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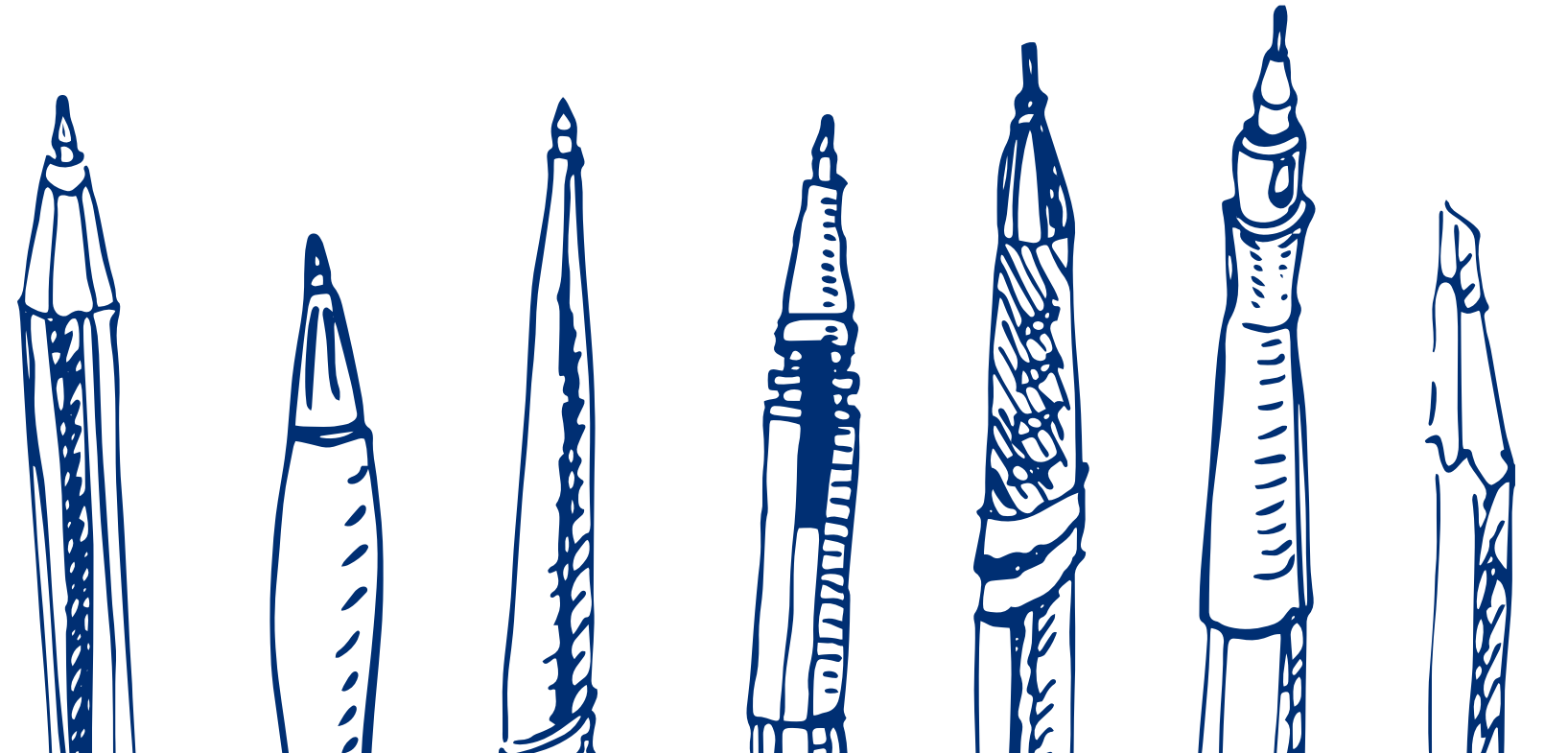

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2016-2017

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Editor's Note

Welcome to the 2016-2017 issue of *Writing@SVSU,* our yearly attempt to capture a small slice of the good writing that occurs at and because of SVSU.

Whether the pieces in *Writing@SVSU* are attached to a prize, the works you'll find here emphasize that all writing matters, even when it's not done for an English class (to paraphrase the title of an essay that follows). Given the political climate, where commentary is often delivered by our leaders through late-night or early-a.m. tweets, we hope you find it refreshing to read the pieces on the following pages. Beyond incorporating far more than 140 characters, these pieces encourage us to reflect at length, as they themselves were the product of much thought and reflection.

Beyond being sources and the product of reflection, these texts remind us that the work of the university is, in part, to build bridges, often through words. Thus, the prize-winning pieces that appear on several of these pages not only provide new insights to readers outside of the authors' disciplines, but are often intended to serve as models for the students in the same majors. Indeed, whether transactional writing, writing of a more scholarly bent, or writing that is literary in nature, the works that follow show that words indeed matter; texts—tweets, graffiti, haiku, scholarly essays—are ways for writers to actively engage with the larger world.

As always, thanks to the deans of SVSU's colleges who help make this publication a reality, with special recognition for the ongoing financial and moral support of Marc Peretz, Dean of the College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences, and his staff. Additional gratitude goes to David Callejo, Cathy Davis, Kim Lacey, and Helen Raica-Klotz for their support and advice. Last but not least, a special thanks goes out to the tutors in the Writing Center who put this publication together throughout the winter and spring months. Writing is indeed a cause for reflection, as well they know from their various roles as writers, editors, and proofreaders.

As the tutors and I plan for the 2017-18 edition, please know that we count on your input for students and initiatives to profile. Please send your suggestions to me. Until then, happy reading and happy writing!

