she been a softer woman, tears might have filled her eyes. Instead, her skin turned bright red, and she swatted at Eden, knocking over the bags and spreading the filth. "Get out! Get out! You evil girl!" Her words were hoarse, and she grew winded from throwing punches.

Eden easily sidestepped the blows, her own face growing inflamed. "I'm the evil one, Mom? Me? You and your mess ruined my life! You care more about this garbage than you ever did about me, or anyone else! I left because I couldn't stand to be here! You made me so miserable, Mom." Her chest heaved, but she continued screaming at her mother. Years of resentment bubbled to the surface. "You want to know why your other kids never visit you? Why the grandkids aren't allowed to come over? This place is dangerous, Mom. No one wants to be here. And no one wants to be around you when act crazy like this."

Her mother had never looked so small before. It struck Eden in that moment that her mom was old. She'd always been older, but now she was old, and for the first time, she looked helpless and weak. The skin below her eyes drooped lower than Eden remembered, and more wrinkles had joined the circle around her mouth. "Get out," Vivian whispered, the closest to defeated Eden had ever heard her sound. "I don't want to see you again."

Eden left the trash bags where they lay on the floor. She pushed past her mother toward the door, ignoring the tightness in her chest. If this is what she wanted, she could have it. Eden was done begging for her mother's love. She was done competing with junk.

* * *

The phone rang, filling the house with its jangling clamor. A year had passed since Eden had last seen her mother, at her home or otherwise. Vivian stopped attending family gatherings, and didn't answer the phone unless her eldest daughter, Esther, was the one calling.

Eden's stomach stretched with the promise of new life, and she waddled across the half-empty house toward her cell phone. Her plodding footsteps echoed across the hardwood. Miles beat her to the phone, deftly maneuvering through the neatly-stacked towers of moving boxes, all labeled with his wife's tight, uniform script.

She conceded the race, sitting instead on a box as he exchanged greetings with whoever had called. The house was too hot, the July heat defeating the full-blast air conditioning. She fanned herself with one hand, pausing when she noticed Miles's grimace.

"What happened?"

Miles shook his head and focused on the call, his olive skin growing pale. He spoke only short, terse words to the caller, not enough to give eavesdropping Eden any sort of context. A wave of anxiety rushed through her—the pregnancy hormones made her more susceptible to panic. Miles's silence did nothing but provoke the frenzy of feelings.

"Miles, what happened?" She stood, feeling exceptionally hot and suddenly dizzy.

He sighed, said goodbye, and turned to his wife. His brown eyes were glassy, and he rubbed a hand over his stubbled jaw before speaking. "That was Esther. They haven't heard from your mom in over a week. They're driving over there now to check on her."

Eden's stomach twisted, and she placed a protective hand over her middle. She had thought about her mother every single day since their fight, but that didn't mean her heart had softened any, or she was any more inclined to forgiveness. Her life was starting a new chapter—their first child, a new home. A clean slate. She was almost tempted to leave her splintered relationship with her mother in the past, too. As the thought crossed her mind, Eden shuddered. Maybe her mom was right. Maybe she was evil in some way. "Do you think we should go, too?" Her voice was tight, and she resented the stinging in her eyes. She turned away, hoping dusk's shifting shadows hid her tears.

"Do you think that's a good idea?" He reached for her. She didn't move toward him. "I don't want you to do anything that will upset you right now."

Eden shrugged. At times, the influence of her mother's hard demeanor had its perks. "If something's happened, I need to know. And I don't want to hear it from someone else."

* * *

Esther's navy blue SUV glowed under the setting sun, reflecting orange beams across the scraggly grass of their childhood home. She and her husband, Liam, stood outside, their grim faces visible even in the dim light.

As Miles parked the car, Eden had already unlocked and opened the door before he turned it off. She felt some toxic mixture stirring in her gut and rising up her throat, a fizzy combination of dread and guilt that made her limbs feel like they'd been filled with TV static.

"You don't have to do this," Esther called, hurrying after her little sister. "It's not worth risking your health."

Eden chuckled, which quickly turned to dry heaving. She had to know. Why didn't they understand? The lingering heat and the roar of cicadas and crickets pounded in her head as she moved

the birdbath on the porch and retrieved the spare key from beneath. She twisted the rusty key into the stiff lock and shoved the door open.

The smell hit before her eyes adjusted to the dark. The dry heaving worsened, and she lifted her shirt collar to cover her nose. The house was impossibly hot, muggy in such a way that stuck to her skin and clouded her lungs. She fumbled for the light switch, feeling Esther's peering eyes over her shoulder. Liam and Miles stumbled back from the stench.

Vivian sat in her recliner, a half-finished book resting on her knee. Clothing baskets and Rubbermaid containers, all stuffed with clothes and trinkets, surrounded her, like silent sentries around a cursed throne of garbage. The ever-constant stacks of boxes had toppled, spilling their contents like guts across the carpet. Flies buzzed, their hums filling the room with the same static Eden felt in her body. She couldn't see far into the house past the living room, but she didn't need to. She had seen what she needed to. Esther threw up behind her.

The golden sunlight, streaming through the dirty blinds, did nothing to alleviate the horror of the scene. Her mother's skin was tight and waxy, a sickly yellowish green under the humming incandescent lights. Her mouth hung open, pearly-white teeth better exposed behind shrunken gums and shriveled lips. She was small, her skin tight to her bones. She looked anything but peaceful, lying in her chair, empty, dehydrated eyes staring up at the mold-speckled ceiling.

Eden had seen enough. She hadn't even stepped foot over the threshold before turning back toward the porch. She felt numb.

"Eden?" Miles called, voice shaky from retching.

She said nothing, just kept walking across the yard and down the street. Her mother died how she wanted to live—alone, surrounded by her precious junk.



THE ETERNAL WONDERS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

ASHLEY KENIA*

I shimmy in the plastic desk-chair, thighs peeling up from its surface, the sweat that glued them down now dribbling down behind my knees and to my calves. *Tap, tap, tap*, an impatient tune drums through my pencil and I stare blankly at the classroom door, awaiting Mrs. Wisnosky's sing-song voice to fill the room. It is the first day of eleventh grade. It is also 2:15 pm and 90 degrees on a humid August afternoon, and I am ready to go home.

When Mrs. Wisnosky sat us all down on the last day of her English class in the spring, someone passing by would think she was telling us that we had won the lottery. What the enthusiasm in her eyes and squeakiness of her voice really indicated was that she would be teaching a new elective in the fall titled Contemporary Poetry. The energy which leapt from our bodies as we cheered in excitement was not feigned; it just wasn't for the idea of studying poetry—or the little idea we had of it that overwhelmingly involved a black-and-white textbook image of Shakespeare. We were just thrilled at the opportunity to have Mrs. Wisnosky again.

So when, lo and behold, Mrs. Wisnosky waltzes into the room that fall, Mickey Mouse coffee cup in hand and paisley-printed dress flowing behind her, it is unusual that the same amount of excitement that washed over us just a few months ago is nowhere to be found. My peers and I smile at the sight of her face, but in the few minutes we've spent waiting for her, we have had enough time to face the insurmountable reality of our situation: we actually have to learn about poetry now.

Despite my negative preconceptions about poetry from the little education I had of it up until that point in eleventh grade, the next four months sitting in that plastic desk-chair in the corner of Mrs. Wisnosky's cozy, string-light-lit classroom would come to be the setting of my most prized high school memories. As I learned nothing about Shakespeare and all about Rupi Kaur, Mary Oliver, and Jason Reynolds, and as I created even more poems than I read, I became obsessed with the language I rarely thought twice about. Five years later—after hundreds of read books, about a thousand written poems, and a nearly completed English literature and professional writing degree—my admiration for the innumerable wonders of the English language flourishes still with each breath, and as I embark on my professional ambitions to become an editor at a major publishing house, my fascination with and study of words marry to create a deep understanding of language that I am confident will aid me in thriving in the publishing industry.

At the start of my journey in that English classroom five years ago, I was exposed to an entirely foreign world I had never heard of before. Poetry didn't have to rhyme? Poetry wasn't exclusive to Middle English writers? Poetry could be fun to read? This was all news to me! Emma Doherty explains, "Twenty-first century poetry often takes shape in fragmented sentences, with a heavy use of enjambment, without strict forms of punctuation, grammatical or syntactical rules, and rarely any distinct rhyme scheme." This fluidity attracted me infinitely more than any line of Shakespeare I was forced to consume before. Besides twenty-first century authors, we also examined pieces from nineteenth and twentieth-century poets, like Emily Dickinson and Sylvia Plath, whose styles resemble the contemporary era. Mrs. Wisnosky displayed several poems each day for us to pick apart and we would spend the first half of the class underlining similes and metaphors, circling vivid imagery, and riddling our minds to figure out what in the world "I'm

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Nobody! Who are you?" (Dickinson) could possibly mean. As we identified rhyme schemes, themes, and figurative language, I began to consider poetry to be something I could really excel at. At home, I had secret lock journals and colorful Dollar Tree notebooks filled to the brim with confessions of a heartsick pre-teen,—*Should I ask Will to the eighth-grade dance? But I think he is in love with Ella! What should I do?!?!?*—but consistently throughout every other page or so, there also housed rhymed couplets in stanzas of the same heartsick pre-teen confessions which I dubbed "songs" or "poems." I believe one sixth-grade ballad went something like, "Friday night, I see you over there / You're with her, but I don't even care / At the football game with my friends / Hoping it will be me and you in the end." As a twelve-year-old, I was already the next Chaucer or Taylor Swift—depending on if I would call the piece a poem or song that day. So, as Mrs. Wisnosky formerly introduced me to the art of rhythmic sentence structures and metaphorical meanings, I realized that I had been unintentionally exploring poetry my entire life. Utilizing Russel Tabbert's work, Bill Gribbin would describe my unconscious use of language as "Grammar 1" (55). I was effortlessly implicating the rules of language in my daily life, but I had no idea. This epiphany paired with Mrs. Wisnosky's passion about the subject inspired me to truly immerse myself within the course, writing every day, workshopping new ideas, and braving the community's open mic nights once a month. By the end of the year, I had accumulated quite the collection of angsty, free verse poetry from my journal and the writing prompts Mrs. Wisnosky had us complete in class. I was proud of my work and even though I never analyzed the sounds and structures of sentences before, I still loved to read and it was my life-long goal to be an author; when I saw how much work I had done, therefore, and considered the quality to be proficient enough, I decided to compile my poems into a collection and self-publish my work on Amazon. A few months later in August of 2021, I released *Boy Bands Are Soul Food*. While back then I figured I may be the next writer featured on Thought Catalog's Instagram page, I loath to mention that I authored the piece now.

