

EXPRESSIONS

2019



Holliday
2019

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Expressions

Spring 2019

Volume XXXIII

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General Art—First Place

Robert Curtis Barker



*Short
Story*

Short Story

First Place

The American Nightmare

Kevin Vazquez

At times, the American Dream seemed more to be like the American Nightmare. Being a United States citizen in an undocumented family hasn't been all that great as it seems. Simply being labeled a United States citizen made my life a lot harder. I've had to put my wishes to the side to help my family make it through the hard times. It wasn't like I had much of a choice; it was either me or my family and I seemed to have been cursed with a conscience. I was humbled by the situation, and it gave me a different perspective of life.

It was late December of 2015, and I was a senior in high school. At the time, I was in a happy relationship and a student in honors. One day on the way towards my high school soccer game, I received a call from my mom. She told me, "Son, your brother was picked up by immigration on his way towards work." My heart fell to the ground and the news left me speechless. I immediately left the bus and called a taxi to take me home. I had already faced the same situation with my dad before, but his parents and siblings were over there making his situation easier. In my brother's case, he had never been in Mexico since the day he was born.

Upon arriving home, my parents and siblings were in tears, looking for answers anywhere they could find them. At the time, my mom and dad couldn't find jobs that didn't ask them for a work permit making it hard to make ends meet. Since I was the second oldest and the first to be a United States citizen. Without thinking of how I would balance school and work, I knew what I had to do. The next few days after school, I began applying at any

place I could think of. A week past when I received a call from two fast food places, Jack-in-the-Box and McDonald's. I was a high school student working a full-time overnight job and a full-time overtime job. There were times where I'd go three days without sleep. I'd go to school and after I would have to go work both jobs on the same day.

Having to deal with keeping my family afloat financially didn't seem enough for life. Instead, it felt my school life needed to have some changes. As time went on, keeping up with my grades started to become a challenge. My grades started to drop, and many people started to notice. Colleges whom I had received athletic and academic scholarship offers began to withdraw their offers. At the time I was in a relationship for almost five years with a girl I loved. Being that majority of the time, I was either tired or busy, made our relationship complicated. As if I didn't already have enough problems to deal with, she eventually left me for another guy. Everything I had worked for started to slip from my hands. School ended up being a graveyard for my hopes and dreams.

Dealing with school and work wasn't my biggest problem. My parents couldn't enter the detention center to visit my brother or the immigration building where his case was being handled. I'd sit in court rooms for hours hearing arguments between my brother's lawyer and the ICE defense. I'd have to travel to Houston three times a week to visit our lawyer and see the process of my brother's case. I'd always visit my brother in jail to discuss his case and seeing the fear in his eyes of being deported was unbearable to watch. He was eventually released from the cold bleak hands of immigration on a bond of fifteen thousand. To be able to see my family smile again made every sleepless night worth it in the end. I no longer take anything in life for granted and I still consider this chapter of my life a nightmare.



Photography – First Place
Carmen Sanders

Short Story

Second Place

Riley

Brandon Copeland

I'll never forget the first time I laid my eyes on her. The first thing I noticed was that she looked grey. I later asked and found out it had to do with amniotic fluid. She had blood on her, but that's to be expected from a cesarean section.

Riley had her little fists clenched and her baby eyes closed. She made not a sound until I cut the umbilical cord. She took a huge breath, her eyes shot open, and she screamed. I was paralyzed by the sudden burst of energy from such a tiny human being. Nurses began poking and prodding, doing what they do best to clear her nose and eyes. They wiped her baby body down and swaddled her.

"Where is she? I want to hold her!" said Chandler, Riley's mother. I barely hear her as I'm too focused on what is happening to Riley.

Chandler can't see anything. A curtain is blocking her view. Doctors and nurses are working on sewing her up and cleaning her as well.

As Riley is still screaming, I move the few paces now between us and grab her tiny baby hand and say, "Daddy is here, Princess." It doesn't take but a second for her to stop and look up at the sound

of my voice. For the last nine months, she has heard me talking to her through her mommy's belly.

“What’s happening? Where is Riley? Please bring her to me, Brandon. I want to hold her!” Chandler demands now that they have removed the curtain. She had an epidural and had been up for nearly twenty-four hours, so was understandably tired and somewhat confused. I think they had also given her other drugs to ease her pain but she doesn’t remember and I never asked.

The nurse has finally finished doing the necessary things nurses do when children are born and hands Riley to me. I cradle her in my arms and turn around to show Chandler our beautiful baby girl. I am sure that I had the biggest smile on my face that I’d ever had in my life. I walk over to Chandler, lay Riley on her chest, and say “Mommy, meet Riley. Riley, meet Mommy.” Only then do I notice the tears in my eyes because Chandler had some of her own.

The nurses give us about ten minutes to fawn over Riley before taking her to get weighed and measured. I give Chandler a kiss and follow the nurses to the nursery. They never say anything to me so I assume I am allowed in here.

The nurse takes her to a table, unwraps her from the towel they put her in and place her on the scale for babies. Eight pounds, nine ounces is what reads on the digital readout. “That’s a big girl” I say remembering my own mother tell me I was nine pounds, two ounces when I was born.

“Sure is. A big healthy baby too”, replies the nurse as she gets a measuring tape and goes about her job, measuring the circumference of Riley’s head and the length of her body.

I went about rubbing my finger on Riley’s nose and her little feet and her tiny hands. When I touched her hand, she opened it and I gave her my finger to hold on to. What a grip she had! I never imagined such a small human could have such strength! I never understood what I was expecting when she was still inside her mommy’s belly.

The only time she cried during the measurements was when the nurse asked me to hold her leg still and somewhat straight so she can get a fairly accurate measurement. I cannot for the life of me remember what the measurements were because I felt so bad to be the one to make Riley so upset. From that moment on, she had me wrapped around her finger, imagine that! She goes from wrapping her whole hand wrapped around my finger to having me wrapped around hers. Thirty minutes of life and already the roles have reversed.

After we are finished with the measuring, the nurse asks me to pick Riley up and follow her. I do, and for the first time, I noticed my family on the other side of the glass. My whole family was there, smiling, laughing and taking pictures. My smile is huge but it is no match for what was shared with Chandler.

The nurse tells me to put Riley in the little, bed with her name on it. I comply. I am then told I can leave because they are going to give Riley a bath and let her sleep for a time. I go out to the hallway to my family and get showered with hugs and love. My life as I knew it has drastically changed and I am excited for what's in store.



Digital Art—First Place

Brit'ny Pollard



Cover Art—Second Place

Robert Curtis Barker

Short Story

Third Place

The Ravine

Brandon Copeland

I come from a family of dead people. Their bodies found among a mangled mass of metal.

I was sitting at the table with my wife twenty-two years later, drinking my favorite blend of coffee when she asked, “Toby, what do you want to do this year for your birthday?”

“Well, “ I said, “I would like to visit the ravine but I know how uncomfortable that makes you.”

“It’s not that it makes me uncomfortable – you just never speak about them.”

I was only thirteen when Frank and Cheryl, the only mom and dad I had ever known, told me what happened to my biological parents.

They took me out for a pizza, my favorite food, on my birthday. We were sitting in a corner booth with as much privacy as a public restaurant can give.

“Son, we want to tell you something that isn’t going to be easy on any of us.”

“We have discussed it and believe you deserve to know the truth”, Cheryl added.

“What truth? What are you guys talking about?”

* * * * *

It was a frightfully cold evening but nothing new to the residents of the High Rockies. A blizzard surprised the town. Everyone thought it would blow the next day.

Steve and Sara, out celebrating their anniversary, decided to take the short cut through Crater Pass before the weather made the narrow, winding way unpassable.

“Everything is going to be ok, dear Stay calm. We’ll be there soon.”

“I just miss our Toby, Steve. He’s going to be frightened!”

“Sara, he just turned one today. I don’t think he is going to be too-“

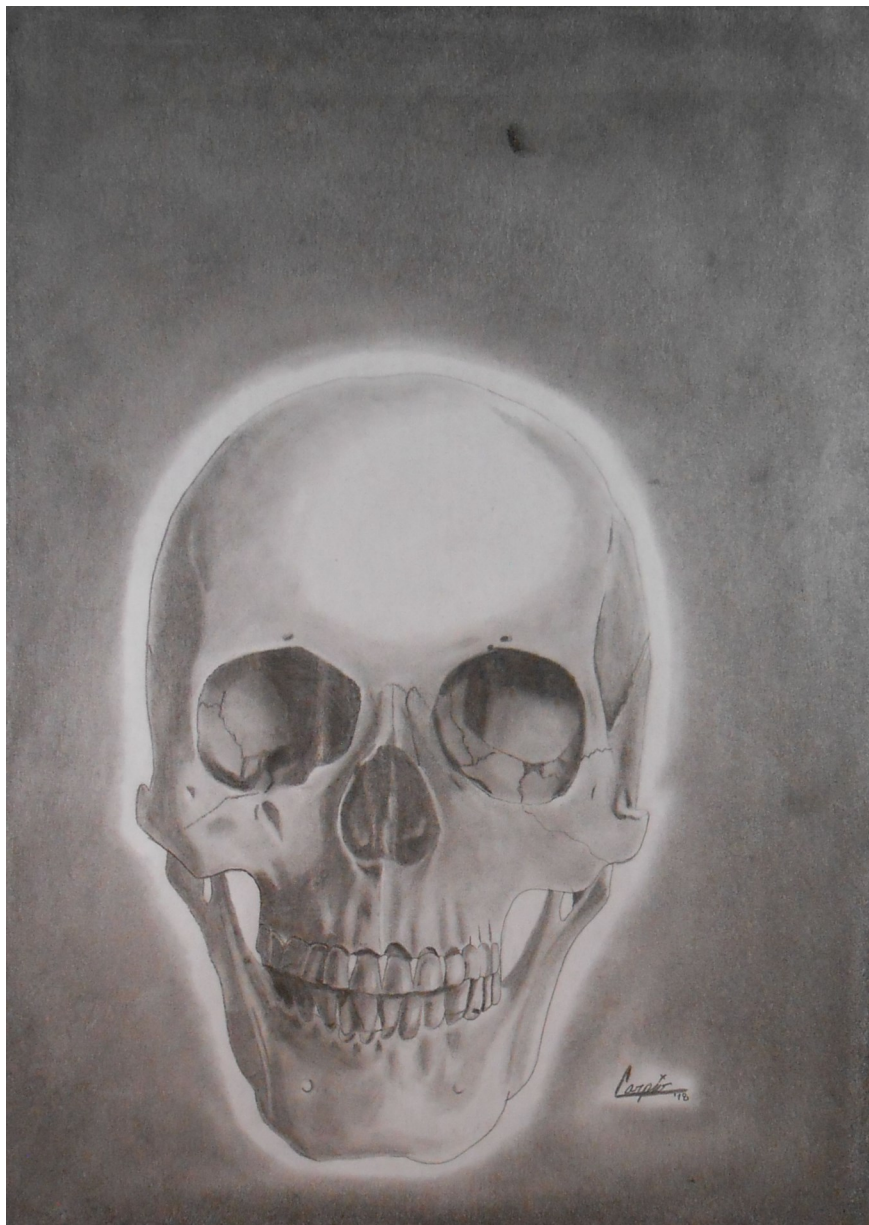
Sara screams as a truck comes barreling towards them, sliding around the corner. Steve slams on the brakes and begins a slide of his own. The two vehicles collide, slamming Steve and Sara into the rail. Groaning and screeching, the metal does not hold against the blow and the car careens over the side of the mountain, into the ravine.