Chris Giroux
Editor, *Writing@SVSU*

In Memoriam

Ted (Hugo) Braun (1932-2017)

One of the special gifts in life is to be able to reflect with gratitude and affection on people who have walked beside us and left their mark in unique ways: on institutions, such as SVSU, and on us, as individuals privileged to know them. Ted Braun has been one of those extraordinary people.

I first met Ted and Ruth in 1995, shortly after I had been hired as SVSU's first Writing Program Director. To put writing "on the map" at SVSU, I wrote a proposal to the SVSU Foundation, seeking a donor for across-the-curriculum writing awards. Ted and Ruth responded with funding for an endowment, and the Braun Writing Awards at SVSU came into being.[1] Established to create incentives for outstanding student writing and opportunities for student writers to be recognized and published, those awards have now been given out annually for twenty consecutive years. Nearly 350 SVSU graduates have been able to put a line on their résumé noting this special Braun Writing Award recognition. The diverse pieces of this year's winners, found in the pages that follow, continue this tradition. Thus, it is fitting that we dedicate this publication to Ted Braun.

A graduate of Arthur Hill High School, Yale University, and the University of Michigan Law School, Ted's influence was both broad and deep. He served on SVSU's Board of Control for eight years (1981-1989). He was succeeded by Ruth, who served sixteen years (1991-2007). In other words, for nearly half of SVSU's history, our university was an agenda item in the Brauns' life. In addition to the Braun Writing Awards, their support also established the SVSU Braun Fellowship for Faculty; sixteen faculty members have been privileged to receive these awards.[2] It is impossible to imagine the history of this university without the Brauns.

In his law practice of fifty-seven years at the firm of Braun Kendrick, and throughout his life, Ted was known for his foresight and integrity, generosity and kindness. His commitment to the community was exceptional: he was president of the Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation and served as president/board chair of many other organizations, including Saginaw Community Foundation, United Way of Saginaw County, and Saginaw General Hospital. Ted received numerous awards, including an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from Saginaw Valley State University, Spirit of Philanthropy Award from Saginaw Community Foundation, Lifetime Community Service Award from Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, and United Way Outstanding Community Volunteer Award.

These community awards are a fitting testimony to Ted's generous spirit. But perhaps a greater gift was to know him as a friend. I will always remember our last meeting, the week before my retirement, when Ted, in his navy blue blazer, and Ruth, bringing a gift, came to say good-bye. No words were adequate to express my gratitude! For me personally, Ted and Ruth made it possible to achieve a vital goal. For so many SVSU students, the Brauns' presence at the annual Writing Awards reception has provided ongoing testimony to their commitment to our university. Ted, we remember with great gratitude all you gave to SVSU!

Diane Boehm
Director Emerita, SVSU University Writing Program

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[1]For more information about the Braun Awards, visit svsu.edu/writingprogram/studentinstructorwritingawards/braunawards/.

[2]Information about the Braun fellowship can be found at svsu.edu/academicaffairs/facultyawards/ruthtedbraunfellowship.

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The University Writing Awards

The Ruth and Ted Braun Awards are presented in the categories of General Education, Graduate Programs, and in each of the five colleges to promote excellent writing across the curriculum. This year two prizes were available in the College of Health and Human Services: one for students in Health Sciences, Kinesiology, or Occupational Therapy courses, and one for students in Nursing or Social Work courses. Two prizes were similarly available in the College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences: one for students in Art, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Philosophy, Rhetoric and Professional Writing, or Theatre courses, and one for students in Communication, Criminal Justice, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, or Sociology classes. Members of the 2016-17 University Writing Committee judged this year's entries. The committee was chaired in 2016-17 by Monika Dix, associate professor of Modern Foreign Languages; Sherrin Frances, associate professor of English and SVSU's Writing Program Administrator; and Kimberly Lacey, assistant professor of English.

The Braun Awards were established by Ruth and Ted Braun. Longtime supporters of SVSU, they created these awards with the belief that no student can be successful in his or her academic career without writing competence and that no SVSU graduate should enter the workplace without such proficiency.

The Brauns' support of SVSU extends far beyond these writing awards. Both have served on the SVSU Board of Control and SVSU Foundation Board of Directors. The Board of Control's chairperson from 1995-1997, Ruth Braun has been active in community service: she has served on the State Board of Education and the Saginaw School District Board of Education, as the president of the Junior League of Saginaw, and as the chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Saginaw General Hospital. Hugo ("Ted") Braun was a partner in the Saginaw law firm Braun Kendrick Finkbeiner PLC. A recipient of an honorary Doctor of Laws from SVSU, he was a longtime supporter of the school; among his other volunteer work for the university, he served on the Foundation Board's Finance & Investment Committee. Like his wife, he was much involved in other community organizations; he was president of the Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation, and United Way of Saginaw County honored him with its Outstanding Volunteer Award.

The writings of past Braun Award winners are available online at svsu.edu/writingprogram/braun-awards.html.

The Tyner Prizes are awarded to students in English courses to recognize writers of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Faculty in the English Department nominate student work for these prizes. Daniel Cook, associate professor of English, and Tamara Migan, lecturer of English, chaired the selection committee in 2017. The Tyner Prizes are named after Raymond Tyner, a former member of the English Department. Professor Tyner came to SVSU in 1968 and was long affiliated with the publication *The Green River Review*. This year the committee awarded the Tyner Award for Poetry and the Tyner Award for Fiction to Kellie Rankey. Kellie's work appears on the pages that follow. The award for nonfiction was given to Victoria Phelps, a junior from Rochester Hills, Michigan, who is pursuing a bachelor of arts in English with minors in history and creative writing. Victoria's winning essay, "'Our lives began with one cell': Understanding Twin Loss and Grief in Danticat's *Untwine,*" was her final project for Professor Eric Gardner's course Memory/Stories in Twentieth-Century American Novels (ENGL 442).