Perhaps the most alluring feature of Mrs. Wisnosky's class that made me and my peers fall in love with poetry was the freedom she allotted to us, an unfamiliar characteristic in a high school classroom. In fact, in discussing why so many teenagers hate poetry, Kevin Stein says:

In the classroom, poetry—this innately wild, frequently uncivil, and fundamentally rebellious art—has been neutered. To tame it, classroom poetry, like one's lovable but unruly pet, has been "fixed." Many teachers offer their students only poetry-as-eunuch: mannerly, genteel, safe to leave at home alone with spouse and kids. (203)

Mrs. Wisnosky, on the other hand, did not conduct her classroom in this manner. She allowed us the freedom to use our own dialect, as well as use curses and slang. We were even allowed to write about any topic, as she often stated the importance of knowing when to separate the written art from the author and when it is okay to conjoin the two. Therefore, many students wrote about bad home lives, sexual assault experiences, and identity struggles. For a low-income, rural area, this kind of artistic catharsis was life-changing for many of my peers. First-hand, I saw how using a safer outlet to express themselves instead of self-harming or turning to drugs was truly changing their lives. Of course, as a teacher, Mrs. Wisnosky had to speak with students and school counselors in response to these kinds of poems, but regardless, many of my peers were thankful for the ability to freely express themselves in their own terms—a result of both the environment Mrs. Wisnosky created and the nature of contemporary poetry itself—making the class a sort of safe escape from reality.

The following year, Mrs. Wisnosky ran a Contemporary Poetry 2 class because my class just did not want to leave her alone. We begged and pleaded for an encore and we received it. The majority of the sequel to our favorite class focused on constructing our own voice and practicing the different ways to perform poetry. We performed spoken-word pieces, crafted our own songs, and created partner and group works. By the time graduation rolled around and I had to decide

what my major would be in college, I knew my love for English had never failed me. I was also desperate to see my name on a Best-Sellers List since I bought my first book with my own money (*The Fault in our Stars* by John Green) back in fifth grade. So, I decided to traverse through my college experience as an English major.

After being enrolled in all the AP Language and Literature classes in high school, taking every English elective offered, and reading whenever I could, I thought I was quite a master of the English language as I entered college. My ego was hushed in my first collegiate English class though when my professor began speaking of poetry and using terms like “iambic pentameter,” “consonance,” “assonance,” and “enjambment.” I took two poetry classes in high school and I had no idea what he was talking about. Mrs. Wisnosky tended to focus more on the creation aspect of poetry and less on the technical terms, as we had no quizzes and tests in the class, just creative projects. Instead of being embarrassed or feeling uneducated about a topic I thought I knew so much about,—okay, I may have been a little of both—I saw this as an opportunity to acquire more knowledge and was eager to see what else I had yet to know.

Since that first collegiate class, I realized there was a lot. In terms of poetry, I didn’t know about meter, epigraphs, or identifying factors of a sonnet. Beyond verse, I was unfamiliar with literature outside of my own selected interest, which more often than not happened to be young adult romances, literary fiction, and thrillers by exclusively American authors. My literature classes at college introduced me to romantic poets, post-colonial works, British authors, must-read-before-you-die type classics, and historic American Renaissance pieces. Besides growing my catalog of read literature, these works opened the gates to new vocabulary, stylistic choices, and inspiration for my own writing. I found myself writing “after” poems in response to Alfred Lord Tennyson, circling beautiful-sounding words in Shakespeare’s plays to use later, and adding way too many hyphens in a poem—thanks, Emily Dickinson. As I continued through college, this aspect of language is what my passion grew to center on: the fact that any time I read or listened to words, I couldn’t just read or listen to words. My mind immediately began tossing them around like a pancake, relating them to previous experiences, crafting lines out of ones that popped, and pondering where they originated from (a quality I later came to know as a word’s “morphology”). It was so beautiful to me, an endless cycle of inspiration and ideas, continuously working your mind. This never-ending stream of words within a normal person’s brain would probably drive them mad. For a bookworm, it is heaven.

Now in my third year of higher education, I am enrolled in a linguistics class labeled The English Language. After so long of crafting poetry with special attention to sounds that create the same ambiance, attempting to figure out what words mean by separating their prefixes and suffixes, and wondering how this magnificent paradox of language even exists in the first place, many of my questions have been answered and I am now able to put a name to the processes I was subconsciously going through. Bill Gribbin would describe this step of my linguistic journey as “Grammar 2,” my “conscious knowledge,” of language, including, “concepts, terminology, and analytic techniques for talking about the language” (55). Each time I was using long-sounding, soft words within a line of poetry—like somber, shallow, and wallow—to create a certain effect, I was examining the phonetics of the words to do so. When my mind puzzled to try to fix a definition to a word I was unfamiliar with, tearing the prefixes and suffixes away and looking at the base word, I was studying the word’s morphemes. Whenever I worked to arrange words in a manner that sounded unique to my purpose, moving prepositional phrases and adding appositive or absolute phrases where needed, I was utilizing grammar rules and playing with syntax. The ambiguous pool of words and sounds and phrases in my mind is now able to be defined. Through collecting more knowledge about a definition and proper name for a concept, one may grow more inquisitive about the topic. Therefore, the versatility of my writing and curiosity of just how far I can bend the rules

has expanded since the beginning of the semester. Along with developing my personal writings skills, the acquisition of the linguistic jargon and comprehension of it will aid me tremendously in becoming an editor.

Since the work I want to do involves finding grammar errors, rewording, reworking sentence structures, and identifying ways to better evolve a text, I must understand how grammar, words, and sentences work. Beyond a basic foundation, I must know how to make these elements the best they can be in a piece. This goal would be hard to accomplish with just a general exposure to words through literature and my own writing. Actually focusing on the study of phonology, morphology, grammar, syntax, and semantics propels one's capabilities of working with language to a new level in a way only proper, intensive education can. Also, I have to alter my application of these elements depending on what publication I am working with. Preferably, I will work with fiction; however, the issue of grammar and sentence structure becomes tricky in fiction when authors have more creative jurisdiction over breaking the rules. In her article, "Confessions of a Comma Queen," Mary Norris talks about a coworker named Eleanor Gould. Initially the head grammarian and query proofreader at *The New Yorker*, she was removed from fiction, "because she treated everyone the same, be it Marcel Proust or Annie Proulx or Vladimir Nabokov" (5-6). I do not want to be an Eleanor since I want to work with fiction. I therefore have to understand when to tighten the grammar reins and when to give them some slack. This third and final (though never really "final") tier of my linguistic journey would be described by Bill Gribbin as, "Grammar 3"; it is not really about grammar itself, but "linguistic etiquette," a.k.a., usage – critically thinking about grammar and syntax rules and analyzing when to use them at what time, depending on the author, genre, and publication (55). In addition to being able to better help authors as I edit their pieces, knowing the literature jargon will allow me to seamlessly communicate with coworkers and other scholars in the field when discussing a text. Whether I am stuck and need help with reworking a sentence or am just babbling on about the stellar grammar of one of my authors to a colleague, "Do you think this appositive is too wordy?" and, "Stephen King's syntax is impeccable!" sounds way more professional than, "Do you think this part of the sentence in between the commas is bad?" and, "Stephen King just writes so well!" With the knowledge of linguistics I have acquired throughout my personal experience and college education, I will be able to sound like a true editor—and produce the work which proves so.

Sometimes when I'm sitting in the tan-carpeted, white-walled rooms at my college, learning about morphemes and grammar, a word or phrase will come up like "gerund" or "preposition," something I learned back in high school, and then I am back in that horribly humid English classroom on the first day of eleventh grade, sweat gluing my thighs to the desk-chair. Before I knew much of anything at all and yet thought I had an encyclopedia in my head, I was oblivious to how much understanding of language I had yet to discover. Beginning on that first August day, Mrs. Wisnosky built a sturdy foundation of language for me in her Contemporary Poetry class, crafted with rhythmic rocks and metaphorical mud. In Contemporary Poetry 2, she constructed walls embedded with variations of style and technique. Once in college, my professors then took over the project, installing windows with views of centuries of past literature and treasured definitions. But like the skyscrapers towering over New York City, the house of my linguistic knowledge may never be completely finished; after years of building, it is obvious that there still must be so much more to know. As I continue my college education and eventually step foot into my first publishing office, I know the curiosity of words that first inflamed me at a young age will infinitely burn bright within, as there will eternally be more elements of the English language to discover.

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BENEATH THE STARS, UNSEEN
JULIANNE DEE*

In the heart of the city, where the lights never dim,
Lives a world unseen, on the society's rim.
Beneath the stars, on cold concrete beds,
Lie stories untold, dreams left unsaid.

Faces weathered by time, eyes that have seen,
The harshness of life, where hope's rarely been.
They walk among us, shadows in the day,
Invisible souls, in the world's grand play.

Cardboard shelters, their castles at night,
A fragile defense against the cold's bite.
No walls to protect, no doors to close,
Just the open sky, where the wind freely blows.

Each day a battle, each night a test,
For a place to sleep, for a moment's rest.
They search for warmth, in a world so cold,
For a kind word, for a hand to hold.

In the eyes of the passerby, they are but a blur,
A nuisance, a problem, a life to deter.
But look closer, see the human inside,
A heart that beats, a soul with pride.

They are mothers and fathers, daughters and sons,
People with dreams, though their battles are unsung.
Circumstance and fate, a cruel twist of time,
Has left them adrift, in a world so unkind.

Yet in the darkest corners, where shadows loom,
There are sparks of hope, that pierce the gloom.
A shared meal, a blanket, a smile so rare,

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Acts of kindness, that show someone cares.
For every soul deserves a place to belong,
A shelter from the storm, a life that's strong.
To be seen, to be heard, to be understood,
To be given a chance, to rise from the wood.

So let us not turn away, in our hurried stride,
But see the faces, where the shadows hide.
For in their eyes, lies a story untold,
Of resilience, of courage, of hearts made of gold.

Let compassion guide us, in every step we take,
To build a world, where no one breaks.
Where every life is valued, every soul is free,
To live with dignity, beneath the same sky, equally.