* * * * *

As tears stream down my cheeks, and a million questions speed wildly through my mind, I hear Frank say, “They wanted nothing more than to come back safely to you. That’s why we tell you to never go anywhere when the weather gets bad. Things like that can happen when you least expect it.”

As I sit at the table with my wife, I tell her I am sorry for neglecting her feelings. I look out the window to the mass engulfing the distant peaks to the north, which contain Crater Pass, and I say, “I guess we won’t be going anywhere today.”

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General Art—Second Place

Kevin Carpio

Short Story

Honorable Mention

Not Another Gangsta' Story

Tyrone Owens

It was over quick as it started. The shoot out and the loss of "the love of my life." The hardest part-- I have to live with myself knowing.

June 11, 2010 around two in the morning somewhere on the dark side of Killeen. I know I'm not supposed to be where I'm at or going where I'm going. There I was anyway, "four deep" in my home-boy or more precisely my ex- homeboy's red Chevy Avalanche, on our way to engage in some debauchery with some partially clothed ladies we met moments earlier.

Cali, which is short for California, is in the driver seat with one hand on the steering wheel, the other on a remote control for the sound system. There are two men, or more appropriately, two teenagers sitting in the backseats. They remain nameless since they were never indicted, but they both possessed weapons. I was sitting in the passenger seat. Seat reclined with no safety belt on, and in my lap rested a cell phone and a blue-steel .45 Smith and Wesson with the safety off.

The clip of my .45 caliber was filled with ice-blue-tip, Hydro Shock rounds and my cell phone was filled with text messages back and forth between me and the love of my life, Rashida. The last few months have been only discussions of her arrival back to Texas and the commencement of our relationship for the last couple of years, Rashida had been in Augusta, Georgia for basic training into the Army Reserves, as well as nursing school. For the last couple of years, I had been incarcerated in the State of Texas. I was released

only months earlier. June 11, 2010 was her anticipated arrival back to Killeen.

As Cali drove to the rendezvous, I thought about the future planned with Rashida. As I inhaled thick white smoke and exhaled light purplish clouds that seemed to be formed in the shape of skulls, I noticed a melee in the neighborhood I was familiar with. Nearly 30 people outside, a miniature riot had ensued between some people I was also familiar with.

I heard a tapping on the window on the passenger side door, where I was sitting. Before I could roll the window down I heard a voice I recognized in a rushed tone, "Let me see the strap."

"Why?" I asked. Reluctant to hand over the gun to the brother of a girl I cheated on numerous times.

"Because D.J. trippen."

"D.J. who?" Cali asked anxiously, as he snapped his head towards the rambunctious crowd, trying to get a better view.

"Brooks," the voice responded.

"D.J. Brooks, where he at?" Cali questioned with intense curiosity. The two had a deep history and had been at war during the two years I was incarcerated.

Cali had an overzealous infatuation with an almost artistic eccentricity in displaying his blood on any nearby landmark for a canvas. As only gang culture can inspire for someone else to expire.

As if on cue, gunshots rang out. People ran, car tires screeched, more shots rang out, and car chases ensued. D.J. must have known death was closing in because he fired repetitiously almost without ceasing. I could feel the "thumping" of bullets piercing the door where I was seated. Then all of a sudden, I felt a burning pain above my eyebrow. I grabbed my face and dropped my head in hand down to my lap. To this day I don't know if I was grazed by a bullet or a shard of glass but I could feel blood soaking my hand. It was hot.

At that moment, I opened my eyes to reassure I was alive. I caught a sudden stream of bright light, it was from my cellphone.

I recognized the name, the message "Hey! I'm back, where r u, I wanna see you," Adrenaline was swelling in me, and I could feel my heartbeat pulsating in my wound. Pounding as fast as the sound of the gunshots that seemed to be "in-sync" with the tempo of the bass still booming through the speakers, as fast and hard as the first time I saw Rashida. I realized I might never see her again.



Photography—Second Place

Carmen Sanders



Digital Art—Second Place

Brenin Reece

Short Story

Honorable Mention

The Last Raindrop

Jeff Wager

It was the highest water level that had ever been, not a speck of land to see; and Noah saw the last raindrop fall. “Is it really over?” His family peeked through slits in astonishment as the rainbow softly glowed.

There were eight of them. They had been sealed in chambers full of animal urine and feces for forty days. They were fed-up. “This is a bunch of crap,” one said, “Open the damn door!”

Noah knew this wasn’t wise. “No!” he screamed as he ran for the next chamber; but it was too late. His son, Ham, had opened the door and water flooded in. Everyone ran for the chamber Noah had entered, but it was sealed. Noah had locked it tight. He was safe on the other side.

Noah’s wife, his three sons, and their wives were in the flooded chamber. This created quite a dilemma. Noah had been commanded to repopulate the earth. He heard a sound. He looked around. The animals were smiling.

“Oh No!” Noah thought, “You have got to be kidding me.” He walked the row between the stalls. Slowly, cautiously, he glanced in each one; and he considered. He walked real fast past the elephant and a few of the larger animals. Some he considered quickly and with barely a glance in their direction, “These will just not do.”

Some of the mid-sized beasts were not much better. “Oh hell no!”

he said, as he stared at the horse. “What have I gotten myself into?” He asked when the donkey batted her eyes.

The animals were neighing, braying, roaring, growling, squeaking, squealing, and hissing. The sounds had merged together as one united chant, “repopulate, repopulate, repopulate...” Noah was so distraught.

Suddenly, he stopped in front of one stall and looked in. Her name was Lola. She was rather sickly when she entered the art, but Noah had nursed her to good health. He had a special fondness for Lola. He was glad she had survived. Noah smiled.

As Noah continued walking the rows, glancing in and out of different stalls, he pondered the beasts on level three. His tour of one and two had done nothing more than stress him out. “What am I going to do?” he wondered; and the chant continued, “repopulate, repopulate, repopulate...”

Lizards, mice, chickens, frogs: Noah began to sweat. He trudged his way up the row until he saw the final stall. He was devastated. With great hesitancy, he eased his way up to the edge of the stall. He leaned forward just a little. He peeked. It was a gorilla named Darwin. Noah screamed!

He sat straight up in a room all alone. He had been dreaming; “ha ha ha ha!” It was funny laughter. Noah heard it. As he looked around, the room got brighter. God was laughing, “Ha ha ha.” God smiled. “I’m just messing with you Noah.” The last raindrop had fallen, and the rainbow softly glowed.



General Art—Third Place
Matthew Torres



Cover Art—Third Place

Oasis Cardenas

Short Story

Honorable Mention

Happy Faces

Jeff Wager

I was naked, cold, and staked to the ground. It was winter. Dried blood was crusted on my lips. My eyes were swollen. I was seeing double, and I heard the drums.

I saw gnarly branches above me. They stretched in double direction. The sun threatened me. When the drums stopped beating, I saw a shadow.

The shadow was skirted by blinding margins of light. My head screamed. The shadow shoved a skull near my face. The shadow's fingers were dark and twisted like the branches up above.

With blurred and double vision, the gnarly fingers seemed not few. The eyes on the skull were four. I knew to be afraid. My head was aching. My heart was pounding. My blood was crusted. My eyes were swollen, and the shadow with the skull confirmed my fears.

Terror was immediate. I struggled with my bonds. My throat was parched. I couldn't talk, but in my head I screamed, "What in the name of Matthew's God is going on?!"

We were on a sailing expedition at the last of my recall. James and John manned the sails. Paul was at the helm. Matthew and I were tying down to save our store from the swells. The thunder roared. The lightning flashed. Off the southeastern coastline, tossed to

and fro in the darkness, we had lost the sight of land.

Waves were as high as the sails, which had been torn to shreds. Suddenly, I heard a crunch. Everything went sideways. The water was cold. The boat was gone. When I emerged from the depths, I held fast to a jagged slat of wood. I knew I was going to die.

I shivered in the thrashing waves. Moon and stars were buried behind enraged and roiling clouds. Gnarly branches, like fingers of an angry heathen god, webbed across the sky in search of vessels on the sea. They searched for life to die. The lightning crashed.

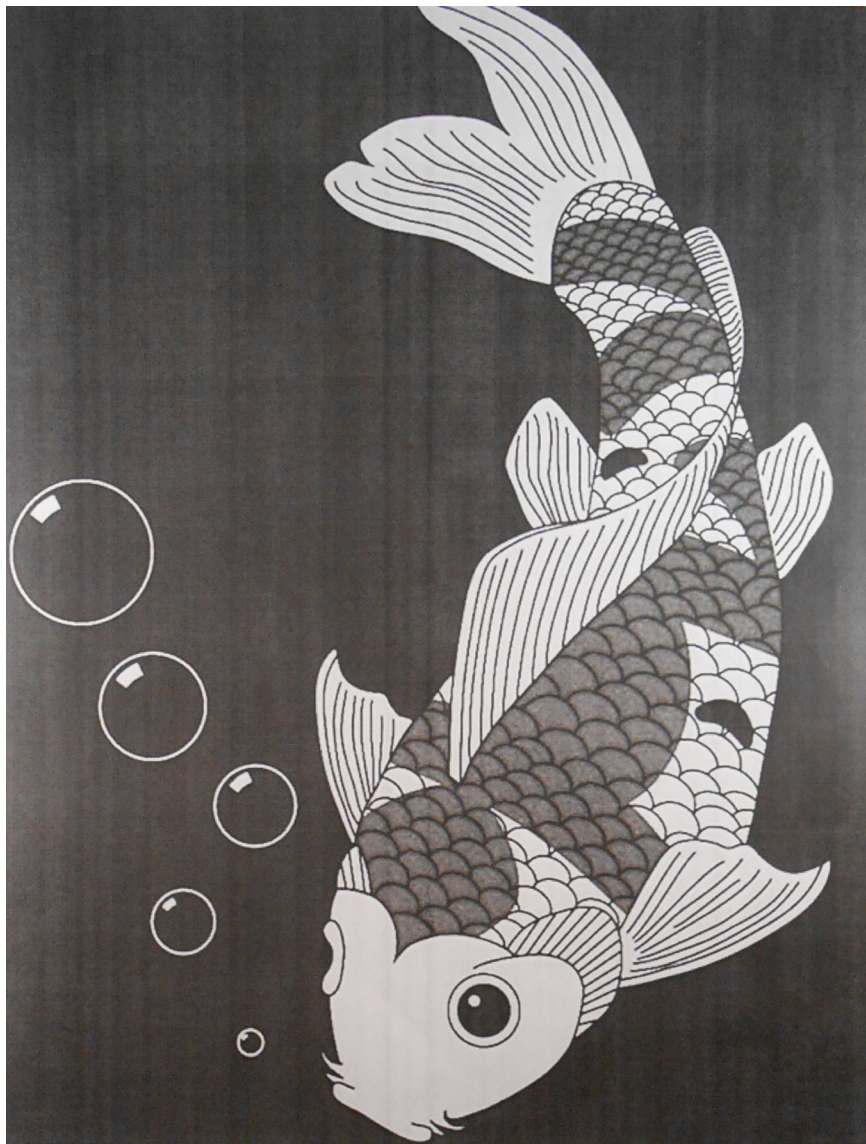
Something seemed to reach up from the depths of the sea. It slammed viciously upside my head. I lost my grip. I tasted blood as the cold, dark waves engulfed me.