The First-Year Writing Awards recognize outstanding writing in the beginning composition courses taught at SVSU. The First-Year Writing Program at SVSU strives to ensure incoming freshmen have a solid introduction to writing at a collegiate level. This program includes two comprehensive writing courses: Writing Skills (English 080) and Composition I (English 111). Members of the First-Year Writing Committee, chaired in 2016-2017 by Emily Beard-Bohn, associate professor of English, selected the winning essays.

The first prize for the 2017 First-Year Writing Awards went to Carson Chapman, whose essay "A Cleaner and Healthier Future: Environmental Waste and Its Impact on Human Health," is reprinted on the following pages. Other winners were as follows:

- Second Prize: Austin H. Teeple, "How Guns Can Be Safer for Everyone"
- Third Prize: Mary Zwerk, "Syria"
- Fourth Prize: Brittany Eichman, "Overconsumption of Caffeine in College Students"
- Fifth Prize: Brianne Dolney, "Accepting My Reflection"

Asmita Rai and Sadia Majhabeen were also recognized, respectively, for their essays "Parents Should Send Their Daughters to School" and "Child Labor in Bangladesh" in recognition for outstanding writing by English 111 students for whom English is a second language.

The Diane Boehm Writing Awards for e-Portfolios were awarded for the first time in 2015. Established by Diane Boehm, founder and former director of the SVSU Writing Center and the SVSU University Writing Program, the awards recognize the creative and effective integration of writing and multimedia by SVSU students via the medium of e-Portfolios. Entries are judged according to a portfolio's ability to do the following: present a student's capabilities in an engaging, professional and comprehensive manner; include artifacts and documents that demonstrate deep learning appropriate to the student's class or chosen major; include perceptive self-reflection; demonstrate creative use of multimedia; and be easy to navigate and aesthetically effective based on the capabilities of the software or program. Coordinated by Helen Raica-Klotz, the director of the SVSU Writing Center and co-director of the Saginaw Bay Writing Project, the Boehm Awards are given for portfolios made for the classroom or for a workplace application.

The Seitz Creative Writing Scholarship was created by Jim and Melissa Seitz to acknowledge excellence in the writing of poetry and/or fiction. The scholarship, worth $1,000, is awarded annually. A graduate of SVSU, Melissa Seitz is a retired member of the English Department much respected by her students and colleagues. During her time at SVSU, Melissa served as both student editor and faculty advisor of *Cardinal Sins*. The 2016-2017 Seitz Scholarship was coordinated by Tamara Migan, lecturer of English.

The Changing Independence Day Celebrations of the 19th Century

Kaitlyn Farley
Braun Award for Writing Excellence in General Education
Nominated by Brad Jarvis, Associate Professor of History

Kaitlyn Farley is from Warren, Michigan, and transferred to SVSU in Fall 2016 from the Early College of Macomb. She is pursuing a history major, English minor, social studies endorsement, and secondary education certification. She is a reporter for *The Valley Vanguard*, a Club Red tour guide, the vice president of recognition for SVSU's National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH), a Foundation Scholar, and a President's Scholarship recipient. After graduation, she plans to be a secondary education social studies teacher.

This paper was written for Introduction to Historical Study (HIST 111). The goal of the paper was to find and analyze disparate historical sources and then craft an argument pertaining to the changing nature of Independence Day celebrations in 19th-century America. The essay discusses how minority groups—women, African Americans, and Amerindians—utilized protest and alternative declarations of independence to reveal their discontent with the lack of rights their newly formed government offered them.

Shortly after the American Revolution and the ratification of the American Constitution, the problems facing marginalized groups of Americans took political center stage. Because the young country was independent from Britain and operating under a single federal constitution, it became time for the groups within the country to cite their grievances. These groups believed that, even though the country was independent and free in name, freedom and independence did not extend to them. As such, the country was facing more problems and unrest instead of being able to enjoy its victory over Britain, for, as Abraham Lincoln famously said, a house divided cannot stand.

Many groups felt excluded from their country's new rights and liberties because of their political beliefs, gender, or ethnicity, among disparate other factors. Although they were not the only groups that sought more rights, no one was more outspoken than women, African Americans, and Amerindians. Women pondered whether their political voices would ever be heard. African Americans wondered whether freedom would ever include them. Amerindians speculated about how much land and how many lives they would lose to the white man. As such, America's 19th-century civil rights movements morphed a once patriotic Independence Day celebration into one of protest and alternative declarations of independence against the country and government to show these marginalized groups' unhappiness and desire for change.