The Malevolent Beholder:
Observation and Subjectivity in
The Blithedale Romance and “Wakefield”

DOMINIC MAILLOUX*

In the preface to *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), Nathaniel Hawthorne memorably attempts to discredit any comparisons between the fictional community of Blithedale and his lived experience at Brook Farm, an experimental community populated by Transcendentalists: “In short, [the author’s] present concern with the Socialist Community is merely to establish a theatre, a little removed from the highway of ordinary travel, where the creatures of his brain may play their phantasmagorical antics, without exposing them to too close a comparison with the actual events of real lives” (1-2). Despite this stringent caveat, *The Blithedale Romance* closely reflects Hawthorne’s experiences, its flawed cast of characters paralleling the lives of actual transcendental community members. The “theater” of Hawthorne’s imagination appears dangerously similar to reality, blithely mixing the real with the unreal until truth becomes obscured by imagination. His earlier short story, “Wakefield” (1835), exemplifies Hawthorne’s use of ambiguous or veiled narration, where the narrator’s desires and experiences pass through the subjective veil of imagination, before materializing in written word. Ambiguous narration becomes a characteristic feature of his fictional works, obscuring any definite “pervading spirit and...moral” (“Wakefield” 96). Hawthorne positions himself as a narrator and observer of the human condition, professing not to record the practical details of reality but rather the magnified images of a subjective imagination.”

Hawthorne’s ambiguous depiction of subjectivity and identity has a profound impact on the course of American literature, both exemplifying and subverting the legacy of American identity. At the time of Hawthorne’s birth in 1804, America had existed as an independent nation for a mere twenty-eight years. The newly founded republic found itself in the process of creating a distinct national identity which both draws from European tradition and embraces its separateness from European mores. What results is a national emphasis on the supremacy of the individual over the institutional, drawing the communal identity of the nation from the independent agency of the individual. Despite the exterior reconciliation of the individual and communal in the republican system of government, Hawthorne identifies an interior tension between self and other, his literary efforts forming a psychological search for coherent identity. For Hawthorne, this relationship moves beyond the literal level of interpersonal relationship and embraces the tension between the interior and exterior selves, one’s innate self or “I-ness” and the constructed rationalization of the self. Samuel Chase Coale highlights the Manichean underpinnings of this search for coherent meaning: “The essential experience of the Manichean soul...is his central isolation and his disconnection from all others. The psyche lies at the heart of the investigation, the center of this cosmic drama” (6). Hawthorne attempts to reject this dualistic understanding of selfhood yet, through an inability to bridge the gap between self and other, finds himself enmired in Manicheism’s riven sense of identity. Hawthorne’s failure to arrive at a coherent sense of self endangers the stability of American national identity. Existing as a communal extension of the

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individual's search for meaning, the "American psyche" requires a coherent sense of self to arrive at a stable national identity (6). Hawthorne's literary legacy is one of existential doubt, causing generations of future authors to question their place in the complex network of American national identity.

Hawthorne offers observation as a potential solution to this national problem of identity, allowing the subject to relate to others through a Lacanian vision of the reflected self. The inherent subjectivity of observation, however, renders it an imperfect form of connection, the subjectivity of the observer inevitably obscuring the agency of the observed. Hawthorne's readers thus find themselves caught in a three-way act of observation: The narrator observes the fictional world around him, the author observes the narrator, and the reader observes author, narrator, and the world surrounding the author. What follows is a process of observation, conversation, and ultimately transformation. In bridging the gap between self and other, the observer both informs and forms the self, transforming self-identity through an encounter with the othered object of his gaze. John Dolis explains that in "this abyss between the two, the subject emerges to being," indicating that selfhood can ironically only be found through relation to the other (62). Reading *The Blithedale Romance* alongside "Wakefield" provides a nuanced example of this paradoxical phenomena. Hawthorne's idea of reciprocal observation demonstrates how self-identity is intrinsically related to the other, so that Hawthorne's readers ultimately become observed by their literary objects.

An Opera-glass for the Imagination: Subjectivity and Observation

In a moment of introspection, Miles Coverdale, the protagonist and first-person narrator of *The Blithedale Romance*, expresses a key principle of Hawthornean observation—a sense of emotional and narrative distance between the observer and his subject: "My own part in these transactions was singularly subordinate. It resembled that of the Chorus in a classic play, which seems to be set aloof from the possibility of personal concernment" (90). Coverdale serves as the self-appointed observer and chronicler of the Blithedale experiment, where a web of secrecy submerges the community in an atmosphere of distrust. Despite acting as the novel's protagonist, he does little to progress its plot, displaying a liminal relationship with the objects of his observation and preferring to observe rather than intervene. This sense of detachment becomes even more extreme in the imaginative observation of the nameless narrator in "Wakefield," who frames his narrative as a theoretical exploration of the mysterious absence of the short story's eponymous protagonist. Wakefield ultimately exists as a product of the narrator's musings, and despite this proximity, the narrator remains detached from his imaginative creation, preferring not to discuss how Wakefield reflects his personal "pervading spirit and . . . moral" (96). While "Wakefield," like *The Blithedale Romance*, sets up its narrator as an objective observer, a self-deconstructive nucleus lies within the relationship between observer-narrator and his subject, subverting the apparent objectivity of the Hawthornean observer. A psychoanalytical examination of Hawthornean observation reveals a subjective relationship between observer and observed, where the objects of observation become objectified by a subjective ego.

Coverdale's ambiguous role in *The Blithedale Romance* demonstrates a failed attempt at detached observation. Among the founding members of the fictional Blithedale community, Coverdale quickly comes to occupy a liminal position in the community, closely observing the actions of his friends Zenobia, Hollingsworth, and Priscilla yet doing little to directly participate in their lives. Resting in his "hermitage," a tree-top perch which allows him to view others without being seen, Coverdale considers it the will of destiny to take the office of the spectator. "I began to think it the design of fate that led me into all Zenobia's secrets," he muses as Zenobia and the

enigmatic Westervelt pass below him (*Blithedale* 96). Despite Coverdale's confidence in the providential nature of his role as spectator, his observations resemble more the gaze of a curious voyeur than the careful analysis of a scientific observer. "You are a poet," Zenobia tells Coverdale after discovering his watchful presence, "and must be allowed to make an opera-glass of your imagination when you look at women" (156). Zenobia highlights an inevitable side-effect of Coverdale's observation—the objectification of the observed. Coverdale finds himself motivated more by an obsession for knowledge than a genuine sympathy for his friends, admitting that "if we take the freedom to put a friend under our microscope, we...inevitably tear him into parts, and, of course, patch him very clumsily together again" (64). Coverdale's observation deprives his friends of agency and transforms them from persons into enigmas. If Coverdale attempts to uncover the secrets of his friends, his observation exists equally as an attempt to keep his own secrets veiled. David Greven identifies the gaze as an ambitious—if ultimately futile means—of attaining agency: "Hawthorne exposes Coverdale's act of seeming masculine dominance—wielding the gaze, voyeuristically devouring what he sees—as indicative of a hopelessly unsuccessful embodiment of male power" (132). Coverdale's gaze is ultimately unsuccessful because the world of *Blithedale* renders the inner life vulnerable; while the gaze reveals the secrets of others, it fails to keep Coverdale's inner secrecy intact.

Westervelt's Veiled Lady provides an important example of the gaze's failure to safeguard the inner life. The insidious Westervelt manipulates Priscilla into acting as the mysterious Veiled Lady, a ghostly figure whose shrouded identity transforms her into a lucrative spectacle. Priscilla's veiled alter-ego acts as a symbol of pervasive acts of concealment throughout the novel. Coverdale conceals his love for Priscilla under layers of ambiguous narration, Hollingsworth his hubris under a façade of moral purpose, and Zenobia her ignoble origins under a noble bearing. Hawthorne, however, renders these attempts at concealment futile, concluding that "it is really impossible to hide anything, in this world, to say nothing of the next" (*Blithedale* 150). According to Margaret Jay Jessee, the futility of concealment proceeds from its existence as a product of objectification. She explains: "The result of women wearing a veil (both literally and metaphorically) is that... Coverdale [desires] its removal despite [his] fears of what is behind the disguise" (71). For Jessee, the masculine observer occupies a paradoxical position, wishing to remove the very veil he created. If observation exists as an act of objectification, the desire to see what lies beneath the objectified other threatens the secrecy of the observer. Lifting the veil presents Coverdale with what he fears most, his objectified subject gazing back at him. Ironically, Hawthorne renders observation as a self-objectifying act, threatening to undo the very agency it imparts.

If Coverdale's observation heralds a crisis of agency, Wakefield's observation displays a complete lack of agency. In "Wakefield," Hawthorne describes the odd story of a man who, for unknown reasons, decides to leave his home for twenty years and live a block away, surreptitiously observing his wife from a distance. Wakefield's apparent lack of a motive lends his actions an air of ambiguity. The story's narrator takes readers on a speculative journey into Wakefield's mind, producing a thoughtscape where Wakefield may undergo his peculiar mission: "If the reader choose, let him do his own meditation; or if he prefer to ramble with me through the twenty years of Wakefield's vagary, I bid him welcome" ("Wakefield" 96). Although Wakefield seizes the agency of observation from his wife for twenty years, he ultimately derives his existence from the imagination of the narrator. Even within this imaginary realm, his actions lack definite motivation. The narrator describes Wakefield in terms of negatives, and rather than discovering who Wakefield is, readers learn what he is not. Lacking imagination, creativity, and a strong mind, Wakefield is a man of "indescribable obliquity" (97-98, 101). The only positive quality Wakefield displays is a "quiet selfishness" which, ironically, is "indefinable and perhaps non-existent" (97).

While the motives for Wakefield's journey remain veiled behind his inscrutably ambiguous character, Angela M. Kelsey describes Wakefield's departure as a futile means of grasping at agency: "For Wakefield, castration and the taking of the female position become the principle threat to his visual fantasies and desires and, ultimately, to his subjectivity" (n.p.). Kelsey identifies the root of Wakefield's quiet selfishness as a fear of the feminine gaze, where, in an effort to avoid objectification, he attempts to permanently wield the gaze. Wakefield's resulting lack of agency, however, subverts the authority of the gaze. While Wakefield successfully exists outside the gaze of society, he loses the power to affect others, suffering the "unprecedented fate to retain his original share of human sympathies, and to be still involved in human interests, while he had lost his reciprocal influence on them" ("Wakefield" 102). Wakefield's demasculinized existence testifies to the paradoxical nature of Hawthornean observation—that without the reciprocal observation of his subjects, the observer loses the very agency observation imparts.

Colored by His Surroundings: Lacanian Blending of Self and Other

Like Wakefield, Coverdale experiences a deficiency of memorable character traits, lamenting that he has "made but a poor and dim figure in [his] own narrative, establishing no separate interest, and suffering [his] colorless life to take its hue from other lives" (*Blithedale* 225). If the observer suffers from a dearth of agency in a self-defeating attempt to establish subjective control, he also experiences a crisis of identity. Hawthornean observation displays an intrinsic—though often disordered—connection between self and other. The observer displays a desire for a deeper realization of self yet through the very act of observation impedes self-realization. As Lacan concludes, knowledge of the self proceeds from recognition of the other, and the observer lacks the means to foster this most necessary of human connections. Carl Dennis identifies this issue as an unsuccessful means of psychologically and socially integrating the self with the other (94). Viewing observation through the lens of mirror theory demonstrates that Coverdale's and Wakefield's unsuccessful attempts at self-integration stem from a profound detachment between self and other, impeding the relatedness necessary to produce an authentic realization of the integrated self.