That is the last thing I remembered before waking up. When I opened my eyes, the gnarly branches, like fingers of an angry heathen god, webbed across the sky. They seemed to search for me. The shadow, which had appeared, reached out and slapped me. It threw a foul-tasting liquid in my face. I spit.

Near my feet, a pole had been driven into the ground. The sharpened tip of that pole was crammed into the bleeding neck of the skull with no more eyes. It was a scalped skull. The cheeks had been filleted. The lips and nose were gone, and it had no more ears; but it still wore John's bandana. When I turned my head from the gory sight, I saw the happy faces.

My flesh ripped as they forced gnarly, knotted branches beneath me. I heard a chop, and then another. I had been released from the stakes. Many hands bound my wrists and ankles and stretched me off the ground. Limbs continued ripping, poking and slashing into my body as the pile beneath me was prepared. The shadow basted my body with a thick pasty substance. Blobs were stuffed in my ears, up my nose and in my mouth. The shadow smiled at me and slapped paste in my eyes. It got dark again. I was afraid.

I struggled, but it was useless. It was winter. Gnarly branches beneath me began to crackle with flames. Drums began to beat. Hunger was about to flee and there were happy faces.



Digital Art—Third Place

Edgar Alvarez



Photography—Third Place

Julian Garcia



Essay

Essay - First Place

A Turn in the Road

Johnathan Tampico

My father, Joseph, born to Ukrainian immigrant parents and raised in a Jewish section of Baltimore, needed no English until he started school. At home, like everyone in the neighborhood in the 1920s, he spoke only Yiddish—a form of "High" German.

Dad did well in school, and was chosen to attend Polytechnic High School, where he was able to satisfy the language requirement, and earn "easy A's" by taking German classes. He graduated near the top of his class but, being too poor to afford college, had no plans for further education. Instead, he continued to work in his father's bait shop.

Then his Uncle Max took him aside and suggested that it would be a shame if a smart fellow like him did not earn a college degree. Max offered to pay the first semester's tuition—then evaluate his progress. So, he took my father to his alma mater, Johns Hopkins University, to speak with the dean of the Engineering School, an old friend who reviewed Dad's transcripts; my father started classes the next day, even though it was already a week into the semester. When the term ended, he was granted a full scholarship that took him all the way to a doctorate in Engineering.

At Hopkins, my father continued to take German classes, and also joined the R.O.T.C.: a consequential combination in 1940, since everyone knew it was just a matter of months before the United States joined the Allies at war in Europe. No one would hire my Army-Officer father, so he decided that his best course of action would be to enter active duty.

His first assignment was to work on the development of the proximity fuse, which revolutionized torpedoes and anti-aircraft rounds. Then, as the Allied invasion of Germany began, and because he was fluent in German, Dad was sent to Europe, to locate and interview German scientists and engineers, and entice them to work for the U.S. His welcome to Europe, as he unpacked his duffel in an Officer's Hut at an airfield in England, was a V-I "buzz bomb," which landed in the quad outside and blew out all the windows.

Moved to the front lines in western Germany, my father was assigned a jeep, with a machine gun mounted in the back, and a driver. They would travel from company to company, university to university, as the troops advanced in enemy territory. But, given the tenuousness of the lines, the age of the available maps, and the complexity of the roads, sometimes they would be behind the lines, sometimes in front, and occasionally a good deal ahead. It was on one of the latter days, while taking a "shortcut" on a narrow road through corn fields, that they drove around a tight curve and were forced to a sudden stop—faced with a column of German soldiers, their files completely filling the track. There was no room to turn around, no time to backup. With no more than a glance at the now-useless machine gun, and a thought of the .45 pistol on his hip, my father told his driver to "sit tight and do nothing." As the column halted at the jeep's front bumper, Dad exited and stood next to his vehicle.

The German officer at the head of the troops stepped up to him and saluted. My father returned the salute and anxiously awaited his judgment.

In his precise, aristocratic German, the officer pronounced: "We wish to surrender!"



General Art—Honorable Mention

Timothy Hall



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Rashard E. Renfro

Essay-Second Place

Millennial Stud

Nikita Harris

All across the globe there exists some form of dating ritual in which the youth of society must undergo. The old-fashioned term used to be “courtship” which implied a development towards an intimate relationship or marriage. A courtship like all mating rituals required a man to endure some trial and perhaps error in attempt to win over his sweetheart. Tech savvy millennials have mating rituals of today as well, but face difficulties unlike their predecessors. For centuries there have existed the romanticized libertine character of a Don Juan or Casanova. With the fast pace change in technology, cultural norms, and economic climate, is it possible of there to exist a millennial version for a Don Juan?

Technology gets blamed often for the ills of society. Whenever there seems to be a decay of morals within the margins of the youth, it can be blamed on the new innovations that seem to have young people spellbound. Perhaps the hot new trending waves in society are not entirely to blame. When the automobile was first introduced to the country a Middletown court judge was quoted saying it was, “a house of prostitution on wheels”. In the 1950’s with the innovations made to the solid body electric guitar, the new craze of rock n roll was a source of worry for older generations who believed it would result in mass juvenile delinquency. During the Romantic era there was the fade of romantic satirical literature, it was considered quite risqué for women to read such novels out of fear it may cause dangerous and rebellious thoughts and actions. Thanks to technology specifically the internet, today’s millennial male has many options when it comes to dating. There are dating apps such as Tinder that allow for the selection process of mates to be as quick and easy as a swipe through a picture on a smart device. Dating apps make it easier for singles to initiate an interaction

with a potential partner without leaving the comforts of their natural habitats, such as home or the late-night drive-thru line of a fast food restaurant. It has well been established the dangers of online dating, such as increasing the risk of meeting a psycho killer or being catfished. Yet, millennials are willing to take the risk because they are a generation of children who grew up with the fears of uncertainties on the internet, and are a highly hope-driven age group. If one is willing to take the risks, the payoff can be acceptance as a member of the so called “hookup generation” as millennials are often deemed in media. It has never been a better time in history to be prurient male looking for action than now. The predecessors of such charmers had to endure the societal confines of courtship to woo women which could span months, and which may or may not result in the desired conquest. Although there are no tangible rules to the hookup generation, it is common practice that once a sexual exchange has taken place, for there to remain no exclusivity or commitment between the two participants. If the encounter is pleasurable, the parties may “hook up” again or the phenomenon of ghosting may ensue.

Life can sometimes get a little unpleasant. Ghosting is the solution to dealing with the messiness of direct communication when someone no longer wishes to have contact with person they’ve been interacting with. The simplicity of ghosting is a millennial can simply ignore a text message or if necessary block the former partner on all social media outlets. If ever in doubt or uncertain how to use the internet to one’s advantage, it’s wise for a male to listen to the popular music of today for inspiration. In the chorus of a song titled iSpy by rapper Kyle he states. “I spy with my little eye. A girlie I can get cause she don’t get too many likes”. This statement can be construed to mean women on social media with few likes on their posts should be easier to pursue. The drawback of technology for a 21st century playboy is actual effective communication skills are not practiced, only flirty texts and lovey-dovey emojis.

Weak verbal communication can result in poor relationships on an emotional level. An imbalance can occur in relationships in which online and through texts feelings and emotions are fervently conveyed but are not during face- to-face interactions. For

centuries the male sex has been regarded as the weaker sex when it comes to expressing one's emotions, so a millennial Don Juan has to tread careful and not neglect effectively communicate in all aspects of social interaction. One party may appear disingenuous or misunderstandings may arise from a lack of communication. To compensate for the imbalance a lot of relationships move fast, if both parties are really interested in each other within a span of a few short weeks single status changes to in a relationship on social media, or the alternative option of ghosting occurs.

Social media is another resource for potential mate selection, but it also provides emotional stimulation. Whenever in need of reassurance of one's self-image or social standing one can check their online profile. It's easy to express your like or dislike of someone by a quick click of a mouse or by boldly providing a comment to their posts and pictures. Social media also provides intel of the relationship status of a potential mate for a millennial Casanova.

The internet opens the world up to users so vastly that they are bound to notice all the possibilities of other fish in the sea. There is the assumption made by some that the millennial generation are a group constantly worried about missing out on the next best thing. According to Gallup analysis fifty-nine percent of millennials are single and have never been married, they are choosing not to settle. The percentage of half millennials out of the 73 million in the U.S being unmarried can probably be attested to keeping one's options open, but also making a well thought out and committed decision about who one enters a marriage contract with, that will affect every aspect of one's life. With these facts time is on the side of a millennial Don Juan as he has many eligible singles or uncommitted catches to choose from and less pressure or expectation to marry in his youth.