The Independence Day celebrations of the early 19th century still sponsored an air of patriotism and joy, especially in New York City. In the beginning of the century, Independence Day saw "bells pealed, cannons fired, and firecrackers exploded underfoot."[1] Patriotic plays were created, such as William Dunlap's *The Glory of Columbia, Her Yeomanry,* which detailed the Battle of Yorktown and exemplified the extreme patriotism

[1] Brooks McNamara, *Days of Jubilee: The Great Age of Public Celebrations in New York, 1788-1909* (New York: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 31.

many Americans felt for their country and founders.[2] In fact, Dunlap's almost hyperbolically patriotic play included the motto "IMMORTALITY TO WASHINGTON," a sentiment that spoke to most Americans' sense of pride and connection to their country and its ideals.[3]

This patriotic theme was also captured by New York City tourist Baron Axel Klinkowstrom, who, in 1819, recorded the Independence Day celebrations of the city.[4] As historian Brooks McNamara noted, Klinkowstrom described the parades and religious services that began the festivities, noting that, by seven in the morning, military and civilian marches were already well under way. McNamara found that the marchers' destination was a ship modeled after the *Hamilton*, a warship created to celebrate the end of the American Revolution, and then, eventually, City Hall, where a sermon would begin a thanksgiving feast. The hall, McNamara notes, was ornately decorated, and festivities held there included a brief but elegant prayer before a fireworks display.

By the mid 19th century however, even New Yorkers began seeing a weakening of their patriotic spirits. The Independence Day sights and celebrations had declined so heartily that the editor of *The Subterranean*, Mike Walsh, published an oratory in 1846 that read, in part, "Fire away—shout away, and raise hell in every conceivable manner, and let it go off as it should—in a blaze of glory."[5] These lines reveal that he missed the fireworks displays, the long patriotic parades, and the joyous crowds of Independence Day celebrations in New York City. Walsh saw that the once glorious celebrations were quickly becoming more subdued, a change that would foreshadow the growing discontent of marginalized groups and, ultimately, the growing use of the holiday as a form of protest instead of celebration.

Walsh and others who lamented the loss of the grand Independence Day celebrations would find no solace in the years to come. Just two years later, in 1848, New York's Seneca Falls would host the famous Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention,[6] bringing with it a Fourth of July full of protest, not celebration. However, even before this convention, the growing unrest amongst women was beginning to reveal itself slowly but steadily.

Even when America's Independence Day celebrations were at their best and brightest, not every group was permitted to share firsthand in the joys of the holiday. As McNamara discovered, women were often stowed away on balconies during these celebrations. She uncovered that, instead of celebrating on the streets, women took to planning balls and elaborate suppers complete with handcrafted decorations, such as the flags and patriotic banners that lined the rooms of dining halls. Women, especially those of higher social status, were not permitted to watch the parades firsthand since their husbands and fathers believed that it was unseemly for a woman to be present while men drank excessively in the streets, for fear that a riot may break out.[7]

Over time, women became weary of their subdued roles not only during Independence Day celebrations but in society generally. The painting titled *Independence Day in Center Square* especially reveals this growing trend. At first glance, the scene seems to depict a typical celebration in Philadelphia. In the foreground, men drink and sing under tents with American flags and a portrait of George Washington for decoration. In the background, militiamen begin organizing for a parade. However, in this seemingly joyous depiction, women are pushed to the side, their main jobs being to watch children or play music. Not a woman in the picture is drinking or laughing, although nearly every man is. In fact, a woman in the right corner attempts to hand out fliers about temperance as opposed to

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[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., 31.
[4] Ibid., 29.
[5] Ibid., 32.
[6] Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, "Declaration of Sentiments," in *Going to the Source: The Bedford Reader in American History Volume 1: To 1887*, *Third Edition*, ed. Victoria Bissell Brown and Timothy J. Shannon (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012), 315.
[7] McNamara, *Days of Jubilee,* 31.

celebrating happily as those around her do.[8] In this way, she uses the holiday to better her situation and raise awareness, if not of women's rights, then at least of women's growing unhappiness with the status quo. The woman pictured—like so many others—no longer tolerated their oppression and exclusion from political and even social events, such as voting to change laws or simply watching an Independence Day fireworks display with the men.

Women's growing concern about gender equality became very evident when they organized, with some men, the Seneca Falls Convention, just weeks after Independence Day on July 19-20, 1848.[9] The cornerstone of the convention was the Declaration of Sentiments, which was modeled after the United States' Declaration of Independence. It followed the format of most other alternative declarations of independence—that is, it used the original document's format and diction but strayed from its original content to point out the similarities between the original writers' grievances with Britain and a particular group's grievances with America. Although the convention occurred after Independence Day, the women still used common features of Independence Day celebrations, which often included orations and a reading of a patriotic text, which often was the Declaration of Independence.[10] In other words, although this event did not occur on the Fourth of July, the women still used Independence Day as a form of protest against their lack of rights.

The Declaration of Sentiments stated that women are "civilly dead [in] the eye of the law" [11] when they marry, since they lose control over their income, lands, and the "inalienable rights"[12] that all American men are granted. Despite this, women were still expected to obey the laws they had no voice in creating.[13] These grievances explain why women did not have pride in their country, for they believed their country's laws and politics did not care about women's opinions but, rather, were more interested in keeping women servile to men. As such, it was hard for women to celebrate their country's birth when their country's beliefs and promises were compromised and unfulfilled since women were still clearly not viewed as equal to men.

Shortly after the Seneca Falls Convention, another marginalized group's grievances were brought forward as the stage for the American Civil War began unfolding. Nine years before the Civil War began, Frederick Douglass was invited to give an oration in Rochester, New York, for the 1852 Independence Day celebration.[14] As a former slave and outspoken abolitionist, Douglass' oration did not celebrate Independence Day; rather, like the Seneca Falls' Declaration of Sentiments, it focused on the fact that the ideals and promises of the Declaration of Independence did not apply to African Americans.[15] Like the women, African Americans did not believe their country viewed them as equals to the white man; in fact, they knew their country viewed them as slaves. Douglass underscored this point by saying, "I am not included within the pale of [this] glorious anniversary!"[16] Within this context, "pale" does "double duty"; it literally describes the pale moonlight that illuminates the Independence Day fireworks and celebrations, but it also implies that these celebrations were only for those of pale skin. Only white Americans were free to celebrate Independence Day because African

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[8]John Lewis Krimmel, *Independence Day in Center Square,* in Brown and Shannon, *Going to the Source*, 308.