Hawthorne's idea of interrelated identity draws upon Transcendental theory yet displays distinct differences. Transcendentalism defined elite literary and theological thought in the 19th century, providing both a way of life and a means of understanding reality. Reacting to both Unitarianism's historical understanding of God's providence and empiricism's preoccupation with the tangible, Transcendentalism ushered in an age of miracles where connection with the divine can take place through living in the reality of His creation. In *Nature*, Ralph Waldo Emerson famously describes the individual's role as one of universal being: "I become a transparent eye-ball...I am a part or particle of God" (n.p.). Despite the communal nature of Emerson's vision of identity, his assertion is profoundly individualistic, making the individual, in himself, a perfect reflection of the divine. Joel Myerson explains that "if religion is centered in individuals because we are emanations of divinity, and if knowledge is preexistent within us...then of course individualism becomes essential" (xxx-xxx). Transcendentalism ultimately proposes a radical reciprocity between the individual and the collective, where the divinely ordained agency of the individual gives him meaning in the enormity of creation. Hawthorne's works display many elements of this idealistic view of the human person yet characteristically arrive at a liminal stance. Ted Billy, in his essay contrasting Transcendentalism with dark romantic writing, effectively summarizes Hawthorne's points of ideological difference: "Hawthorne valued community over the personal ego...[capitalizing] on the fundamental unknowability of personal identity" (156). If Transcendentalism approaches the individual with

faith in the coherence of human identity, Hawthorne emphasizes the impact the unknowability of the individual has on identity. Hawthorne's adaptation of Transcendental personhood ultimately blurs the distinction between self and other, making the observer's identity as much a reflection of the objectified other as a coherent vision of self.

Coverdale's confused sense of character reflects Hawthorne's adaptation of Transcendentalism's theory of identity. In his observations, Coverdale undergoes a Lacanian transformation, realizing—at least subconsciously—that the objects of his contemplation not only recognize his observation but also return his gaze. In assessing his identity, he feels like Theodore who attempts to glimpse the mysterious visage of the Veiled Lady only to discover that the object of his gaze has been aware of his presence the whole time (Blithedale 102-104). As Theodore gazes upon the Veiled lady, he discovers that she not only returns his gaze but also reflects his visage: “[she] seemed to have no more reality than the candlelight image of one's self, which peeps at us outside of a dark window-pane” (100). Elements of Coverdale's ill-defined ego similarly appear in his descriptions of his friends. Hollingsworth, with his singular purpose and manly determination, provides a fitting vessel for Coverdale's masculine insecurities, while Priscilla and Zenobia represent Coverdale's conflicting ideological—and romantic—loyalties to true femininity and new womanhood. Coverdale's gaze ultimately participates in a paradoxical cycle of psychological projection and introjection, coloring and receiving color from others. Dolis aptly explains this process as a relationship where “the subject of this phenomena is at once its own object” (61). Although Coverdale remains socially distant from his subjects, his sense of self becomes irrevocably merged with the other.

Coverdale's unintentional merging of self and other proceeds from his lack of integration in the community. Although the Lacanian self necessarily exists in relation to the other, the observer detaches himself from human connection, existing in intimate proximity to the idea of personhood yet never achieving the human connection that allows for authentic realization of self. Coverdale's encounter with a bewildering crowd of masqueraders at the end of *The Blithedale Romance* exemplifies his self-destructive detachment from the other. “Stealing onward as far as I durst, without hazard of discovery,” Coverdale relates, “I saw a concourse of strange figures beneath the overshadowing branches; they appeared and vanished and came again, confusedly” (Blithedale 193). Coverdale's language enshrouds the scene in a sense of veiled otherness; the community whirls by him in a ghastly display of togetherness which remains inaccessible to Coverdale despite its tangibility. Jessee explains that “Coverdale describes the masqueraders in such a way as to put readers on the outside of the scene” (72). Readers and Coverdale alike are separated from the masked other by a masked self. Through Coverdale's objectifying gaze, the other becomes a bizarre spectacle, deriving its strangeness through Coverdale's riven sense of self.

In “Wakefield,” Hawthorne similarly identifies the alienated other as a product of a disassociated self. Ed Piacentino emphasizes the importance of the narrator in understanding Wakefield as a non-existent protagonist: “Telling the strange story about Wakefield... becomes for the narrator a means to counteract a personal but potentially destructive inclination to emulate Wakefield” (74). If Wakefield becomes an observer of his wife, the narrator becomes an observer of Wakefield, who having no existence or agency on his own, becomes an othered reflection of the narrator's desires. If Lacanian identity is realized through the reflective mirror of the other, the narrator constructs Wakefield as a mirror to safely view his suppressed desires. “We know, each for himself, that none of us would perpetrate such a folly, yet feel as if some other might,” the narrator writes, transforming Wakefield from a human with moral purpose to a moral for his readers (“Wakefield” 98). Despite the narrator's intimate association with Wakefield as a reflection of his psyche, he exhibits a sense of disgust for his creation, deeming him “as remarkable a freak as may be found in the whole list of human oddities”

(96). The narrator's estrangement from his othered sense of self exemplifies the dangerous proximity the observer occupies toward his objects. The observer requires the other to realize his identity yet dreads the existence of the other, displaying a relationship that is both intimately close and invincibly detached. Dreading to become, like Wakefield, "the Outcast of the Universe," the narrator laces his psychological creation with all the unacceptable desires of his id, distancing himself from this embodiment of abnormality while requiring the mirror of Wakefield's constructed existence to view his own identity (103). Hawthorne thus renders the office of the observer as an inherently paradoxical position, testifying to the unknowability of the self through a disordered relationship with the other.

The Reader as Observer: Subverting the Reader-Text Relationship

Observation's inability to successfully bridge the gap between self and other applies both within and without the text. If the reciprocal relationship between self and other forms a defining intertextual theme in Hawthorne's works, the relationship between the written word and the reader becomes an important extratextual theme. Readers approaching Hawthorne's works find themselves pulled into a reciprocal cycle of observation, where they ironically make Hawthorne's observers the object of their observation. In their essay on reading as a subjective act, Marshall W. Alcorn and Mark Bracher examine how literature both informs and is informed by readers: "Literature offers not only an occasion for emotional release but also an opportunity for the formation or re-formation of the self" (343). This re-formation of selfhood evokes Lacanian notions of reflective identity but places more stress on the agency of the reader. Where the Lacanian subject finds himself a victim of his own inability to find cohesive meaning, Alcorn and Bracher frame literature as a formative and transformative process, operating on both conscious and subconscious levels (342). If the reader consciously exposes himself to literature, he also unconsciously lets it shape and change his psyche. In Lacanian terms, he sees his reflection in literature without realizing that his reflection is looking back. Both *The Blithedale Romance* and "Wakefield" exemplify Hawthorne's prioritization of readerly involvement, transferring the focus of literary criticism from the written word to the individual.

For Hawthorne, subjectivity pervades the act of reading, making interpretation as much a reflection of the reader's ego as an objective judgement of the author's work. In *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction*, Wayne C. Booth identifies all artistic value as subjective, concluding that any sort of readerly evaluation implies subjective judgement (94-95). By evaluating the nature of Coverdale's observation, readers consequently assume the office of the Hawthornean observer. Like Coverdale, they find themselves absorbed into the characters they observe, allowing their subjectivity to be merged with the objects of their observation. In *The Blithedale Romance*, Coverdale's character forms a focal point for these psychological projections; upon him fall the biases of readers who view aspects of themselves in the ambiguous depths of his being. Hawthorne ultimately presents his readers with a moral dilemma which necessarily lacks a definite solution; by judging Coverdale, they place themselves in his own position. While the subjectivity of Hawthorne's approach appears to diminish the objective value of literature, Booth presents a more nuanced view: "The value is not there, actually, until it is actualized, by the reader. But of course it could not be actualized if it were not there, in potential, in the [work]" (89). Booth's Aristotelian approach to interpretation frames literature as a conversation, a subjective merging of psyches. If Coverdale colors and receives color from the objects of his observation, Hawthorne's audience also color and receive color from what they read, allowing for a shared sense of subjectivity.

"Wakefield" illustrates Hawthorne's transformation of reading into a cooperative process. In many ways an experimental work of short fiction, "Wakefield" explicitly invites readerly participation.

The narrator provides only the outline of a plot, no overarching moral, and little motivation for Wakefield's inexplicable behavior, leaving the act of justifying Wakefield's actions—and the story's very existence—to the reader. The story's inherent subjectivity produces a myriad of interpretations. While some critics call the story "a failure of creative energy," others, like Jorge Luis Borges, deem it a "profound" exercise in "triviality," in some ways superior to the acclaimed *The Scarlet Letter* (Newman 314, 317). Rather than displaying an objective sense of value, the story's worth thus largely hinges upon readerly interpretation. Hawthorne makes the reader's role in the story explicit through a participatory style of narration. Using communal pronouns like "us" and "we," the story's narrator submerges the reader in a subjective exercise in imagination. Wakefield's character—and very existence—depend upon the participation of the reader: "But our business is with the husband. We must hurry after him along the street, ere he lose his individuality, and melt into the great mass of London life" ("Wakefield" 98). Without the recognition of the reader, Wakefield, lacking substance in himself, fades into the realm of forgotten literary ideas. Neal Frank describes this phenomenon as form of cooperative composition: "[Hawthorne] overtly addresses the reader as a sort of collaborator, as if he could only display an action he had not devised and indeed might not be fully informed about" (Neal 152). By involving the reader in Wakefield's creation, Hawthorne ultimately presupposes the reader as both the unwitting subject and object of the story.

"Wakefield" thus makes explicit the implicit idea that all literature derives its value from the recognition of the reader. If the office of the reader is to actualize the potential value of literature, "Wakefield" demonstrates that a subjectivist view retains literature's inherent value. Booth explains that "variability of judgement, far from indicating mere subjectivity or non-rationality, is the very mark of rationality" (97). Rather than devolving into solipsism or pure relativism, these varying judgements allow for a conversational exchange of subjectivities. Wakefield, despite his deficit of personality, exemplifies this principle of shared subjectivity. While Hawthorne reduces Wakefield's character to a means of reflecting the subconscious, the wayward husband still retains a sense of inexplicable agency. Upon leaving his wife, an inexplicable grin transfixes Wakefield's face, heralding some sort of unknown motive: "For the time, this little incident is dismissed without a thought. But, long afterwards, when she has been more years a widow than a wife, that smile recurs, and flickers across all her reminiscences of Wakefield's visage" ("Wakefield" 98). The maddening ambiguity of Wakefield's character typifies Hawthorne's use of observation as an extratextual means of involving the reader in the story's plot. While Wakefield exists as a product of the reader's observation, he also maintains an existence that transcends the subjectivity of the individual reader. In a sense, the reader both creates and recognizes Wakefield's sense of self. Wakefield's smile defies purely subjectivist or objectivist accounts of literature, implying a sense of intertextual subjectivity that exists outside the gaze of author and reader, an othered reflection of the self that gazes back at the reader with inexplicable autonomy.