The practice of informal dating can be traced back to the 1920's. The "Roaring Twenties" was the first time that a single man and woman could go on a date without a chaperone. Also, during this time peers established the dating rules rather than the old tradition of the community and church. The introduction of the car what a major impact on dating as it allowed couples privacy and

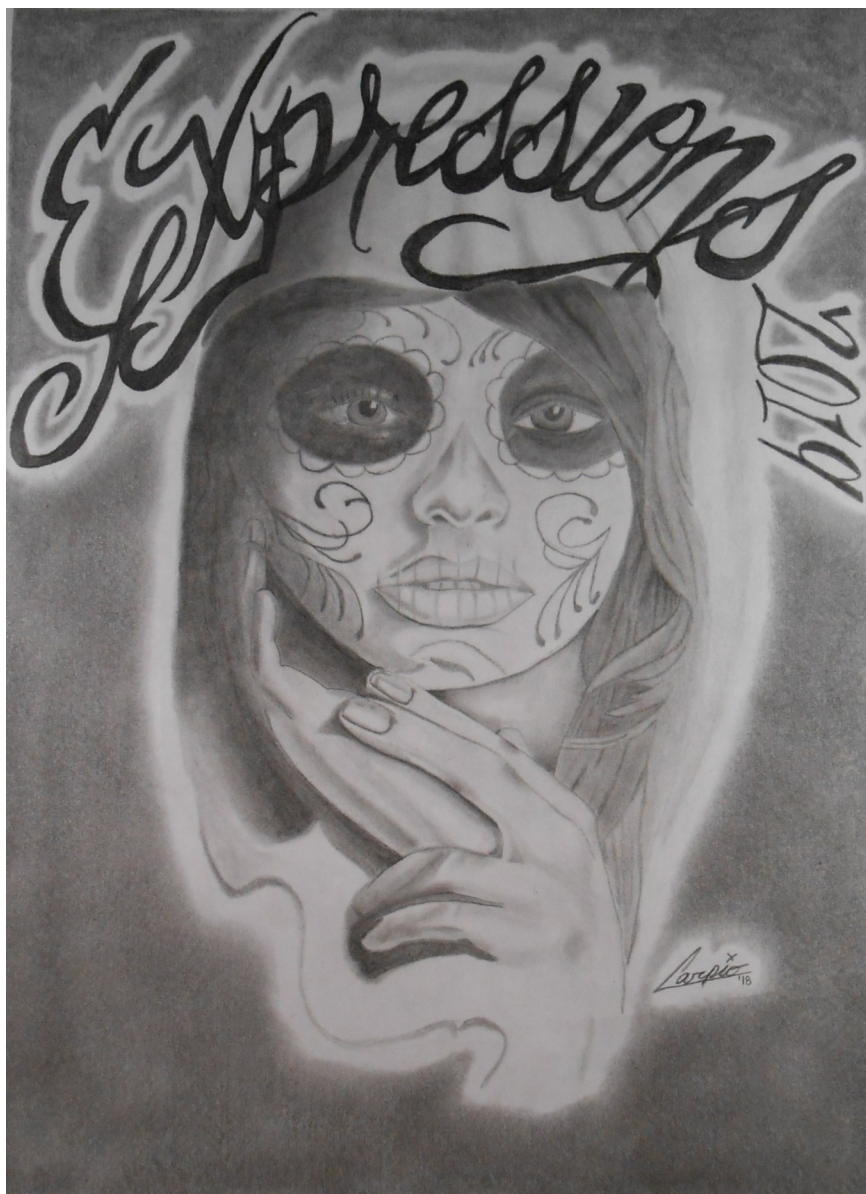
intimacy. Originally dating was in the woman's control because the man was expected to come to her house. The upper hand shifted to the man's advantage when couples started going out for dates, it became customary for the man to pay for the date. The millennial man can breathe a sigh of relief because this is not the customary practice in dating for the millennial generation. A typical millennial date may consist of getting coffee or a drink together, and maybe hanging out at someone's residence. This practice of dating saves time, money and takes a lot of the formality out of getting to know someone.

Financially, millennials have it harder than previous generations. Good paying jobs with benefits are scarce. There is a constant rise in the cost of rent and mortgage making it a rare oddity for one person to own before the age of thirty-five. According to Rolling Stone magazine. "For the first time in more than 130 years, adults aged 18 to 34 are more likely to live with their parents than a partner." For millennials the struggle is real as the economy puts a stranglehold on their finances and thus dictates their lifestyle. Traditionally a man's masculinity was larger defined by being the breadwinner. Masculinity cannot be reflected through a career anymore because women have started to dominate the education and workforce. It is highly likely that in a millennial relationship the woman makes more money than the man. This all means for a millennial Don Juan that he shouldn't expect to impress a woman of today's world with his pocket book because she might be more financially stable than he is. There is no need to put on airs or fear being labelled a scrub, because the economy can be used as the perfect scapegoat if a millennial male can't seem to thrive, and be as financially independent as his forefathers were at his age.

In the original works of *Don Juan*, the fictionalized character of Don Juan meets a tragic end as a heartbreaker. There is a moral to this tale that in the end we must pay for our actions. If one is to be a millennial Don Juan, he must take precaution and remember the moral of the Don Juan myth. It is common for millennials with the comforts of technology to be wishy-washy when it comes to relationships. Rather than have a stern mentality of yes or no toward a potential relationship partner. Out of fear of losing someone entirely often partners get strung along without a clear sense of com-

mitment. Little white lies are told to get a favorable reaction instead of flat out rejecting someone. This all culminates into a build-up of frustration and disappointment when the relationship ends or fades to silence through ghosting. No one wants to be at fault for causing the misery of someone else. Yet, responsibility must be taken for one's actions when engaging or initiating a relationship with someone. The fatal flaw of the fictional libertine Don Juan was he recklessly toyed with the affections of many women. He left a trail of broken hearts and created a reputation of having jilted vengeful lovers. Today's generation of millennials do not differ in the generations of the past including the Golden Spanish Age in which Don Juan was written, in that the spirit of the libertine is ever present within the youth.

A vast majority of the attention of today's millennials is dominated by smart devices and social media as a temporary pleasure fix. With the struggle to stay economically afloat many in the generation are trapped into being dependents that cannot financially support themselves. The roles of men and women have since altered from the origins of traditional courtship. If a hot-blooded millennial male can persevere and master the adversities against him, he can definitely become a millennial Don Juan if he so desired. It is ill advised for one to journey down the path of a Don Juan. If one cannot control the impulse to venture, then the millennial Don Juan must prepare himself for the consequences that come with being a heartbreaker



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Kevin Carpio

Essay-Third Place

Moving to the Beat

Chelse Cisneros

The beat of a drum and the adrenaline flows through my body as I stride across the field to the forty-five-yard line. The count of one and my head instantly rising to its first position brings my heart pleasure. Count after count, move after move, my body guides me through the beat of the music playing around me. A pointed toe and a leg flying into the night sky gives me satisfaction. Listening to the crowd chant my name makes me show my pearly whites a little more than usual.

Dancing isn't a natural given talent to an individual. Some people spend countless hours on one routine, while others spend only one. Dancing hasn't always come easy to me and it still doesn't. I work numerous of hours each day after practice to not only help myself but to help my team look better. The steps become easier the more they are practiced. Some days I come up short and get frustrated, but I choose to keep going because giving up isn't an option when you have supporters all around who believe in you. Pure craziness describes an individual that can perform in front of a crowd that ranges from 10-1000 people but forbid the dancer to talk in front of a class because their anxiety will immediately rise.

Dance consumes most of my life, but I wouldn't have it any other way. It mentally and physically helps me when my day takes a wrong turn. I get to practice, and the pain instantly goes away. I am in my turf, my second home, where I belong. The intensity of dancing in the heat takes true talent. Leaping and turning in the high temperatures of mid-day doesn't suit just any individual. I had

trained physically, mentally, and emotionally. I trained physically by eating healthy meals and drinking thousands of gallons of water a day. Mentally I had to prepare myself for the days where I wouldn't always be dancing at my best and that I would have to be corrected various amounts of times. Emotionally, I had to learn not to cry every time an adult began to raise their voice at me. Preparing myself for these outcomes truly did help me in the long run.

The early mornings and late nights may be exhausting, and at times giving up seems like the only option; but I never forgot my biggest supporters I would let down. I have inspired children, young adults, and most importantly my parents in ways others cannot. To overcome challenges, I had to make goals that I could turn into victories. By taking the victories and remembering them on the days where I had a quitting mindset.

My life has always revolved around eight numbers and foul-smelling dance shoes for the past 16 years. My glory days of constantly repeating, "I can't I have dance" have officially come to an end. Many precious memories and forever friends were made along this beautiful journey, and I regret every living moment I took for granted. There's not a day that passes that I wish my feet were touching the cold dance floor again. I will continue to hold onto my "5,6,7,8" for those are the four numbers that gave me confidence and guided me through not only my dances, but through some of the most important moments of my life.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Lorena Garcia

Essay

Honorable Mention

The Etymology of Destiny

Viktoria Thompson

I believe the study of etymology is important because it is valuable to know the history of words and where they came from. To better understand the English language, I feel that it is essential to study the origin and meaning of words, because over time words, their meaning, and even their spelling tends to shift and change. The English language is made up of a mixture of different words from many languages, but the Latin and Greek language had the greatest effect on the words we use today. For an example, destiny is a Middle English word that also came from the Old French language, Provençal, Italian, and Latin; and each origin had a different spelling. The Old French spelled destiny as *destinée*, Provençal as *destinada*, the Italians spelled it as *destinata*, and in the Latin language *dēstinātus* or *dēstināta*. The word destiny dates all the way back to 1340. Even though the dictionary defines destiny to mean that which is destined or fated to happen; predetermined events collectively, we have a much deeper and more intense connection to the word. “Even when you think you have your life all mapped out, things happen that shape your destiny in ways that you might never have imagined.” - By Deepak Chopra. If you close your eyes and think of destiny, what do you visualize? What can you see?

When you think of the word destiny, you see roadmaps and books, you see an old psychic woman with crazy white hair in a dimly lit smoky room sitting at a table with a glowing crystal ball and tarot cards; you even think of love. You think of that one per-

son you love with all of your heart and no matter what happens, you know deep down that you will spend the rest of your life with them because you have this weird connection that you just can't put your finger on. That connection is destiny.

Our lives are like maps. Each twist and turn, each path we take, it is all created to get us to our destination. As we're on our path to our destination, there will be bumps and obstacles that will get in our way that will make us wonder and question our whole journey but those obstacles were placed there for a reason. At the time, we may not understand why those things happened to us but once we reach our destination, all of those things will start to make sense. Everything happens for a reason. All of our life choices are like little mile markers on our route to destiny.

While destiny could mean a lot of things to different people, to me destiny means that we all have something special in us. We were all born to do great things but it is up to us to do something about it. We can't sit around and hope for it to happen, we have to make the choices that will lead us in the right path of destiny. Life is full of ups and downs but everything that happens, is leading us up to that moment where everything falls perfectly into place, and finally everything will make sense.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Christopher Galindo

Essay

Honorable Mention

My First Titanic Storm

Carmen Sanders

The fall of 2008 was when I realized my entire childhood would be swept away in a single night. It was a warm, sunny day when my mom told me in a panicked voice that we had to evacuate from our beach cabin (the only home I had known for eight years). In the background noise of both my mom and I trying to pack our belongings was the television news station. The meteorologist was explaining to us how a category four hurricane would make landfall that night. He said in an alarming tone, “Everybody that hasn’t evacuated needs to board up their windows because the winds are too strong to drive in.” Hurricane Ike would be the first Titanic storm I have ever encountered face-to-face.

Saturday, September 13, 2008, was just a normal day until my mom shook me from my dream suddenly. I opened my eyes to a faint silhouette of my mom slowly whispering to me, “Baby, we need to get up and head to Aunt Jodie’s.” Ever since I could remember I was always fond of traveling so as a young eight-year-old child I thought this was just another trip for the books; I could not have been more wrong. I started gathering up the essentials like clothing for a few days, bathroom necessities, and a few extra activities for me to do on the drive up there. Occasionally, my mom would stop by my room to see if I was putting everything together right. Down the hallway to the right was our living room television. Mom had it set to the Channel 12 news station. Every now and then I could hear what the meteorologist was saying: “Hurricane

Ike is making landfall at 2:30 in the morning,” “Category 4 storm with sustained winds of 140 miles per hours.” With these snippets of words, I thought to myself “will our house survive the storm?” My legs were trembling with fear as my mom and I made it to our truck to load our belongings, our 2 dogs and a cat. By now, the winds were whirling up to 40 miles per hour as we starting to leave. About 30 minutes on the road, my mom received a call from my grandpa, “Hey shoog, are you and baby girl headed up here [Aunt Jodie’s house in Longview, Texas]?” She told him that we were and that we had barely escaped in time. An hour later, one of her friends had to be rescued by helicopter.