[9] Judith Wellman, "The Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention: A Study of Social Networks," *Journal of Women's History* 3, no. 1 (1991): 9-37, doi:https://doi .org/10.1353/jowh.2010.0101

[10] McNamara, "Days of Jubilee," 29.

[11] Ibid., 316.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?," in Brown and Shannon, *Going to the Source,* 317.

[15] Ibid., 318.

[16] Ibid.

Americans were not protected by the same rights white Americans were granted under the Declaration of Independence.

Douglass furthered this point by condemning the nation for continuing its system of slavery, which, by definition, asserted that African Americans were not equal to white men and, as such, were not citizens. He further explained the typical African American's view of the holiday by stating that slavery unfairly punished the slave for running away and seeking a better life for himself and his family. Additionally, these same laws rewarded the white man for returning the slave to his chains—that is, returning him to his master. Douglass argued that the "American bondman"[17] who took the African American back to his owner after running away punished the slave for the white man's mistakes, namely continuing slavery and enforcing the fugitive slave laws.[18] Likewise, Douglass also blamed his primarily white audience for not doing enough to end slavery and therefore failing to grant African Americans true freedom. As such, he urged African Americans against celebrating Independence Day; doing so would be celebrating the reason for his people's enslavement.

Furthermore, Douglass asserted that the Fourth of July was the white man's Independence Day, not the African American's. As such, he ended his speech by stating, "What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July?"[19] By describing Independence Day as "your" holiday, Douglass furthered his point that African Americans were not included in these celebrations. The holiday was only for his primarily white audience, since only they could truly claim to be independent. By contrast, African Americans were dependent on their white slave masters and denied the rights that the Declaration of Independence promised them.

Besides Douglass and his oration, other forms of protest in the 19th century indicate that African Americans used Independence Day as a catalyst for change and protest. For instance, Fernando Miranda's 1876 drawing entitled *The Freed Slave in Memorial Hall* depicts a group of well-off African Americans admiring and respecting a statue of a freed African American. The man holds the Emancipation Proclamation in one hand and a shackle in the other. Chains beneath him reveal that he has been set free.[20]

The statue in Miranda's drawing was displayed during the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, which adds another layer of meaning to its message. Instead of merely celebrating the freedoms brought to African Americans under the Emancipation Proclamation, the fact that it was displayed on the nation's 100th birthday accentuates the fact that most African Americans believed that the Emancipation Proclamation, not the Declaration of Independence*,* freed them. As such, the clothes worn by the picture's African American spectators contrast with the dress of the African American figure caught in the sculpture. Dressed only in a loincloth, the newly freed African American is depicted as almost primitive and uncivilized. The African Americans, however, are dressed rather formally in suits, dresses, hats, polished dress shoes, and parasols.[21] In this way, the African American crowd is showing respect for the Emancipation Proclamation, not the Declaration of Independence since the former, not the latter, freed them.

Although a more subdued form of protest than that of the Seneca Falls Convention, this picture still represents how African Americans used the holiday to protest the injustices they had faced through a counter-celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation instead of the Declaration of Independence. Although the African American crowd is celebrating, they are doing so with a different purpose than white Americans, who celebrate their country and the rights it gave them. The African Americans are happy that the Emancipation Proclamation

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., 317.
[19] Ibid., 319.
[20] Fernando Miranda, *The Freed Slave in Memorial Hall,* in Brown and Shannon, *Going to the Source,* 326.
[21] Ibid.

brought them more rights and freedoms, but they are also protesting that so many people are celebrating a holiday that exalts a document that excluded African Americans from the rights granted to white Americans.

As African Americans and women fought for—and, to some degree, gained—liberties, Amerindians continually lost the rights to their lands and faced prejudices from white Americans who believed the natives' cultures were uncivilized. This was especially true when the idea of manifest destiny, which largely affected Amerindians during and after the Jacksonian Democracy period, led many American politicians to push more Amerindians off their lands, claiming they had the right and obligation to do so.[22] Historian Phil Allard notes that, under the Indian Removal Act of 1832, Jackson forced Indians to move westward, most famously along the Trail of Tears. Since the passing of this act, Indians had faced even greater threats from the white man, a fact that John Wannuaucon Quinney highlighted in his Independence Day oration in Reidsville, New York, in 1854.[23]

Quinney, a member of the Stockbridge Indians of Central New York, was removed with his tribe after the American Revolution to Wisconsin, where he represented his tribe while working with the U.S. Congress in an attempt to prevent further Indian removals.[24] As such, he began his speech by describing the evolution of the relationship between his tribe and the white man. He said, "Two hundred and fifty winters ago… the Muh-he-con-new, for the first time, beheld the 'pale face.' Their numbers were small, but their canoes were big."[25] In these two short lines, Quinney described his tribe's first encounter with whites, who were a small minority at the time but had the potential and technology to still overpower the tribe. Quinney then explained that his ancestors, the Aborigines, helped the white man, saying, "'Our visitors were white, and must be sick. They asked for rest and kindness. We gave them both. They were strangers, and we took them on—naked, and we clothed them.'"[26] This quote explains that the natives helped the white man when they first arrived to the former's lands. They did not attack them or hurt them; rather, they fed them, gave them shelter, and learned to appreciate and admire their allegedly advanced culture. In turn though, the white man would destroy their lands, claiming them as their own and forcing the Indians to move elsewhere, even after the kindness and friendship their ancestors had shared. It is no surprise, then, that Amerindians did not view the Fourth of July as a day of independence but rather as a time of mourning and loss. Instead of being freed on this day, the natives, though not enslaved like the African Americans, were merely tossed to the side as a representation of an old and primitive way of life that should be changed or destroyed.