Hawthornean observation thus embodies important elements of recognition theory, an extension of Lacanian psychoanalysis where the formation of individual identity requires the returned recognition of the other. While for Coverdale and Wakefield, the returned gaze presents a frightening challenge to personal autonomy, Hawthorne establishes reciprocal observation as a means of combatting the solipsistic drawbacks of observation. Although he avoids Emerson's idealistic view of universal connection with the divine, Hawthorne arrives at a theory of human transcendence that effectively connects the individual with the other through mutual recognition. Robert Spaemann defines this type of transcendence as a "conceptual abstraction" of the self where "the person, while wholly present in each act, occupies a position at a distance from it, reflecting on the objectivity of its

object and so transcending it” (62). The successful observer thus not only gazes upon the reflected self but also recognizes his proximity to it, making his person both subject and object of his own gaze and effectively transcending the subjective barrier between self and other. When Zenobia, the Veiled Lady, and Mrs. Wakefield return the gaze of their male observers, they offer not only a challenge to individualistic agency but also a means of mutual recognition. Through cooperative narration in *The Blithedale Romance* and “Wakefield,” Hawthorne similarly presents readers with a means of transcending the self; gazing into the abstract mirror of Coverdale and Wakefield, readers may view themselves as both subject and reflected object. Hawthorne’s works ultimately form a theater for the imagination of author and reader alike, lifting the veil from the concealed other to allow for deeper realization of self through mutual connectivity.

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SPECIMENS OF A BYGONE ERA: AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD GERMAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE GILDED AGE (1880-1920)

J.P. Hurt*

I. An Introduction to Gilded Age Immigration

On October 28, 1886, President Grover Cleveland oversaw the dedication of the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island, New York; on it was inscribed a poem by Emma Lazarus. “The New Colossus,” the poem was titled, represented Lady Liberty imploring the nations of the world to “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-lost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” (Potter 11). By 1924, however, Senator Ellison DuRant Smith could be found speaking before Congress arguing for stricter immigration restriction laws, saying: “the time has arrived when we should shut the door. We have been called the melting pot of the world. We had an experience just a few years ago, during the Great World War, when it looked as though we had allowed influences to enter our borders that were about to melt the pot in place of us being the melting pot” (Prchal 30). Thirteen years prior in 1911, the United States Immigration Commission, headed by Senator William P. Dillingham, had published its famous 41-volume report on the state of immigration, reflecting the nation’s increasing sensitivity toward the subject and offering facts to inform legislators about potential policy regarding it (Daniels, *Not Like Us* 60-61). These accounts, along with countless others, reflect a growing overall attitude of nativism in the United States at a time when the number of newcomers to the country was at an all time high. This attitude, manifest in the various pieces of anti-immigration legislation passed throughout the late Gilded Age, had only become prominent in the years since around 1880, begging the question of how Americans had gone from welcoming the “huddled masses” to fearing that they would “melt the pot.”

As the Dillingham Commission laid out in its first pages, this uptick in nativism accompanied a change in the nature and composition of immigration to the United States. In 1882, 89.6% of the 648,146 European immigrants that came to the country had been from Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and Switzerland, a group that had comprised about 95% of all immigration from the continent between 1819 and 1883. By 1907, this group, referred to by the Commission as “old immigration,” had been dwarfed in numbers by what it called “new immigration”; people hailing from Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, and Turkey (Dillingham 13). This new immigration, the American people contended, was responsible for a plethora of degradations being brought on the country, and it necessitated a departure from the 19th century immigration policy, or lack thereof, that had worked well at accommodating old immigration. The Chinese, of course, form an exception since they saw their exclusion written into law with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and suffered nativist attacks throughout the 19th century (Lee 36). Therefore, despite the overwhelming sentiments of nativism prevalent throughout the Gilded Age, Americans still glorified the immigration of the past and deemed people from the nations that had characterized it desirable. This essay seeks to contend that until World War I (and despite increasing nativism), Germans constituted the ideal immigrants to Gilded Age Americans, as they represented the “best”

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of an older regime of immigrants defined by its assimilability, its contributions to society, and its whiteness.

II. “Their Usual Sagacity and Thrift”: on Germans’ Assimilability

By the time of the Gilded Age, Germans had long been seen as among the most desirable immigrant nationalities, evidenced by the fact that they had been the second largest ethnic group to migrate to the U.S. between 1820 and 1924, their numbers (5,907,893 in this timespan) being eclipsed only by the Irish (Daniels, *Coming to America* 146). Unlike the Irish, who bore the brunt of many nativist attacks throughout the 19th century, Germans brought and reinforced positive stereotypes that would persist into the Gilded Age until the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Firstly, German immigrants, for the most part, avoided the criticisms of motivation brought against new immigrants as well as against their Irish counterparts. While these groups were regarded as “lesser” because they had felt the need to move only in the face of distress or persecution, Germans were praised for their motivation for personal economic improvement because they actively desired to live in the United States, rather than simply wishing to live somewhere other than where they were born. To an American people that already saw its country as a beacon of prosperity, it must have been reassuring to see Europeans of higher social stock flocking to live there in droves. Though this immigrant population did contain a relatively large number of higher-class movers, their image among Americans as societally fit was partially supplemented by the fact that the major shipping lines, like the *Norddeutsche Lloyd* (NDL) and the *Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft* (HAPAG), that brought Germans to the United States were financially responsible for returning them if they happened to be turned away upon arrival (Steidl 119). In the interest of protecting their business, these lines established migration inspection points to filter out those potential migrants that would be deemed “unfit” if they made it to Ellis Island, thus inadvertently improving Germans’ social standing in the U.S. by decreasing the number of undesirables among their ranks (Steid 120). Because of their supposed higher stock, many Americans were much more ready to accept that these foreigners could, one day, become Americans, or at least Americanized.

Beyond their motivation to migrate, Germans brought with them several traits valued by American culture, making them more digestible as being able to become full members of society. Among these was their propensity for hard work, an attribute mentioned in countless contemporary analyses of German immigrants. Throughout the 1870s and into the 1890s, railroad colonization campaigns explicitly targeted German immigrants, even as other ethnic groups surpassed them in numbers, because they “sought to work eagerly” (Pierce 155). In an 1874 account describing the German population of Anaheim, California, one James Rusling mused: “Here were some five hundred or more Germans, all industriously engaged, and exhibiting of course their usual sagacity and thrift” (Pierce 87). Willingness to work hard was key to being able to assimilate into a Gilded Age culture that demonized laziness and glorified the personal mobility that capitalism could supposedly bring to one who was industrious. This industry, however, could not have acted alone in securing Germans’ place at the top of the list of desired immigrant groups, as most, including new immigrants, came to the U.S. ready and willing to work hard, oftentimes for very little reward. It necessarily combined with other common traits valued by Americans to further the German people’s propensity for Americanization.

Like their tendency to work hard, German immigrants also brought with them entire families, and, if not, relatively equal numbers of men and women. As mentioned in the Dillingham Commission, one of the chief criticisms of the new age of immigration was that it brought disproportionate amounts of men, and of people not within their childbearing years, to a country that increasingly

valued the building of families. For one, German people, as previously mentioned, more often had the economic means to transport larger groups of people across the Atlantic than some other groups did. More importantly, however, this action displayed their desire to remain in the U.S. permanently, something that could not be said of the new immigrants like the Italians. Gilded Age reformers concerned with immigration often denounced ethnic groups with low retention rates and disproportionate numbers of men, and those ethnicities classified as “new” by the Dillingham Commission saw a 40% return rate, in addition to nearly 75% of their ranks being male, while the old immigrants, including Germans, did not have figures worth reporting (Dillingham 24). If America was going to have immigrants, then, it was believed they should be like the Germans in their commitment to having themselves and their lineage remain American.

German immigrants also enjoyed more than any other old immigrant group the benefit of education. While new immigrants had more than a 35% illiteracy rate, Germans entering the country had close to zero (Dillingham 24). In the wake of Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo the German educational system began to heavily influence whatever semblance there was of an educational system in the United States (the term kindergarten gained its popularity around this time), a trend that can at least partially be attributed to Americans’ admiration of the education of the Germans that had already arrived (O’Connor 268-269). By the Gilded Age, American admiration for German education was incredibly prevalent, and over ten thousand young men had been educated in German universities by 1900 (Daniels, *Coming to America* 149; Jentz and Keil 150). Few other nations from which old or new immigrants came could claim such a statistic, and Americans’ respect for German educational prowess, both among common men and elites, undoubtedly increased the Rhine men’s standing within Gilded Age society, and their propensity to assimilate in the minds of nativists.

In analyzing immigrant assimilability, it would be impossible to ignore what it was these people did for work. Characterized chiefly by their tendency to settle in rural areas, German people had a particular disposition toward agriculture, though a relatively large number of them also arrived as skilled workers, along with many unskilled laborers (Daniels, *Coming to America* 150). The biggest draw among these groups for Gilded Age Americans would have been those who settled away from the cities, as urban crowding was a contentious political issue involving many immigrant groups at the time. Skilled laborers would also have been desirable for many of the aforementioned reasons, including that they represented those who were leaving their home countries not out of desperation, but out of hope for improvement. Though the national trend was by this point drifting further away from its agrarian past, Americans still vastly preferred to gain a farmer than to gain another unskilled factory worker to fill up the tenements. Skilled German workers tended toward such trades as baking, butchery, cabinetmaking, cigar making, and the production of lager beer, among other things surely to have been enjoyed by American consumers (Daniels, *Coming to America* 150). Even those workers who were unskilled strayed further from the stereotypical immigrant positions of factories and mills, instead prominent in the service sector as domestic workers, janitors, hotel keepers, and laundry workers, a fact that would have further distinguished them from competing immigrant groups. To all of these professions Germans brought their typical strong work ethic and intelligence, leaving impressions on the Americans who deemed them the most fit for entrance into the Land of the Free.