Afterwards, we drove, for what seemed to be an eternity, to Longview, which was only about four hours away. When we finally arrived, I greeted my three cousins who were all older except for the youngest who was only two years younger than me. I settled in for where I would sleep, for what I thought only a few days, but it turned out to be two weeks. Throughout the long time we stayed there, I played games, watched the news a little, and slept a lot because our electricity went out for a few days after the storm hit. All my mom and I had to do was wait out this horrific storm until I could go back and sleep in my comfy bed again. Mom constantly watched the news because she always worried about the littlest events but this one was much worse, so I could sympathize with her on it. Most of the time I did not give any attention to the television that the adults were watching because I knew they would be the ones to handle and take care of anything if something were to happen.

The following days after the storm hit the shores of Galveston and the surrounding area, my mom drove down by herself to where we lived which was Gilchrist (the small town that is right before Crystal Beach and Rollover) to see the damage Ike had left. When she drove up to our house, she barely recognized the place. We had a palm tree that was planted to the right of our house that was gone except for a few roots the storm decided to leave for us. The house that we once called “home” was now gone and all that was left for us to come back to was a three-inch cement slab half crumbled up. Within two miles of our house, she slowly started finding debris from our house. For example, a piece of siding that was salmon colored (she knew it was from our house because we

were the only ones that had that specific color of paint in the area). A segment of our coffee table that once stood in our living room where I ate breakfast at every Saturday morning to watch my cartoons. To this day, my mom has it hanging up in our living room over the couch to help remind both of us about the fond memories we had together at the beach. She also found our maroon, sun-bleached Chevrolet Tahoe that was flipped upside down. This was the vehicle that I rode in the backseat to wherever my mom took me. I remember I used to look out of my window and towards the night sky to find the moon, full and bright, with one star north and west of the moon. The images and memories popped inside my head of me sitting in the middle of the seats halfway hunched over falling asleep in my car seat (my mom later in life told me that she always put me in the middle seat because it was the safest and she did not want me getting hurt). Walking about another half-mile, she found my *Dora the Explorer* night light. Ever since I started sleeping by myself, my mom had bought me this night light where I would not be afraid to fall asleep without her. She [Dora] always stood next to my bed watching and guarding me from terrible nightmares and demons that decided to lurk my way. Also, occasionally at night, when I would go to the bathroom, she would help shine the way for me where I would not stub my toe on my dresser. Now, those recollections will forever be engraved in my mind instead of experiencing them once more.

All-in-all, Ike was a category four hurricane that took away my home and also what I loved and cherished with it. To this day, I can still hear my mom laughing and seeing her splash the salty sea water at me as I played in the ocean. Little moments like these are so ghastly hard to forget especially since I will never experience them in the same way again. Watching my mom cry until her eyes and face were red over losing her life's work petrified me. Not only did I experience this powerful cyclone for the initial time, but I learned to not take what I have for granted and to enjoy the little things in life to the absolute fullest.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Timothy Hall

49

Essay

Honorable Mention

Master of Our Craft

Jeff Wager

War and disease were rampant. The 13th century Italian revolution had erupted. Transition from Medieval Dark Ages had begun. Cultural and ideological development was ushering in a new period we would come to know as the Renaissance. “[C]hanges in all aspects of life and culture, with dramatic reforms sweeping through the worlds of religion, politics, and scientific belief [took hold].”¹ It was in this environment that Michelangelo was born. His life experience would not only encourage certain individuals to preserve, but would also inspire entire societies to be creative in their endeavors. Through grievous struggles, piece-mealed education, and tedious hours of unglamorous persistence, Michelangelo developed to become the best that he could be. He grew up to be a Master Craftsman.

Michelangelo’s first grievous struggle in life came at an early age. His mother suffered a prolonged illness, and she died when he was 6 years of age. His father sent him to live “with a nanny and her husband, a stonecutter, in the town of Settignano...There he gained his love for marble.”² In fact, Michelangelo once said, “If there is some good in me, it is because...[a]long with the milk of my nurse I received the Knack of handling chisel and hammer, with which I make my figures.”³ Even in his grief, life had begun to piece an education together for Michelangelo.

Michelangelo's father did send Michelangelo to grammar school in Florence, but Michelangelo expressed no interest in such educational pursuits. Instead, "He would rather watch the painters at nearby churches, and draw what he saw there."⁴ When he was 13 years of age, his father realized that Michelangelo had an artistic spirit; therefore, he sent Michelangelo to the painter, Ghirlandai, to be an apprentice. Two years later, another set of circumstances led Michelangelo to attend the Humanist Academy where he was exposed to many great artists, philosophers, writers, and thinkers of his past and present. He was being educated a little here and a little there. He dedicated hours upon grueling hours, and long days, evolving into years upon grueling years to the perfecting of his craft.

One of Michelangelo's projects took 40 years due to various interruptions. His Fresco in the Sistine chapel had over 300 figures on 500m² of ceiling; and he had to pain that while lying on his back over a period of 4 years. In 1513, Pope Leo X commissioned Michelangelo to reconstruct the façade of the Basilica of San Lorenzo. Michelangelo "spent 3 years creating drawings and models for the façade,"⁵ but the project was later cancelled. Twenty-one years later, in 1534, Pope Clement VII commissioned Michelangelo to paint a Fresco of 'the Last Judgement'. Michelangelo tediously labored on that project for 7 years. It wasn't all peaches and cream.

For Michelangelo to develop his love and passion in life, many struggles had to be endured. His particular set of circumstances in the particular environment which existed in the world as it transitioned from the Medieval Dark Ages into the Renaissance was his stage. On that stage he experienced the grievous death of his mother, which placed him in an environment where he would learn a love for marble. His education was piecemealed together by his watching, listening, and learning from workers, painters, sculptors, artists, philosophers, writers, thinkers, and of course, his nanny and his father. The long and grueling hours, days, and years of trial and error and untold set-backs was not glamorous for Michelangelo, but his perseverance is inspirational. It not on-

ly encourages individuals to persevere—It also inspires entire societies to be creative in their endeavors. All of the grievous struggles, all of the piecemealed moments of learning, and all of the hours, days, and years of tediously pursuing his love and passion is exactly what Michelangelo spoke of when he said, “If people knew how hard I had to work to gain my mastery, it would not seem so wonderful at all;”⁶ but that is what we also go through. It is what we all must go through in order to be the best that we can be. It’s how we become masters of our craft.

Footnotes

“Michelangelo: Paintings, Sculptures, Biography of Michelangelo” (<https://www.Michelangelo.org>) p. 2 Retrieved 29 October 2018.

Michelangelo “(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelangelo>) at Wikipedia, p.2 Retrieved 29 October 2018.

See footnote 2

See footnote 1, p.3

See footnote 2, p.3

See footnote 1, p. 4



Photography—Honorable Mention

Lorena Garcia

Essay

Honorable Mention

The Death of My Paw-Paw

Carissa Keller

“Peachie-Poo! Come look!” Peachie-Poo is what my Paw-Paw would often call my Maw-Maw. “Isn’t she just beautiful? I think she gets prettier each time I see her!” My Paw-Paw never missed an opportunity to dote on me. He would often brag about the day I was born, and how he was my first kiss. As I grew older the dotting would embarrass me, but I secretly loved it. I knew that if there was not a person in this world that did not think I was beautiful, my Paw-Paw did. The thought of no longer having my Paw-Paw was always one of my greatest fears as a child. It was a fear that would become my real-life nightmare as an adult.

Walter Gabriel Boudreaux was my Paw-Paw’s name, but he went by many different nicknames. To me he was just simply Paw-Paw, and I was his Tootsie Wootsie. I have many great childhood memories and lessons that my Paw-Paw shared with me. He and my Maw Maw raised me in a small country town on their 16 acres of land. He loved to watch me compete in sports and even helped me raise pigs and chickens for the state fair. My Paw-Paw brought me to every practice, and he never missed a game. We loved to eat crawfish together, and he would often bribe me with it during my sporting events. One game, in particular, I remember looking out at him sitting in the stands, and he was pretending that he was peeling, and eating crawfish. I knew what that had meant. It meant that if I hustled hard during the

game that he would take me to eat crawfish afterward. My Paw Paw was the dad that my real father failed to be. I would often beg my Maw-Maw and Paw-Paw to change my last name, because I wanted to be a Boudreaux too. I took pride when I said, "That's my Paw-Paw." When I was ten years old, he bought a motorhome and we traveled to many different states and saw various national landmarks, such as the Grand Canyon. He poured all of his love into me, and I never had to question his love.

Unfortunately, as I grew older so did he. His memory began to fade, and his health started to decline. He no longer could work until the sun went down, and he started spending his days watching old Dallas Cowboy football games and Westerns. He had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease that progressed quickly. He eventually could not remember if he had eaten, but nonetheless he never forgot to tell me how much he loved me, and how beautiful he thought I was. I would often walk past his room, and he would call out "Tootsie Wootsie, come see!" I would walk into his room for what felt like the hundredth time that day and say, "Yessir?" I can still hear his deep, yet tender voice say, "Do you know that Paw-Paw loves you?" "Yes Paw-Paw" I would say. He would tell the stories of our travels over and over to anyone that would listen and talk about all the fun we had when I was playing sports. As his health declined, our visits began to feel like daggers through my heart. I started to try to mentally prepare myself for the day he would no longer be with me on this earth. I do not think that is something anyone can ever fully prepare themselves for.

On January 26, 2018, I laid my head sobbing on my Paw-Paws chest. I was shaking and gasping for air. In between my tears, I thanked him for everything that he had done for me. I told him how I never had to question his love for me. I told him how beautiful and special he always made me feel, and I thanked him for raising my siblings and me. I promised him that I would finish college, and that I would never forget the life lessons that he taught me. I just wanted him to know how much he impacted my life, and how much I loved him. I knew that the day I had dreaded since I was a little girl was near, but I had no idea how near it was. I kissed him one last time, and as I did he opened his eyes and gave me the last smile I would ever see him give. On that day at 7:33 in the afternoon, surrounded by his family, he took his last breath. My Paw

Paw passed peacefully in his home that he built, surrounded by the family that he poured his whole being into.

When I entered this world, he was my first kiss and when he left this world, I was his last. The death of my Paw-Paw was no longer something I feared as a child, but it was a reality. My Paw Paws death has been, and still is, the hardest thing I have had to deal with in my adult life. With the life lessons that he instilled in me, I continue on with life, but a piece of my heart is missing. Although he is no longer here, I can still hear his voice in my head saying, “Tootsie-Wootsie, do you know how much your Paw-Paw loves you?”