Quinney further believed that the Americans were more sympathetic to the African Americans' plight than that of the Amerindians. As he explained, "Has it ever occurred to you, my friends, that while the slave is increasing, and increased by every appliance, the Indian is left to rot and die, before the humanities of this model *Republic!*"[27] Although Quinney acknowledged that other groups, especially African Americans, had been treated poorly by the white man as well, he still criticized Americans for being only sympathetic to the African Americans while viewing the Indians as a race and culture in need of extermination.[28] The fact that only 250,000 Amerindians survived the end of the 19th century has led many historians to call the removal and supposed civilizing of Amerindians a

[22] Phil Allard, *Manifest Destiny: Issues & Controversies in American History* (New York, New York: Infobase Publishing, 2015), PDF e-book, 1-11.
[23] John Wannuaucon Quinney. "Speech," in Brown and Shannon, *Going to the Source*, 320.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 321.
[28] Ibid.

genocide.[29] Quinney even hinted at this when referring to the actions of the white man as "hurrying [Amerindians] to extinction."[30] Many Amerindians would not celebrate Independence Day but rather use it, as Quinney did, as a form of protest against the injustices they faced because of the laws and ideals of their country.

Just as Quinney's speech fought against the government's assimilation efforts, Amos Bad Heart Bull's 1903 drawing titled *4. July. 1903* attacks assimilation. This point is emphasized by the description that accompanies the picture: "The Oglalas are still celebrating the Fourth of July in the old way."[31] Amos Bad Heart Bull's illustration depicts two of the tribe's chiefs, Iron Bull and Bad Heart Bull, leading a procession on horseback with flags on their horses' manes and on their saddles. The flags appear to be America's, but the chiefs are dressed in their traditional style with headdresses, furs, fringe, and beads. This provides a contrast between "the new" and "the old"—that is, the white Americans and the Amerindians. The combining of the two worlds reveals that the Amerindians used the white man's holiday to celebrate their own traditions and culture, both of which the white man was trying to destroy.

Likewise, this scene depicts how the Amerindians used Independence Day to protest against the assimilation efforts of the American government. The description of the text makes it clear that the Amerindians did not agree with the changes that the white men had made to their country and, more importantly, their culture. Instead of celebrating with fireworks and loud and long parades, they celebrated in their traditional dress and on horseback.[32] Their refusal to adapt to the white man's traditional modes of celebration further supports the fact that they were using the holiday to protest the assimilation efforts of the white man. Keeping to "the old way"[33] of celebration showed that the Amerindians were resisting and protesting the white American culture being forced on them and, instead, demonstrating their pride in their traditional ways. As such, the Amerindians used a counter-celebration similar to that of the African Americans during the centennial celebration to reveal that Independence Day was the white man's holiday, not theirs.

Throughout the 19th century, the struggles for the freedom and independence of certain groups in this new country came to light. These groups utilized Independence Day to air their grievances with the rest of the country and as a catalyst for protest, not celebration. Women, African Americans, and Amerindians all wanted their rights and voices acknowledged by those who controlled political decision-making in 19th-century America—white men. Although these groups did create some change through their protests, all of them still faced challenges and obstacles in exercising their rights and liberties as the 19th century came to a close. These groups and sources reveal a discontent that would lead to a wave of civil protests that would carry into the 20th and 21st centuries.

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[29] Guenter Lewy, "Were American Indians the Victims of Genocide?," *History News Network*, last modified September 2004, accessed November 2, 2016, http://historynewsnetwork
.org/article/7302.

[30] Quinney, "Speech," in Brown and Shannon, *Going to the Source,* 321.

[31] Amos Bad Heart Bull, *4. July. 1903*, in Brown and Shannon, *Going to the Source*, 328-29.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

Hashtag Activism: Counter-public Acquisition of Agency via Online and Digital Tools

Kylie Wojciechowski

Braun Award for the College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences, Category One
Nominated by Scott Kowalewski, Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Professional Writing

Kylie (Ky) Wojciechowski graduated from SVSU in May 2017 with a bachelor of arts in professional and technical writing (PTW) and a minor in philosophy. While at SVSU, Ky was involved in several activities and initiatives in the department of Rhetoric and Professional Writing, including its usability research team, Cardinal Solutions, and the Association of Professional & Technical Writers. A former editor of *The Valley Vanguard*, tutor at the Writing Center, and Roberts Fellow, she will begin her graduate studies at the University of Michigan in the School of Information in Fall 2017. Her focus there will be on user experience research and design.

This paper was written for the course Studies in Rhetoric (RPW 480) in Fall 2016. In this course, students learned about the ways in which writing circulates in and impacts broader society, a class emphasis that drew from the works of several public sphere scholars, including Jürgen Habermas, Michael Warner, and Nancy Fraser. Students were asked to contribute to this scholarly conversation with their own research projects about public sphere theories. Inspired by movements such as #BlackLivesMatter, Ky explored the extent to which hashtags enable social media users to serve as advocates for civic and political causes, ultimately concluding that "hashtag activism" can be a powerful digital tool for social change that requires a rhetorical awareness for complete effectiveness. In nominating Ky's essay for the Braun Award, Dr. Kowalewski wrote: "Ky's essay is timely, as social movements are deeply intertwined with social media, and Ky admirably weaves course content with her own research to draw conclusions about hashtag activism's cultural impact."