Despite all their advantages on the front of assimilation, at the end of the day, Germans were still immigrants, and thus many Gilded Age Americans could not accept that these people could ever truly be one of them. Many Germans in the U.S. either could not or would not learn English, they nearly unanimously opposed Prohibition, and they were disproportionately represented in

radical political groups like anarchists and socialists (Daniels, *Not Like Us* 65; *Coming to America* 148). Additionally, while a majority of their ranks were comprised of Protestants, a significant number of Germans were also confessed Catholics, and a lesser, yet still significant, number of them were Jews (Daniels, *Coming to America* 152-153). These two groups, particularly the latter, felt much of the wrath of Gilded Age nativism, despite their German heritage. Despite these facts, however, there are very few accounts, if any, of Gilded Age nativists on the national scene calling for the expulsion of German immigrants or grouping them in with “undesirable” new immigrants (Daniels, *Not Like Us* 65). If German immigrants were not perfectly assimilable, then, they were enough so to be tolerated by even the most extreme nativists, and certainly by the American people at large.

III. “Carriers of Culture”: German Societal Contributions in the Gilded Age

Beyond their ability to be accepted by Americans, upon their arrival in the United States Germans were responsible for a number of contributions to Gilded Age society and culture which helped solidify them as the most desirable of immigrant ethnicities. Whether it was notable individual German immigrants, German ingenuity and invention, or societal customs brought from their homeland, Gilded Age Germans were indispensable in bringing about the quickly transforming American culture of the period on all fronts.

Among the most recognizable names in Gilded Age history is that of political cartoonist Thomas Nast. Born in the Bavarian Palatinate in 1840, Nast immigrated to the U.S. with his father at age six, settling in New York (O’Connor 277-278). First being published in an 1855 issue of *Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly*, Nast, by the late 1860s and early 1870s, was the premier political cartoonist of his age (Vinson 339-340). He gained national fame from his work to expose Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall in the late sixties, and proceeded to target those associated with the corrupt politician, like Jay Gould and Jim Fisk, for several years after (Betz 125). During the 1876 presidential election, Nast worked ardently, and incredibly effectively, for the Republican campaign of Rutherford B. Hayes, demonstrating further his influence on the American people (Betz 340). Nast was also something of a nativist himself, often negatively depicting Irish Catholics, distancing himself from his nature as an immigrant and solidifying his Americanism (O’Connor 156). In addition to his massive influence on the Gilded Age American political culture, Nast also exemplified American values of personal progress and prosperity, even as an immigrant. From being \$350 in debt upon his marriage in 1862, Nast had, by 1880, amassed \$125,000, with an annual income of around \$20,000 (O’Connor 160). Thomas Nast was a classic American success story, and his was one of many that could be pointed to in defense of Germans’ desirability as immigrants. Nearly until his death in 1902, Nast continued to produce political cartoons and maintained a large group of followers, and his influence on American culture persisted throughout the 20th century.

Another notable Gilded Age German was one Carl Schurz. Born in 1829 in Liblar, Schurz gained national fame for his exploits in the Civil War, already helping the standing of German immigrants in American culture (O’Connor 161-162). His case, however, is one of full Americanization, a quality fully realized by his achievements in the Gilded Age. From his youth, Schurz was a staunch believer in democratic values, and his migration to the United States was precipitated by the death of the republican movement in Germany in 1851 (O’Connor 173). Upon arrival he immediately dedicated himself to learning English, as well as the American political system, which, along with what he saw of American culture, excited him (O’Connor 173). After fighting for the Union in the Civil War because of his contempt for slavery and his commitment to republicanism, Schurz was given a national platform when he was elected to the Senate by the state legislature of

Missouri in 1869 (O'Connor 174). He was the first German-born citizen to hold office in the upper house of Congress, and he served his brief stint in a uniquely individualist and democratic fashion (O'Connor 156). He broke with the Republican party after the turmoil of the Grant administration, classifying himself as an Independent until he left the Senate in 1875. Because he was so committed to the American values of democracy and equality, he abdicated his power and denounced his party when he saw that the Grant administration was beginning to stray from them. For the rest of his life, he advocated strongly for these values and dedicated himself to writing extensive biographies of Abraham Lincoln and Henry Clay, men whom he thought embodied those principles most fully (O'Connor 276-282). His departure from the Senate was regarded as a "national misfortune," and his mere possession of the office advanced and solidified the value of Germans as immigrants in the American perception. Here was a German man dedicated to American ideals as much as any one person could be, and men of his stock and conviction were becoming increasingly rare, even among Americans themselves.

Another German immigrant that comes to mind for Gilded Age Americans seeking reasons for the desirability of that group is Ottmar Mergenthaler, though less for a lifetime of achievements than for his crowning invention. Born in Württemberg in 1854 and migrating to the U.S. in 1872, Mergenthaler, throughout the 1870s and 80s, put his German "thrift and sagacity" to the task of developing a more efficient typesetting machine (Pierce 87; O'Connor 282). His efforts culminated in a machine much smaller, less susceptible to breakdowns, and less expensive to operate than its predecessors: the linotype. Installed at the *New York Tribune* on July 3, 1886, Mergenthaler's machine was a triumph of German ingenuity that offered the biggest improvement in printing technology since Gutenberg (O'Connor 289). The linotype continued to be used well into the 20th century, and the fact that it had been developed by a German immigrant offered an example to contemporary Americans of a positive good brought about by allowing foreigners to enter their borders.

German immigrants also brought to American culture several aspects of their own, including many that were readily accepted and continue to be prevalent. One such cultural fixture was their celebration of Christmas, which began its transformation into the form it takes today with the arrival of German immigrants. Earlier in the 19th century they had brought their customs of the Christmas tree, baking cookies, and of Santa Claus bringing presents to children on Christmas Eve (Vinson 338). With the dawn of the Gilded Age and the emerging commercialist culture in the United States, however, Christmas began to take on a new character, and this character was explicitly based on German tradition. The image of Santa Claus now known worldwide was popularized by German immigrant Thomas Nast, and this German creation has since become synonymous with the commercialized Christmas hatched by the department stores of the Gilded Age (Vinson 310). In fact, all the aspects of the new, Americanized, Christmas built upon German traditions, including the use of gift-giving as a sales device, the commercialization of the Christmas tree, ornaments, cookies, and more (O'Connor 289). Though not all would have been fans of this emerging means of celebration, Gilded Age Americans could surely have pointed to the Christmas holiday as a positive contribution to American culture perhaps unmatched in scale by any other practice transported by immigrants. Germans, then, had the propensity to supplement American tradition with their own culture, and thus were worth allowing to immigrate if any group had to be.

German immigrants made countless contributions to American society and culture throughout the Gilded Age that continue to be seen to this day, and in doing so distinguished themselves as the most tolerable and even preferable of immigrant groups to American people at the time. In addition to those previously mentioned contributions, Germans also continued to operate popular restaurants and breweries throughout the country in the Progressive Era, and German Americans like Babe

Ruth's representation in professional baseball, quickly emerging as America's pastime, surely won the ethnicity favor with the Gilded Age American public (O'Connor 310). Germans could be seen as a positive, contributing contingent of American society, and when compared to the stereotypes that surrounded new immigration, they must have seemed like saints.

IV. "Racial Purity": Germans' Whiteness and the Rise of Eugenics

Perhaps the most important factor in German immigrants' relative desirability, however, can be found in a movement that was quickly gaining momentum in the Gilded Age years: eugenics and scientific racism. One of the chief arguments for the restriction of immigration in the Gilded Age was based on Social Darwinism, the idea that some ethnicities had "evolved" further than others and were therefore superior. New immigrants from countries in southern and eastern Europe were regarded as "biologically inferior" on this basis, and thus were deemed undesirable and unfit to become Americans (Miller 5). To eugenicists, that is, a group of upper-class intellectuals defining the "science" of racial superiority, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs) constituted the genetic elite, the most "racially pure" group in the world (Miller 7). These elites contended that new immigrant groups would, if allowed to continue entering the United States unabated, destroy society and "pollute" the gene pool (Miller 7). Notably absent from these discussions of racial inferiority were Germans; in fact, eugenics was gaining just as much, if not more, popularity in Germany as it was in the United States (Miller 21). Time and again, eugenicists and nativists argued for the exclusion of all groups but those from the British Isles, Germany, and Scandinavia, illustrating that Germans were ultimately second only to WASPs on the ladder of ethnic desirability (Miller 57).

A plethora of eugenics-based works spilled off the presses throughout the Gilded Age, all of them praising the German race as similar in stock to the Anglo-Saxon for a variety of reasons. Joseph Pomeroy Widney's *Race Life of the Aryan Peoples* claimed that the German race had "never been subjugated" and were "possessed of high mechanical skill, having the capacity for organization in a marked degree, (and) full of confidence in themselves" (Widney 215-216). He also claims that it would be "unfavorable" for the German race to become so modified as to no longer be German in race characteristics, a clear nod to the overall desirability as an identifiable ethnic group (Widney 217). Some eugenic publications even contended that the Aryan race of the German people was the originator of all civilization, and thus the supreme incarnation of said civilization, though this view was decidedly less popular among Americans (Miller 59-60). The question posed to nativists by these conclusions was simple: How could a people of such high racial caliber be polluting the United States? The answer to pre-World War I Americans was that they were not; it was those immigrants from southern and eastern Europe that were supposedly threatening their social order and contaminating their genes.

V. Concluding Thoughts on the Status of German Immigrants in the American Mind

Overall, the Gilded Age was an era in which Americans tried to cling to a bygone age of immigration amidst a rapid influx of a new class of foreigners. Nativist Americans pushed for stricter immigration laws to stem the flow of immigrants entering their borders, yet they still made exceptions for those who had defined a previous era of migration to the United States. One could be American while simultaneously opposing immigration and accepting that some groups were much more desirable than others. Germans were crowned the most desirable, as they represented an old immigration that would never be seen again in the United States. They were desirable on the basis of their assimilability, as they already possessed many American qualities like thrift and education. They were desirable because of their countless contributions to American society and culture, an

accomplishment few groups could claim. Most importantly, they were desirable because they were white and fell into arbitrarily defined eugenic categories of racial superiority. Until the outbreak of the first World War, Germans enjoyed a higher place in the American mind than any other ethnic group besides their own, and never again would an immigrant group be so highly regarded in the United States.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WINNERS OF FALL 2024 FR. FITZGERALD UNDERGRADUATE WRITING CONTEST

Creative Nonfiction

- 1st Place – “Eternal Wonders of the English Language,” Ashley Kenia, King’s College
- 2nd Place - “The Turtle Queen at Lynford Creek,” Jacob Klaung, Loras College
- Honorable Mention – “Finding my Rhythm,” Moesha Facey, Mount Saint Mary’s College

Critical Essay

- 1st Place – “The Malevolent Beholder,” Dominic Mailloux, Loras College
- 2nd Place – “Displacement in Fictional Place: Displacement in Fictional Place: Finding Tolkien’s Shire in Our Ecologies,” Ryan Kelly, Mount Saint Mary’s University