Photography—Honorable Mention

Sabrina Ramirez



*Special Essay
Category*

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Special Essay Category

First Place

Novus Ordo Seclorum

Kwane Douglas

The increasingly integrated cultural and economic aspects of the world's Nations have become a topic of great debate within intellectual circles as well as around the dinner table. The term 'globalization' has been coined as the catch-all phrase used to describe a myriad of complex issues connected to each other.

On a macro level, the increased inter-dependence on global economic ties can cause certain security risks. A well-known example of this is the fact that America's dependence on foreign oil often strengthens countries that are adversarial to us by placing U.S. dollars in their coffers. This dependency also gives these nations the opportunity to leverage this power by using veiled threats that have the effect of upsetting the U.S. economy. At the same time, these nations are just as dependent on the U.S. dollar for revenue to fund their own government's budgets. What's more is that by holding the U.S. dollar (which is the "reserve currency" of the world for all the banks part of the IMF/World Bank/Federal Reserve System), they have a conflict of interest because America needs to be strong or they lose out on the value of what it is they hold.

Global economic interdependence also provides a way for the world's poor to begin to move out of poverty. As developing nations of the world begin to go through their own Industrial Revolutions, the human condition is raised as more money flows into

their systems. The “middle class” of these nations grows and they become consumers of the other products made and shipped around the world. The process provides an opportunity for these Nations to take advantage of the human capital they have and up until recently been wasting. It also provides new markets for the U.S. to import/export.

The catch is that this very same process causes Americans to lose jobs as multi-national corporate conglomerates move their production plants and supply chains overseas. Obviously, this is bad for the U.S., but it may be a net gain for humanity. Though I am a U.S. citizen, I believe that the fate of humanity as a whole is greater than the fate of the U.S. Many people perceive globalization from a personal or purely “nativist” stand-point, and in some cases they can prove globalization negatives from that narrow view. But if one is looking at the net gain for humanity in general, while placing an equal value on human life, it becomes obvious that society must totally integrated.

Globalization is the process that will lead to this total integration of all societies. The process of globalization is the slow, complicated, messy, and sometimes violent path toward One World Government, with a uniform commercial standard for finance, trade, and criminal law. All the momentum is pushing the world this direction. The situation is one of inevitability. The question is more one of how we shall accomplish this feat. Will it be with global cooperation, understanding, and compromise, or will it be trade wars, sanctions, and corporate exploitation. The former seems unlikely. The focus, knowing that globalization is inevitable, should be on getting there with as much inclusion and as little pain to our fellow man as possible. Lastly, if we Americans believe that the moral authority in world affairs lies with us, we should support efforts to insure that America remain the dominate force at the forefront of the Globalization movement.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Clifton T. Holliday



Poetry

Poetry - First Place

Tropic Twilight

Stephen Norton

Santiago's mountain tops
Devour the setting sun,
Like fire,
Like a bolt of lightening
Dividing the firmament,
Like the fate of a match
Struck in the dark.
Stars trip over
The sun's tail
Tumbling clear across the horizon
Like a million diamonds scattered
Throughout a timeless landscape,
While the moon and the globe
Hum parallel tones on
Nature's diatonic scales.
Like heavenly music theory,
Or poetry of the spheres.
A cosmic concerto
In perpetual movements, or
Celestial syllables written

In the form of creation
And chaos.
Surely composed by
Pythagoras' God,
But maybe Mozart's,
Or Homer's.
The blood-red sky gives way
To ashen-grey
And then dusky black
While the stars wink their
Their careless approval.
I stand by silently observing
This age old struggle
Between the sun and his shadows.
And at the apex of human thought
I feel the planet dancing
Happily through the Universe,
A subtle reminder to me
And the sleeping poppies that
The sun will rise again.



Digital Art—Honorable Mention
Jacobby Baise

Poetry- Second Place

Mental Heal

Robert Curtis Barker

And if we can't be "healed" from the illnesses we're assigned
Perhaps we can find freedom from the haunting of our minds
And if we can't find freedom, perhaps we can learn to cope
With destructive thoughts and feelings known to rob us of hope
And if we can't learn to cope, perhaps we can look around
And find solace in a place where acceptance can be found
A place of community where our likenesses are shown
And we can live in unity and know we're not alone
Where we look into each other rather than in disgust
We find that our humanity is mirrored back at us...



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Aniceto Sanchez

Poetry - Third Place

Gentle Rainfall

Stephen Norton

The gentle rainfall continues, tattooing
Small and large tropical leaves,
Unbelievably blue and green lush

Purest cool scent of nature's water,
And exotic wood, and moss
Seeping and fermenting near by

Clicking bugs and birds chirping,
Lots of bustle hanging low
To flora like fog

Glassy orbs of dew drops gather
On lotus petals, spilling from canopies
Like tender whispers

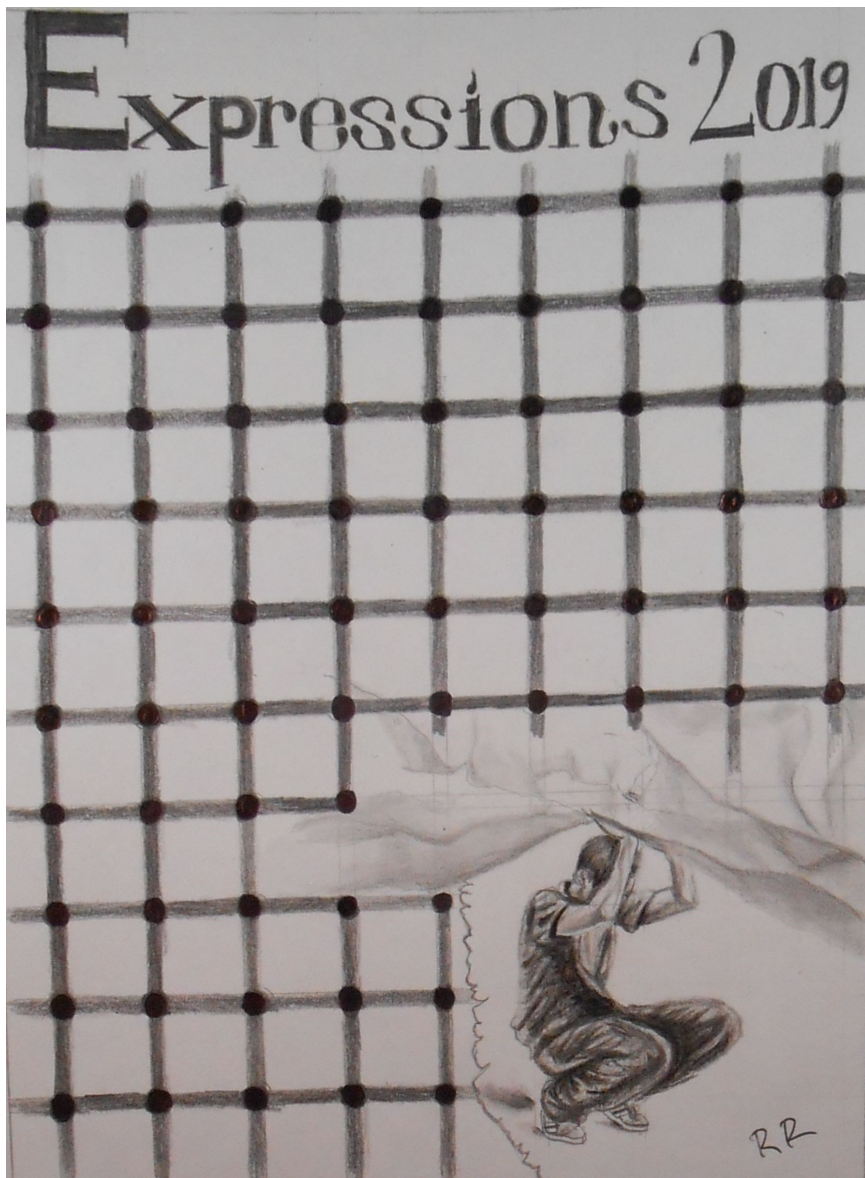
But not a voice—not one word.

A tangy bitter peel of ripe citrus,
And cognac - straight—

Blend lightly the surface
of this tropical sonata.

But not one damned word
To save me from myself

The gentle rainfall continues.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Rashard E. Renfro



General Art—Honorable Mention

Christopher Galindo

Poetry
Honorable Mention

My Tribute

Earnest Heileman

Your twenty five years
Came and went
Your efforts are everlasting
Your shoes were so huge to fill
Till they hire three in your place
Just look at the stats
You're a living legend
A legend of a Princes
A goddess of chance
For society's misfits
You saw far beyond our failures
And encouraged us to aim high.
True success is spear-headed
By a woman of true virtue
Against all odds, your efforts
This is my tribute to you
Against all odds your efforts
Have paid off your legacy is
Indeed your love shown to us
Is that gift that keeps giving
Light and hope you've been
In a very, very dark place.

We love you very much
And really miss you.
Enjoy life we love you too. Life may God
Richly bless and keep you.
You have been a blessing to
So many were blossoming.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Angel G. Aleman

Poetry
Honorable Mention

Unlucky Duck

Timothy Hall

Buckey duck was an unlucky
Duck who couldn't cluck
His lack of quack, and the fact,
He had no flair for air.
So as he roamed he became known
As unlucky **Buckey Duckie**.
Then at last, it came to pass
That **Buckey Duck** could cluck.
But he never took flight, cause
He was scared of heights.
Truly an unlucky Duck.



Digital Art—Honorable Mention

Victoria Murray

Poetry
Honorable Mention

Pitter Patter

Jeff Wager

Scared
To be myself,
Afraid
To not be liked,
So I pretended
I'm someone else;
But no one liked him,
And I was twice not liked,
Ignoring God.
What a lonely place!
Double-locked
Inside myself
Along, a door of no entry—
Not for anyone!
Not God.
Who was abandoned by whom?

Time...
I smile.
On occasion,
I laugh,
A friendly façade.
Others do the same;
But in my dark hole,
Pretense gone,
No love,
No friends,
No bond—
Pitter patter.
A sad songs sings in me.
Lonely tears,
Embracing my pain,
My lonely song—
All by myself,
Alone, I cry.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Angel G. Aleman

Poetry
Honorable Mention

Rain on a Tin Roof

Jason Sanders

Rain on a tin roof
Has ever there been more proof
That living is loving

Wind blows through the ash
I reflect on seasons past
I'm miles and years away

I've a shiny bald pate
So much has stacked on my plate
I smile into the ether.

Dusk on Albion's plain
Coincides sweetly with rain
Dewdrops come with the morn.

Summer rests his brow
The time for winter has come

All things laid to rest.