Hashtags (#) became known as hashtags—rather than pound symbols or representatives of the word *number*—in 2007 when Carnegie Mellon University alum Chris Messina suggested such on Twitter: "how do you feel about using # (pound) for groups. As in #barcamp [msg]?" (as quoted in "#OriginStory," n.d.). In the time that has passed, *The New York Times* has since dubbed the hashtag "the typographical symbol with ambitions" (Turner, 2012, para. 1). Turner, the author of "#InPraiseOfTheHashtag," has traced the hashtag from its days as purely functional—a tool to categorize conversations—to present day, when the use of hashtags has exploded exponentially in terms of both instances and purposes of use. Hashtags are now supported across social media platforms, from Twitter to Facebook to Instagram, and from Google+ to Tumblr to Pinterest, though the degree to which they are supported varies (Hiscott, 2013).

They now serve purposes beyond organizing conversations; they encompass, as Wikström (2014) argues, a variety of other communicative functions, like structuring information, playing games, and engaging in reflexive meta-commentary, to name a few. What this undergraduate course research endeavor will focus on, though, is the extent to which hashtags enable social media users to serve as advocates for civic and political causes.

Put another way, this research is concerned with what "hashtag activism" is, how it takes place, and whether it is an effective activism strategy. Initial findings lead to the conclusion that hashtag activism is an effective activism strategy only if the understanding of what actually constitutes civic and political engagement is modified to encompass a multifaceted view of the sociological specialized online public (and counter-public) sphere, as defined by Warner (2002) and Kowalewski (2013). Additionally, this research briefly explores how counter-publics (as subordinate to and dominated by publics) can acquire and enact agency via online and digital tools.

Hashtag Activism as a Concept

Hashtag activism was first described as such in 2011 by *Guardian* journalist Eric Augenbraun in his critical analysis of the #OccupyWallStreet protests, which formed in response to rampant corporate greed and influence on government actions. Although Augenbraun initially expected the protests to fizzle out after a few days, he argued that, at the time of his writing, nearly two weeks after the protests had begun, the movement would not likely achieve any measurable political change. The premise for this argument lay in the movement's relative lack of clearly defined goals, leadership structure, or constituencies, trends that he then attributed to the movement's basis in and reliance on technology (i.e., its nature as a form of hashtag activism):

> The advent of "hashtag activism" has been greeted with breathless claims about the birth of a new form of technology-based social movement. While such technologies can be extremely useful tools, they do not represent alternatives to the exhausting, age-old work of meeting people where they are, hearing their concerns, reaching common ground, building trust and convincing them that it is in their interests to act politically to change their circumstances. There are no shortcuts here; or to put it another way, it's not the protests that matter, but what happens in the time in between. (para. 17)

Before Augenbraun's use of the term however, other, older terms, like "slacktivism" and "clicktivism," were used. As Lauri Goodling described, slacktivism was and is a "pejorative neologism used to describe actions taken by an individual through digital channels as opposed to in person in order to affect change" (2014, "Slacktivism (Otherwise Known as Clicktivism)," para. 1). These actions could include liking, sharing, and signing e-petitions; joining an online community without participating in its efforts; changing one's avatar to a cause's logo for a set period of time; and so on. A synonym for slacktivism is clicktivism, due to the act of clicking that is necessary to advance such social causes (or the technology-based nature of the advancement of such causes).

Despite this criticism, many people engage in some form of technology-based social movements. Research conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2012 (Rainie, Smith, Lehman-Schlozman, Brady, & Verba) analyzed the extent to which American adults engaged in political or civic discourse through social media platforms. Of the 60% of American adults who use social media platforms, 66% of those users—or 38% of all American adults—have engaged in at least one of eight civic or political activities via social media: "liking" or promoting material related to political or social issues that others have posted, encouraging others to vote, posting their own thoughts or comments on political and social issues, reposting content related to political or social issues that was originally posted by someone else, encouraging others to take action on a political or social issue, posting links to political stories or articles for others to read, joining a group that is involved in political or social issues, working to advance a cause, or following elected officials and candidates for office.

Many of these civically and politically engaged American adults, at least those who post their own thoughts or comments on political and social issues or who repost content related to political or social issues that was originally posted by someone else, likely have used or use some of the most popular socially or politically relevant hashtags in their

discourses. Caitlyn Dewey, a journalist for *The Washington Post*, compiled what was in 2014 the "complete, divisive history of 'hashtag activism.'" Dewey drew comparisons between slacktivism, clicktivism, and hashtag activism, which is allegedly just the "latest iteration of a long-standing debate between people who think awareness is its own kind of protest … and people who, for various reasons, do not" (para. 2). She highlighted the following movements as integral to the history of hashtag activism: #StandwithPP, which arose in 2015 to represent opposition to the U.S. government's decision to cut federal funding to Planned Parenthood; #Kony2012, which came from a 2012 movement started by Invisible Children, Inc., to make Ugandan cult and militia leader and indicted war criminal Joseph Kony internationally known; #JusticeforTrayvon, which became popular after the 2013 acquittal of George Zimmerman for the murder of Florida teen Trayvon Martin; and #BringBackOurGirls, which arose after more than 250 school girls were kidnapped from the Chibok Government Secondary School by Boko Haram Terrorists in Nigeria in 2014. Toward the end of 2015, Twitter ("Most Influential," 2015) compiled a few moments (and their complementary hashtags) that had the biggest impact across the world that year: #JeSuisCharlie, which came about after the terrorist attack on the headquarters of French weekly satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*; #PrayForParis, which arose just 10 months later as widespread terrorist attacks unfolded in November; #BlackLivesMatter, which came to represent the social movement surrounding police brutality of black citizens; #LoveWins, which arose after the U.S. Supreme Court voted on June 26 to legalize same-sex marriage; #IStandWithAhmed, which became popular as a solidarity movement when 14-year-old Ahmed Mohammed was detained and handcuffed at his school in Texas for bringing in a homemade digital clock (thought to be a bomb by administrators); #FIFAWWC, which represented the FIFA Women's World Cup in Canada from June 6 to July 5; #PlutoFlyby, which arose after the *New Horizons* spacecraft came within 7,750 miles of Pluto's surface and produced close-up images; and #BlueandBlack / #WhiteandGold, which were used to represent a user's view of the optical illusion dress that went viral in mid-2015.