Poetry

- 1st Place – “Beneath the Stars, Unseen,” Julianne Dee, King’s College

Scholarly Research

- 1st Place – “Specimens of a Bygone Era: American Attitudes Toward German Immigrants in the Gilded Age,” J.P. Hurt, Holy Cross College

Short Fiction

- 1st Place – “Mother,” BethAnnie Hartman, Loras College
- 2nd Place – “The Lord is Present,” Corcoran Austbarr, Mount Saint Mary’s University
- Honorable Mention – “My Date with Adam Ingram,” Colette Costlow, Saint Francis University
- Honorable Mention – “Mourning Doves,” Abigail Steigerwalt, Neumann University



**WINNERS OF THE 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDY**

Sister Anasobi Winifred, Caldwell University

Helen Brewer, Regis College

Hugh O'Sullivan, Holy Cross College

Kristina Packowski, Saint Anselm College

Molly Mohr, Villa Maria College

Rory Heer, Loras College

Rylie Owen, College of Saint Benedict

Madeline Rose McCartney, Saint Mary's University of MN

**WINNERS OF THE 2025 FELLOWSHIPS
FOR GRADUATE STUDY**

Allison Shephard, Niagara University

Bradley Szotko, Holy Cross College

Karlie Schleich, Villa Maria College

Taylor Samuelson, College of Saint Benedict

Melanie Winzenburg, Saint Mary's University of MN

Laura Camila Segura, Loras College



AN INVITATION TO POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTORS

- The editors of the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* invite contributions to the *Journal* from the readership. Submit manuscripts via email attachment to the editor, Robert Magliola (magliola.robert@gmail.com), with copy to the interim co-editor, Claudia Kovach (ckovach@neumann.edu).
- All attachments should be sent as Microsoft Word documents; no PDFs please. Submissions should be limited to 5000 words at maximum. Submissions to *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* are peer reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or specialists in the pertaining subject matter.

The journal is open to a wide variety of topics and genres. Particularly welcome are submissions addressing issues of concern to Catholic colleges and universities. The *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* editors encourage contributions from all readers, both DES members and non-members.

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA NATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

Delta Epsilon Sigma has a national award to be presented to outstanding student members of the society who are completing their undergraduate program. It provides a means by which a chapter may bring national attention to its most distinguished graduates.

The National Office has a distinctive gold and bronze medallion that it will provide without cost to the recipient's chapter for appropriate presentation. A photo and brief profile of recipients will be published in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*. Qualifications for the award include the following:

- Membership in Delta Epsilon Sigma.
- An overall Grade Point Average of 3.9-4.00 on all work completed as an undergraduate.
- Further evidence of high scholarship:
 - a grade of "A" or with the highest level of distinction on an approved undergraduate thesis or its equivalent in the major field, or
 - scores at the 90th percentile or better on a nationally recognized test (e.g., GRE, LSAT, GMAT, MCAT).
- Endorsements by the chapter advisor, the department chair or mentor, and the chief academic officer.
- Nominations must be made no later than six (6) months after the granting of the undergraduate degree. Include with the nomination a 300-dpi photo and a three-sentence abstract of the student's accomplishments, including the ways the qualifications for the award have been met.
- **The calendar deadline for the submission of names of proposed recipients of this award is February 15th. Please send nominations to the Office of the Executive Director: DESNational@neumann.edu.**

THE HARRY R. KNIGHT UNDERGRADUATE/GRADUATE PRIZE FOR INTERNATIONAL SERVICE



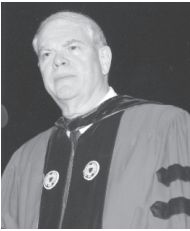
Harry R. Knight

Through the generosity of the Knight family and named for a professor and long-time member of Delta Epsilon Sigma, this award supports a student who wishes to offer service to others outside of the United States by assisting with travel costs up to \$2500.00. The transformative nature of such efforts provides benefits to the student as well as to those served. New skills related to work, language, and culture can enhance resumes and refocus existing career plans. A required reflective report, submitted after the student returns, will be published with photos in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*.

Requirements: Applicants will submit the following items:

- a three-page proposal, which includes a statement of specific details of potential destination, travel costs, length of stay, assistance goals, and how the applicant's goals correspond with the mission of DES.
- a brief CV with biography including career goals, other completed service, and academic accomplishments.
- an official transcript of coursework.
- a letter of recommendation which addresses the candidate's character, academic work, and potential to contribute to society.
- **All documents must be sent electronically to the National Office (DESNational@Neumann.edu) by March 15th.**

THE J. PATRICK LEE UNDERGRADUATE AWARD FOR SERVICE



J. Patrick Lee

Delta Epsilon Sigma offers the J. Patrick Lee Award for Service. This annual undergraduate competition was established to honor Patrick Lee, who served as National Secretary-Treasurer of Delta Epsilon Sigma with dedication and commitment for over 20 years, and whose leadership transformed the Society. As a tribute to Dr. Lee's praiseworthy ethical character and judgment, awards of \$1000 will be given to student members of Delta Epsilon Sigma who best embody the ideals of Catholic social teaching through their engagement in service. Student winners of the award will also be profiled in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*.

Guidelines for The J. Patrick Lee Undergraduate Prize for Service:

- In order to participate in the contest, the student should submit a 300-dpi photo (preferably highlighting the candidate's service) and a personal statement of 500-1000 words to his/her chapter advisor. Personal statements should reflect on the service experiences by responding to the following questions: How does your current and past engagement in service reflect the tenets of Catholic social teaching and enrich the local, national, or global community? How will you continue or expand your service in the future? **Students are encouraged to be as specific and thorough as possible within the word limit. Please do not simply repeat information listed on the entry form. Make every effort to explain service involvement instead of just listing service activities.**
- The student should also submit one letter of recommendation written by someone in a professional position who can attest to the type and extent of the service in which the student has been engaged.
- Chapter advisors should select one student from their chapters to nominate for the prize.
- Nominated students must be undergraduates at the time of nomination.
- Nominated students must be members of Delta Epsilon Sigma.
- **Applications must contain a complete official entry form to be considered.** Please visit the DES website, www.deltaepsilonsigma.org, for this form.
- Advisors should submit all entries electronically as MS Word Documents (no PDFs, please) to the National Office at Neumann University, Executive Director: Dr. Claudia Kovach, Neumann University, Division of Arts and Sciences, Aston, PA 19014-1298, (610) 558-5573, FAX (610) 361-5314, Email: DESNational@neumann.edu.
- **The deadline for nominations from advisors is December 1.**

THE FATHER EDWARD FITZGERALD UNDERGRADUATE COMPETITION IN CREATIVE AND SCHOLARLY WRITING



Fr. Fitzgerald

The DES Board is proud to honor Fr. Edward A. Fitzgerald, the founder of Delta Epsilon Sigma. Fr. Fitzgerald conceived the notion of a national association of Catholic scholastic honor societies in 1938 and chaired the Committee of Founders that wrote up DES's Constitution in 1939, thus initiating the national association.

This contest remains open to undergraduates (members or non-members) in an institution that has a chapter of the society. Manuscripts may be submitted in any of six categories:

- Poetry
- Short fiction / Drama
- Creative nonfiction/personal essay
- Critical/analytical essay
- Scholarly research in the non-empirical humanities
- Scholarly research in the empirical sciences and in the social sciences

A first prize of five hundred dollars and a second prize of two hundred and fifty dollars in each of the six categories will be awarded. No award may be made in a given category if the committee does not judge any submission to be of sufficient merit. **Winners must submit a 300-dpi photo of themselves to accompany the publication of their essays in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*.**

General Guidelines: Either MLA or APA documentary styles are acceptable (except where they may deviate from the instructions contained here in the *Journal's* "Guidelines"). Publishing restrictions do not permit the Chicago Manual of Style. All prose should show double-spacing, appear in Word format (no PDFs), use 12-point font, and include just one space between words and sentences. Number all pages. Citations should use the "in-text plus Works Cited" format. Relegate all explanatory notes to the submission's back matter as Endnotes (no footnotes!). Do not include headers or footers. The author's name should not appear after the cover page to assure anonymity during judging.

The first phase of the competition is to be conducted by local chapters, each of which is encouraged to sponsor its own contest. A chapter may forward to the national competition only one entry in each category. Preparatory to student revision, editorial comment and advice by a faculty mentor is expected and appropriate, as is correction of grammatical and mechanical (spelling, punctuation) errors, as long as it is the student who--in the final analysis--implements them.

Proofread carefully to reflect the standards of your college or university. Adhere to all guidelines, including conventions of grammar and punctuation. Also follow formal academic requirements of language and style (such as avoiding excessive wordiness and redundancies). The *DES Journal* reflects Catholic values. *Gratuitous use of profanity or vulgarity will not impress the judges and will not merit publication.*

Poetry: Writing in this category should be original poetry, either in verse or prose form. A long poem should be submitted singly; shorter lyrics may be submitted in groups of two or three.

Short Fiction / Drama: Writing in this category should be original fiction or drama, such as short stories, plays, or stand-alone sections of longer pieces. Fiction should total 1500-5000 words, either in a single work or, in cases of very short pieces, in groups of two or three.

Creative Nonfiction/Personal Essay: Writing in this category should communicate some dimension of the worldview or feelings of the writer. Writing should be true—as affirmed by the writer—but may be creative in structure or form and may make use of character development, dialogue, or other techniques of creative writing. Creative nonfiction pieces or personal essays should total 1500-5000 words, either in a single work or, in cases of very brief pieces, in groups of two or three.

Critical/Analytical Essay: Writing in this category should investigate a text, or a social or scholarly issue, through a critical lens. Examples of this type of writing may include textual interpretation or expository or argumentative essays in which original research is not the primary aim. Essays in this category should total 1500-5000 words. Provide appropriate in-text citations for all direct or indirect (paraphrased) quotations. Integrate brief quotations properly with correct punctuation.

Scholarly Research in the Non-Empirical Humanities: Writing in this category should present primary or secondary research that provides and elucidates some original insight on a social, ethical, cultural, or humanistic question. Emphasis will be paid to the quality, depth, and presentation of the piece, and proper adherence to conventional documentation format (MLA or APA). Such scholarly research should include an abstract (situated at the beginning of the paper). Provide appropriate in-text citations for all direct or indirect (paraphrased) quotations. Avoid block quotations and integrate brief quotations properly with correct punctuation. Follow all requirements for formal academic writing by avoiding casual or conversational language such as contractions or informal vocabulary. Avoid using the first person, overusing verbs of being, and including other examples of wordiness. Papers in this category should total 1500-5000 words.