A blink of an eye
Seasons change, time continues
Unabatedly

The fervor of death
Abrupt, but whenever is death
Expected to come

On the sidewalk here
An overdose, suddenly dead
His family grieves now

Face mortality
We are all going to die
Live freely today

Dark empty formless space
Where do go when we die
Only God can say



General Art—Honorable Mention

Jeff Wager

Poetry

Honorable Mention

My Official Love Letter To You

Lorena Garcia

You were always the one for me, I knew it from the beginning,
I was blessed the day you came into my world, it hasn't stopped
spinning,

We've loved, and we've fought, we've laughed and we've cried,
We've made it to the day, that our knot gets tied,

So without further ado,

I vow to take you as you are, to help you to continue to grow,

I vow to always honor you, to follow you wherever you go,

I promise to take you as my lawful husband, to have and to hold,

I promise to always take care of you, till we're wrinkled and old,

Whether we're rich or poor, I'll love you with all of my heart,

By your side is forever where I will be, till death do us part,

It's been an amazing journey, I wouldn't have it any other way,

Now that we've made it this far, there's one more thing I'd like to
say,

So, I want to thank you for our beautiful children, and the years we
have spent together,

I can't wait to start my new life with you, we only have till forever,

-Pooh said it best, "Forever isn't long at all, when I am with you".

Thank you for everything Kenneth, you truly are my other half.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Antonio Banda

Poetry
Honorable Mention

Road

Timothy Hall

Walking down this lonesome road
I spot a man hanging his head down low,
He is hiding his face, in disgrace
His expressions hard to trace.
His torn and ragged clothes
Reflect the life he had chose,
And it seems no one knows,
As he walks down that Road.
He put his family's name to shame,
And life is but a game, to play,
As he walks down that Road.
Well as I slowly pass by,
I can't help but start to cry.
For I can see that face belongs to me,
And things that just might be.
Might be,
As he walks down the Road.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Christopher Galindo

Poetry
Honorable Mention

Finals Time

Yolanda Piedras

There's no time for sorrow
No time for sleep
You better study
Or tears you will weep
Everyone hopes for an A
But will settle for a B
It will all be worth it
You will see
The studying can stress you
And even make you rhyme
But it's almost over
Because it's Finals Time



General Art—Honorable Mention

Antonio Banda

Poetry

Honorable Mention

Social Anxiety

Zachary Owensby

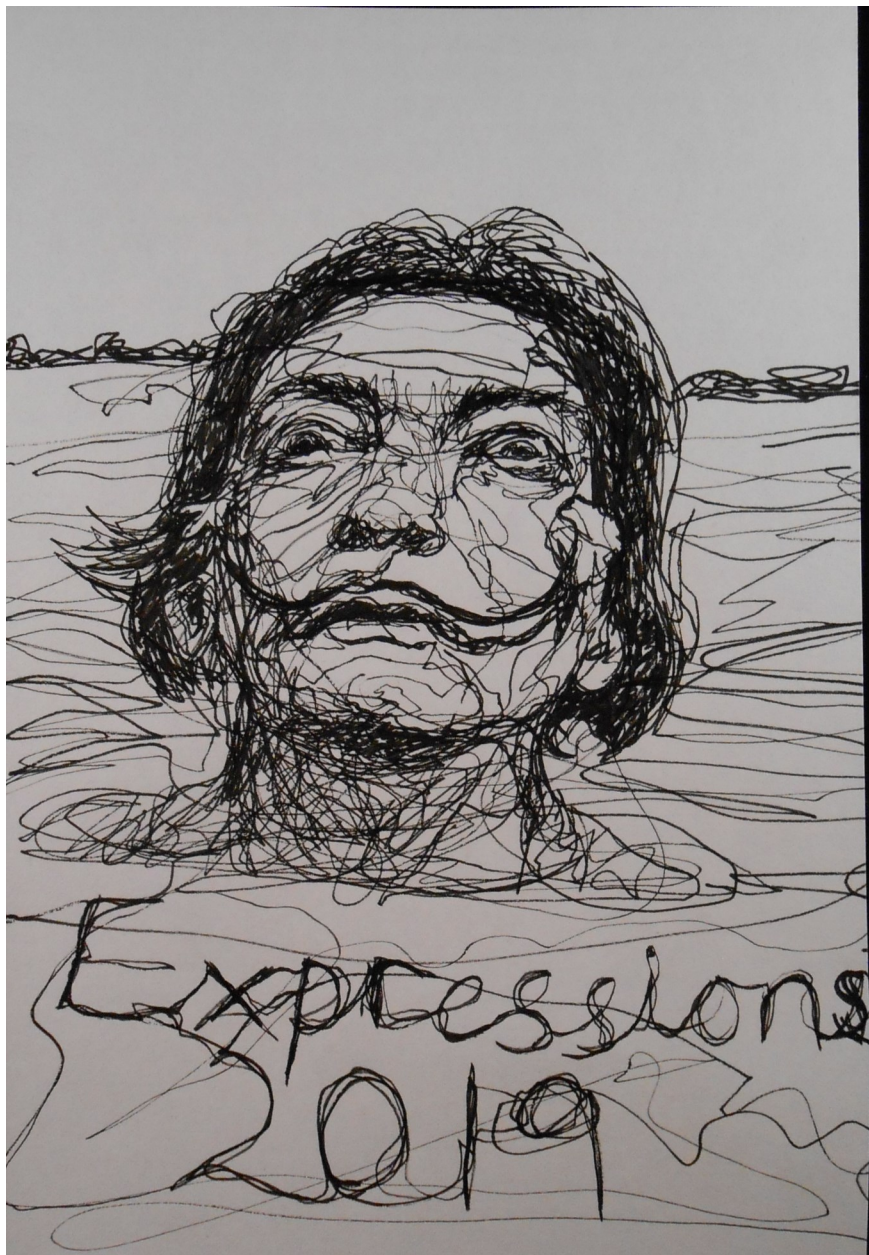
It is dark and deep, the hole through I creep.
The ground is like quicksand below my feet.
My head, above the surface, yet so hard to breathe.
I fear for my life but dare to leave.

All around me I hear, the scatter of feet.
I keep my head down, in hope eyes don't meet.
Then the moment comes, my final defeat.
The body of a stranger squared up with me.

An endless weight, as I fall to my knees.
But in reality... it's only social anxiety.

A simple hello is all it would take,
for a person like me to conquer this place.
My heart is beating, running a race,
dare I look at this strangers face?
What other choices can I make?

The voices, louder, there's such a crowd.
The moment has come, I must act now.
I look up, there's no one around.
I take a deep breath, a gasping sound.
It was all in my head, not a soul to be found.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Antonio Banda

Poetry
Honorable Mention

Breath God Blew

Jeff Wager

I dance on celestial stars,
Twinkling.

A spirit smiles at my touch
as I glide-
I am breath in a temple of God.

Traveling,
I become
glittering stars
behind each spiral stairway
in heaven,
hoping to catch your eye.

Sometimes I fly.
I am the eagle.
I fly with grace
on Heaven's wind.
I am freedom
becoming one feather,
Soft,
In tender breezes of space.

I swirl with tender grace.

Look at me!
God's finger twirled the wind
and I am now set free.

I am wind and light
In a kaleidoscope of colors,
And I become a rainbow,
Soft, promising.

I am the passion you feel.

I smile.
I glow.
I reach into your heart.
I become your song.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Timothy Hall



*Literary
Review*

Literary Review

First Place

Slavery: New Perspectives on the Past

By David Turley

A Book Review

Jacoby Baise

Slavery: New Perspectives on the Past tells a compelling story about what many would consider a dark time in the United States of America. — a period of time which lasted far too long. If you haven't guessed yet, I'm referring to the period of slavery in the United States. This book claims to examine slavery cross-culturally, and I believe rightfully does so in a good manner. In this book Turley analyses many important keys of slavery including the economic and social impact it made at the time of its existence, the experience of not only the slaves, but the slaveholders themselves, and the difference in slavery throughout different societies. One thing that truly intrigued me about this book was how much detail Turley was able to cram into this book of less than 200 pages. Slavery seems to cover most of the more important events that occurred during slavery, and some that led to its eventual emancipation.

One thing I found very interesting is that despite what you may think, Slavery doesn't just talk about slavery in America. I guess one could say it uses America as a basis for comparison to other countries or regions. One of the first examples is mentioned in the

first page of Chapter 3: Societies with Slaves and Slave Societies, a chapter which seems to fully focus on the aforementioned topic. The whole of the chapter differentiates the meaning of a slave society and a society of slaves, if you couldn't tell by the title. It notes how societies with slaves are more hierarchal with only those in power, like kings and queens, having slaves and using them for duties that a normal worker in the business would do (cooking, cleaning, serving meals etc.) , unlike slave societies, which would be more of an American-style slavery, using large quantities of slaves to do farm work and the like(63). While this example may seem more like Just a general statement and doesn't clarify on which country it is referring to, it is relatively obvious which parts of the world are being referred to if you are.

Another topic that interested me greatly is how some slaves gave up their freedom and stayed slaves in order to survive. Some slave security, a security that, at the time and depending on the color of your skin, could only be acquired under slavery. "In a similar situation were abandoned or 'exposed children in ancient and medieval times who were rescued from death through the kindness of strangers, but at the frequent cost of finding themselves in servitude to their rescuer" (19). Some slaves had to stay slaves just to be able to live. Seems pretty messed up how the mouths that feed you are the ones that put you in that position in the first place.

In Chapter 2 the author compares American slavery and classification or eligibility for it to how the Greek picked those to be enslaved. Slaves were considered to be outsiders, despite living and working under the same roof as their slave owners. According to my readings from the book, outsiders were merely those who were perceived as different, often inferior in important aspects, and perhaps hostile to those who seized them as slaves (p. 21)" In ancient Greece this may have been the reason for the enslavement of some Greek speakers, since most of them most likely spoke on a level higher than common knowledge, meaning that to everyone else, they were different.. To the same degree, those who spoke of a different language or were of a different culture were also enslaved. Even some religions shared traditions of enslavement, showing disdain in enslaving their religion but treated non-believers far more harshly. For example, at some point Judaism marked Christian and

Islamic differences of skin color, particularly blackness or any relation to it as the marks of the others' as Turley called it. This was amongst those who reciprocally grew aware of their own racial distinctiveness. So, to put all of that information in a simpler term would be to say that anyone who was different was enslaved.

Those who were part of a religion were most likely taken care, but non-believers would be treated harshly.

"Thus, the condition of not being an outsider was not necessarily entirely based upon supposedly "objective" features, such as language or color, but was the subject to the desire to interpret and impose the condition by those possessing the power to do so (p. 19). Reading on from this point in the chapter I notice the Turley goes into even more detail about the qualifications of an outsider, explaining how those in power could switch things up from what was the norm at the time. In this quote from Slavery, Turley noted something called "objective features." What he later explains is that those features more likely than not at the time were religious affiliation. These affiliations were apparently so strong that those who had any kind of power, including enslaving those under them, went against the religious and racial norms of the time, which I found very odd.

I have only generally covered some of the most interesting topics in the book. I would definitely recommend this book to anyone interested the story of slavery. Especially those who wonder about the different forms of slavery and where they occurred. I honestly and personally think the strongest point of this book is its attention to detail. Hats off to David Turley because I know this book must have been written based off of years of research.