Scholarly Research in the Empirical Sciences and in the Social Sciences: Scientific writing does not just include writing about science; it shows the technical writing scientists use to communicate their research to others. Predicated on the rigors of scientific inquiry, scientific writing must reflect the same precision as that demanded in the research process. Writing in this category thus demands precision (the precise use of words and phrases), clarity, and economy because the writer is communicating highly technical information to others who might, or might not, be as knowledgeable; they may be from a different discipline; they may, or may not, be a native speaker of the language used. Many journals have international audiences, so precise communication helps prevent misunderstandings and mistranslations in other contexts. Communicating facts, figures, and methods used in research—as well as the description of the results—has to be precise and exact. The research question, hypotheses, methods, analysis, and conclusions must be stated clearly and simply.

This category should present primary research elucidating original results of scientific research. Emphasis will be paid to the writing quality, depth, and presentation of the piece, and proper adherence to the appropriate disciplinary documentation format such as that of the American Psychological Association (APA); American Chemical Society (ACS), used in chemistry and some of the physical sciences; American Institute of Physics (AIP); the American Mathematical Society (AMS); the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME); and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). Scientific scholarly research should include an abstract (situate it at the beginning of your paper).

Incorporating the stages of the scientific method, the scientific research paper begins with an abstract followed by the introduction, methods, results, conclusions, and acknowledgments. The introduction discusses the issue studied and discloses the hypothesis tested in the experiment. The step-by-step procedure, notable observations, and relevant data collected are all included in methods and results. The discussion section consists of the author's analysis and interpretations of the data. Additionally, the author may choose to discuss any discrepancies with the experiment that could have altered the results. The conclusion summarizes the experiment and will make inferences about the outcomes. The paper will typically end with an acknowledgments section, giving proper attribution to any other contributors besides the main author(s). Keep all graphs, tables, and figures at a minimum, and never include visual materials as a substitute for verbal description and explication. Papers in this category should total 1500-5000 words.

Specific Guidelines for Preparation of All Submissions:

- Prose manuscripts of 1500-5000 words should be typed and sent electronically in 12 point Times New Roman font.
- One space is permitted between words and sentences.
- Include a cover page with title, name, university, and home address.
- The page following the cover (the beginning of the actual text) should contain only the title and no other heading.
- The pages must be numbered, the lines double-spaced, and in Word format (**no PDFs, please**).
- Scholarly papers should attach an abstract, include primary and/or secondary research, and present some original insight.
- Documentation should follow one of the established scholarly methods.
- Advisors as well as faculty mentors are expected to take an active role in providing additional comments to students.
- **Advisors and faculty mentors should approve and send all entries to the Executive Director of Delta Epsilon Sigma (DESNational@neumann.edu) by December 1.**

Final judging and the announcement of the result will take place no later than May 1st of the following year. Winners will be notified through the office of the local chapter advisor.

THE SISTER BRIGID BRADY, O.P., DELTA EPSILON SIGMA GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD



*Sister Brigid
Brady, O.P., Ph.D.*

Named in honor of Sister Brigid Brady, OP, Ph.D., The DES Graduate Student Award will grant \$1000 to each of up to three (3) graduate student members of DES per year who have shown a strong commitment to graduate study and maintain the Society's ideal of service to others. The award is renewable for an additional year for one awardee during a given year. Sister Brigid served as a National Executive Board Member, Vice President, and past President of the Society, and was a remarkable Religious, educator, and woman. She spent sixty years as a Dominican Sister, forty-three of which she dedicated to teaching at Caldwell University. Sister Brigid challenged and aided her students to excel. A scholar of Medieval Literature, Shakespeare Studies, and the History of the English Language, Sister Brigid was among the first professors at Caldwell to introduce classroom technology as a way to broaden student learning. A Renaissance woman, Sister Brigid also handmade her own harp and was deeply committed to the Arts. In addition to her service to DES and other societies, Sister Brigid frequently presented and published papers at

the Conference on Christianity and Literature, an international society of scholars dedicated to the study of Christian themes in literature.

Requirements: Applicants will submit the following materials:

- a three-page essay, which includes a statement of (a) career goals, (b) academic accomplishments, (c) scholarly activity, and (d) how the applicant's goals correspond with the mission of DES.
- a brief CV with biography (no more than three pages).
- an official transcript of graduate coursework.
- a 1,500-word sample course paper.
- a letter of recommendation which addresses the candidate's academic work and potential.
- **All documents must be sent electronically to the National Office (DESNational@Neumann.edu) by March 15th.**

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA FATHER EDWARD FITZGERALD SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Delta Epsilon Sigma sponsors an annual scholarship and fellowship competition for its members. Junior- year members may apply for one of ten Fitzgerald Scholarships at \$1,200 each, to be applied toward tuition costs for their senior year. Senior-year members may apply for one of ten Fitzgerald Fellowships at \$1,200 each, to be applied toward tuition costs for first-year graduate work. These scholarships and fellowships are named after the founder and first Secretary-Treasurer of DES, Most Rev. Edward A. Fitzgerald of Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa. The awards will be made available on a competitive basis to students who have been initiated into the Society and who have also been nominated by their chapters for these competitions. Applications may be obtained from the website (deltaepsilonsigma.org) or from the Office of the Executive Director (DESNational@neumann.edu). **The deadline for submitting applications for the DES scholarships and fellowships is March 15.**

SYNOPSIS OF THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 1/4/2024

Attendees:

- Claudia Marie Kovach, Ph.D., Executive Director; Editor, Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal
- Luigi Bradizza, Ph.D., President
- Shelly McCallum-Ferguson, Ph.D., Vice President – Via Zoom
- Rev. Anthony Grasso, CSC, Ph.D., Chaplain
- Valerie Wright, Ph.D., Special Projects
- Mary Ann Miller, Ph.D., Board Member
- David Lutz, Ph.D., Board Member
- Heather Josselyn-Cranson, OSL, Board Member
- Ronald L. Smorada, Ph.D., Assistant to the Executive Director

After calling the meeting to order, Dr. Bradizza welcomed everyone and introduced the new members, Dr. Lutz and Dr. Josselyn-Cranson. Fr. Grasso then opened the meeting with a prayer. After the approval of minutes of the January 2024 minutes, Dr. Kovach described the recent elections and review of terms of service. Dr. Lutz and Dr. Josselyn-Cranson received the most votes in the recent election. She recommended the addition of more members to the board to add a variety of disciplines and expertise in judging writing competition entries. Suggestions on how to assist chapter advisors and to encourage participation include recurring Zoom conferences and periodic service recognitions.

Dr. Kovach initiated a conversation concerning succession planning. Dr. McCallum-Ferguson is open to succeeding Dr. Kovach and her school, St. Mary's University, is supportive. Dr. Kovach is willing to continue working on the Journal once she steps down as Executive Director until a new editor will be nominated.

Dr. Wright shared a PowerPoint overview suggesting ways to grow membership, including using social media, polls, professional development badges, and micro-credentialing. She also reviewed the status of the By-Laws revision process, reviewing the proposed changes and making further corrections. Revisions will be completed and sent out to all Executive Committee members for final review and approval. The Constitution was also reviewed, and revisions were made by the Executive Committee to update the document.

Drs. Kovach and Smorada presented the Audit & Financial Report. This year's compilation report created by the Weiss Group was shared. Suggestion was made to highlight those Chapters that have significant membership increases on the website and future Facebook page. Concerns for possible grade inflation issues were also discussed. The costs of running the society have risen, including the price of

pins and certificates. Discussion ensued on whether or not to continue giving out pins. We will continue to provide pins for at least another year since we have a big supply but will discuss this issue again next year after surveying the membership.

The presented budget was approved. Investments & Management of TIAA Funds continues to show low-risk bonds. Donations/Solicitations/Fundraising continues to be difficult since printing letters and the cost of mailing continue to rise. The impact of college closings and the COVID-19 pandemic on membership still causes concern. Six colleges with DES chapters have closed since 2019, and several chapters require reactivation. Any Catholic colleges and universities without DES chapter remain on the recruitment list.

The administration of the Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal shows a continued rise in printing and mailing costs. About 7,300 journals are currently sent to members who want a paper copy and to donors. Print copies of the journal is sent to members for their first three years with the journal still posted to the website for reading online. Dr. Kovach will continue as the editor for the next two years until the board may identify a suitable successor.

For the time being the decision was made to leave the website unchanged (except for updating) while getting Facebook up and running. Then the board will revisit the present format for any possible changes. The FileMaker Database allows access to five people. This database has membership data in it, such as donations, Journal recipients, and readership. The society pays \$1,100 a year for this database.

The ACHS Conference is being held January 30-February in Kansas City. The goal is to have at least one Board member attend the 2026 ACHS Conference. Outreach to new and current Member institutions continues. Several Board members are personally reaching out to several colleges and universities to reactivate or start a DES Chapter. The board will review the list of current member colleges/universities and select ones to reach out to. Dr. Smorada will send out the list to board members as a Google doc. Dr. Smorada and Dr. Wright will work on a letter to send to moderators on how to include online/grad students as members.

The next Executive Committee meeting will take place January 2-4, 2026.

THE DES NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOLASTIC HONOR SOCIETY EMBLEM



The emblem of DES contains the motto, the name, the symbols, and the founding date of the society. Delta Epsilon Sigma is an abbreviation constructed from the initial Greek letters of the words in the motto, *Dei Epitattein Sophon*. Drawn from Aristotle and much used by medieval Catholic philosophers, the phrase is taken to mean: “It is the mission of a wise person to put order” into knowledge.

The Society’s Ritual for Induction explains that a wise person is one “who discriminates between the true and the false, who appraises things at their proper worth, and who then can use this knowledge, along with the humility born of it, to go forward to accept the responsibilities and obligations which this ability imposes.”

Thus the three words on the *Journal’s* cover, Wisdom · Leadership · Service, point to the challenges as well as the responsibilities associated with the DES motto. The emblem prominently figures the *Chi Rho* symbol (the first two Greek letters of the word Christ), and the flaming lamp of wisdom shining forth the light of Truth.

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA STORE



Item Description	Price
NEW Grey DES Chapter Polo Shirt*– unisex	\$49.00
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NEW Ladies Fitted DES Red Chapter T-shirt*	\$25.00
NEW Horizontal Certificate Frame with Medallion	\$85.00
DES Gold and Maroon Double Honor Cords	\$12.00
#502 Key - gold kase	\$31.00
#502 Key - 10K yellow gold	\$282.00
#503 Key Tac - gold kase	\$32.00
#503 Key Tac - 10K yellow gold	\$272.00
#502D Key with 2pt. diamond - 10K yellow gold	\$325.00
#503D Key Tac with 2pt. diamond - 10K yellow gold	\$313.00
ML/02S Staggered Lavalier - sterling silver	\$31.00
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