Cover Art—Honorable Mention

Christopher Galindo

Literary Review

Second Place

Work, Sweat, Cry

Zachary Owensby

The idea of everyone being afraid of something is not too far-fetched. Throughout Hurston's "Sweat," the audience experiences Delia's extravagant journey through fear, sadness, anger, and relief as her good-for-nothing husband beats her and uses snakes to torment her. Through the author's extensive use of mood, symbolism and irony, Hurston challenges her readers to think about how this story relates to modern day relationship problems and abuse and indefinitely help take a stand against it.

The author manipulates the mood throughout the story often. She starts out prideful by talking about all the hard work that Delia does as the wash-woman. The mood of the story quickly takes a turn soon as, Sykes, her abusive husband is introduced. His introduction consists of him scaring Delia with a bull-whip pretending it's a snake. The mood for the next half of the story becomes one of fear and anger. Hurston expresses this fear and anger through the dialogue conflict between Delia and Sykes. The mood stays like this through most of the rest of the story as Sykes continues his constant abuse towards Delia. However the last mood change the readers see is at the end of the story when Sykes pushes Delia too far. She runs off to the barn in fear and lays there for hours. When she returns to the house Sykes has been bitten by the snake that he planted in the house to bite Delia. The mood of the story is lightened up and the audience gets a sense of relief and joy for the protagonist. This is expressed as Delia runs away to a

nearby tree and enjoys a new day's sun.

Hurston's use of symbolism through the story is significant, as it alludes to many abstract ideas. At the beginning of the story Sykes is scaring Delia with a bullwhip acting like it's a snake. The bullwhip is a symbol in the story for the abuse that Sykes causes to Delia. This is made apparent later in the story as Sykes continued to abuse Delia and eventually the bullwhip, evolves into an actual rattlesnake. The rattlesnake represents Sykes karma. The snake was intended to bite Delia so Sykes could be with Bertha, but Sykes is a terrible person through the whole story and ended up getting bitten instead. The sun rises at the end of the story symbolizing a divine intervention. Delia found that the snake had bitten Sykes, and the sunrise signified a new future for her. She is blessed with a new start where she didn't have to be stuck in an abusive relationship with Sykes anymore.

The first instance of irony through the story is that Delia is the one working and supporting her and Sykes. In the time period of the story Delia would normally stayed at home and Sykes would have been responsible for working a job. Next the village men that are on Joe Clarke's porch talk about how Delia was a catch before she married Sykes. This is ironic because they are saying she was beautiful but somehow being married took that from her. Once Sykes dies at the end of the story does that mean she will be beautiful again to them? Another part of irony is how Sykes is promising to give Bertha the house and saying that she can have anything she wants that the town belongs to him. In reality he doesn't own anything, nor does he have a job or the ability to follow through on his promise to Bertha. The rattlesnake is also ironic as it is meant to be the way that Sykes was going to kill Delia so he could be with Bertha but it ended up killing him instead.

Through the authors use of mood, symbolism, and irony I hope that you felt the same emotional connection to Hurston's "Sweat" as I did. I hope this will open people's eyes to abuse going on in modern day relationships and encourage them to speak out before someone ends up hurt.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Oasis Cardenas

Literary Review

Third Place

Just Do It!

Anastoyshia Foreman

At some point in their life, everyone is afraid to try something different. Either they think they are going to be bad at it or they'll simply make a fool out of themselves. In "A&P," by John Updike, the author makes use of characterization, ironic actions, and imagery to show the audience how one young boy stands up to his boss, but that the "right" move is not always the best decision.

Sammy, a cashier, portrays a teenage boy who is trying to figure himself out in a world where everything and everyone feels monotonous. His character displays numerous traits of having impolite thoughts, not only toward the teenage girls, but older women as well. For example, as Sammy is working the register, he notices a group of young ladies enter the store in their bikinis. One of them he describes as "a chunky kid," and the other as a "chubby berry-face." Sammy's choice of words reminds the reader of an immature teen boy. Another example of his immaturity is when he encounters a customer during check out. An elderly woman, who Sammy describes as "one of [those] cash-register-watchers," locks her eyes onto him, making sure he does not allow any mistakes during her transaction. A "witch," is how he categorizes her, which he refers to the Salem witch trials. During the 1600s this was an event of trial and accusations of people being accused of witchcraft and if found guilty, they would be executed. Sammy clearly has a strong dislike for these customers of a certain age.

Throughout this story, numerous ironic actions occur pertaining to the girls and Sammy. For example, as the girls are getting chewed out by Mr. Lengel, the other women in the store are "all

bunched up” like a herd of “sheep,” being noseey. At that moment, Sammy is agitated by the sameness, where no one dares to be different, and everyone follows the crowd. Instead of defending the girls, these older women stand there, watching and trying their best to catch every word that is being said to humiliate them. The ironic events that took place are odd, because in society today, everyone aspire to be different.

Anxiously waiting for the girls in their bikinis to appear, and through the eyes of Sammy, Updike uses imagery to describe the store as “a pinball machine.” Sammy searches the store from left to right, not knowing which direction they will emerge. Finally, they pop up in Sammy’s line of sight. Mr. Lengel, the store manager, approaches the girls and confronts them about their choice of clothing in the store. As his manager talks down to the girls, Sammy responds by suddenly quitting his job. Hoping the girls will acknowledge the heroic gesture he did not only for them, but also himself, they continue walking out the door. Sammy is left standing alone wondering if what he did was the best decision. The images display a great description of what is happening in the store.

While searching for his identity, does Sammy need to become a rebel first? Although making new life decisions can be difficult at times, a little motivation from the least expected places can lead someone in the direction they are pursuing. Heroes are not rude nor disrespectful, but that does not mean that every path they take is the right one.



General Art—Honorable Mention

Juan Barraza



Faculty

&

Staff



Wendy Seay

Cities in Texas that Need to Be Moved or Renamed

Dr. Charles Gongre

If you do much driving in Texas you will come to appreciate the state's sheer size: miles and miles of Texas! You might also notice how many counties the state has: 254 to be exact, more than any other state. [Georgia is in second place with a mere 159].

Spend enough time on Texas roads and highways and you will notice that many Texas counties and cities share the same - or very similar - names. You will also realize that many of these cities are not in the counties with which they share names. Not that I'm obsessive/compulsive, but this keeps me awake at night.

Having nothing better to do, I decided to see just how big an issue this is. It spans the alphabet, A to Z: Anderson is not in Anderson County, where it belongs, but in Grimes County, and Zavalla is not in Zavalla County, but in Angelina County. Austin is in Travis County, not Austin County, Bailey is in Fannin County, not Bailey County, and Bowie is in Montague County, rather than Bowie County. Burleson is not in Burleson County; it's partly in Johnson County and partly in Tarrant County. Caldwell is in Burleson County instead of Caldwell County. Wasn't anyone paying attention? Who was responsible for this?

Is Brazos in Brazos County? Of course not - it's in Hood County. Shouldn't Cameron be in Cameron County? Of course, but it's actually in Milam County. You would expect Crockett to be in Crockett County, but no, it's in Houston County. Ector is inexplicably in Fannin County rather than Ector County, and Franklin is in Robertson County instead of Franklin County.

Cherokee is an unincorporated spot in the road in San Saba County, but any reasonable person would understand that it belongs in Cherokee County! Hardin is in Liberty County, not nearby Hardin

County, and Hemphill and Milam are in Sabine County instead of Hemphill and Milam counties. In a sane world, Sabine would be in Sabine County, but no, it's in Jefferson County, while Jefferson is in Marion County and Marion is in Guadalupe County. Is Henderson in Henderson County? Of course not; it's in Rusk County, while Rusk is in Cherokee County (which of course is where Cherokee belongs!). Parker is in Collin County, not Parker County, Stonewall is in Gillespie County instead of Stonewall County, and Taylor is in Williamson County instead of Taylor County. Terrell should be in Terrell County, but no, it's in Kaufman County, Wilson should be in Wilson County instead of Lynn County, and Yoakum belongs in Yoakum County, so of course it's in Lavaca County!

Crockett belongs in Crockett County but it's in Houston County, while Houston is in Harris County. Pecos is not in Pecos County, Sherman's not in Sherman County, Shelby's not in Shelby County and Tyler's not in Tyler County.

Then there are the ones hoping to escape notice by adding syllables or subtle changes in spelling. For example, Colorado City is not in Colorado County, Dimmitt is not in Dimmit County, Falls City is not in Falls County, Gainesville is not in Gaines County, Hallsburg and Hallsville are not in Hall County, and Jacksonville is not in Jackson County.

Johnson City is not in Johnson County - Why didn't Lyndon Johnson do something about that while he was President?

Kingsville and Kingsbury are not in King County, Liberty Hill is not in Liberty County, Moore Station is not in Moore County, Nolanville is not in Nolan County, and Orange Grove is not in Orange County.

Red Lick, Red Oak, and Redwater are not in Red River County, Smithville is not in Smith County, Stephenville's not in Stephens County, Taylor Lake Village and Taylor Landing are not in Taylor County, and Woodbranch, Wood Creek, and Woodway are not in Wood County.

It's enough to make your car's GPS explode!

To add insult to injury, in several cases where a city is located in the county with the same name, the city is not the county seat, as any rational person would expect. Blanco is not the county seat of Blanco County, nor is Brazoria the county seat of Brazoria County. The same is true of Hays and Hays County, Hidalgo and Hidalgo County, Montgomery and Montgomery County, San Patricio and San Patricio County, Trinity and Trinity County, Waller and Waller County, Presidio and Presidio County.

As I said earlier, this keeps me awake at night.



Adriane Champagne

They Say That Sleeping Late

Dr. Charles Gongre

They say that sleeping late's absurd,
Just because some eager, early bird
Refuses to be beaten.
But consider the early worm:
He gets eaten.



Caitlin James-Mastronardi

Caitlin James-Mastronardi

Sunset Sunday

A still fire burns an ink of relentless passion

To write you.

You are the puppet-master of my pen.

I dissolve within these walls,

Seeking to destroy them

In hopes of finding

Your perfect shadow standing in the rubble.

I give you my secret snowflake of shiny new

Beginnings—beware—

It tastes of ash!

I hand you my palm and honey-soaked heart.

(Til death do us part).



Donna Ellis



LOVE NOT HATE



*Thank you to all
contributors
and
Congratulations
to those
published in
Expressions 2019*

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Statement of Editorial Policy

The editorial staff of EXPRESSIONS 2019 would like to thank all of the students who submitted work for consideration to EXPRESSIONS 2019 this semester. Unfortunately, not every entry can be published. In order to insure fair and impartial judging and publication selection, a copy without the author's name is sent to the judges. The judges at no time see the copy which identifies the individual author.

The purpose of EXPRESSIONS 2019 is to publish the best entries for consideration. We are proud of the entries published in this issue and appreciate the support of all students, faculty, and staff who contributed to and enjoy the magazine. As the editor, I will make changes to reflect correct grammar and usage to enhance each entry and the magazine as well.

Caitlin James-Mastronardi, Editor in Chief

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