Hashtag Activism as Ineffective: "Half-Assed Retweet Activists"

An informal, non-scholarly poll I conducted on Twitter (see Figure 1) shows a split right down the middle in terms of whether my followers believe hashtag activism is effective.

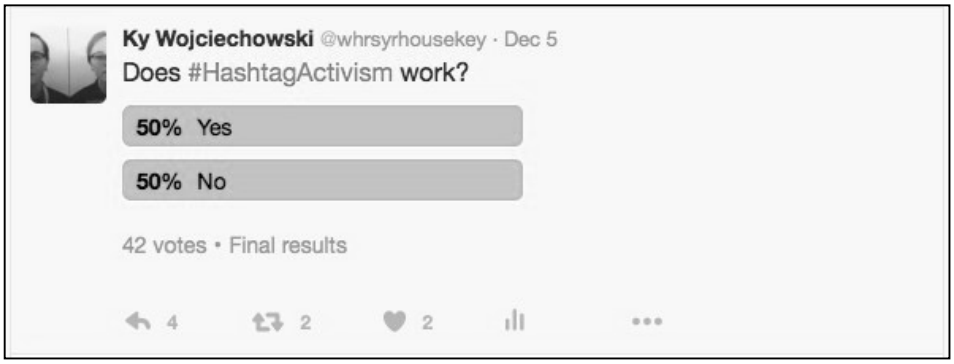

Figure. 1. Informal poll of Twitter followers from Dec. 5-6 on the topic of whether hashtag activism is an effective form of advocacy for civic and political movements.

Many people, scholars or otherwise, including Augenbraun and 21 of my Twitter followers, are of the mind that any form of hashtag activism (that is, any form of a technology-based social movement) cannot be successful in its aims because, with the tools it makes use of, it is unable to truly meet people where they are. In fact, a semi-popular YouTube channel, Blimey Cow, posted a video in 2014, titled "Why I Hate Hashtag Activism," that begins to explain this view. In it, a host describes his view of hashtag activism: "It's this thing where

some injustice in the world is given a catchy hashtag, and people get it trending online." The host then says to another actor, "Hey, I noticed something really messed up in the world this week, and you know what I did? I started a hashtag to raise awareness. I really hope that we can get it trending." The other actor says, "Cool. What are we doing to do once we raise awareness?" He replies, "Oh, I don't know, celebrate? I'm thinking pizza." The host later concedes that awareness of social issues is necessary:

> You can't do something about something that you don't know about. But that's the thing: I don't see anyone actually doing anything! They stop at awareness. I mean, if I'm just aware of every single problem in the world, and I'm not doing anything about anything, all we've done is create a new problem.

He then asks, "What is the goal of raising awareness? Really, what is the point?" Another actor replies, "Um, I'm trying to raise awareness so that other people can take care of problems that I can't take care of myself."

Sean Hannity shared similar sentiments in 2014 on Greta Van Susteren's show on the Fox News Channel. Although the pair were meant to discuss the controversial topic of atheist military chaplains, the conversation kept going back to the #BringBackOurGirls hashtag. Awareness of the issue grew exponentially after First Lady Michelle Obama tweeted an image of herself holding a piece of paper with "#BringBackOurGirls" written on it. It's been retweeted nearly 80,000 times and liked by more than 100,000 Twitter users (FLOTUS, 2014). Hannity expressed frustration with this form of hashtag activism. "Terrorists don't read Twitter!" he exclaimed (LSUDVM, 2014).

Ann Marie Lipinski was also critical of the #BringBackOurGirls hashtag, but for a different reason. She didn't believe that the movement was meant to communicate a message to Boko Haram terrorists as Hannity did. At a "Bring Back Our Girls" rally organized by a Harvard graduate student in 2014, Lipinski spoke with Ameto Akpe, a Nieman Fellow and Nigerian journalist. Akpe described how the "overly-simplified story" of Nigeria and the kidnapped girls "seem[ed] to suit a Western audience" (2014, para. 8). Lipinski explained how the emotional pull of the story was "undeniable" and "understandably appealed to distant observers aching to respond with rallies, donations, and tweets" (para. 13). Akpe, however, waved this off: "'We don't need an emotional response,' she said. 'We need an intelligent response'" (para. 15).

From a different perspective but to the same end, Shonda Rhimes, best known for her roles as creator, head writer, and executive producer of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal*, delivered the 2014 commencement address at Dartmouth College. Amongst a slew of other advice to the soon-to-be college graduates, Rhimes suggested they volunteer or "focus on something outside [themselves and] devote a slice of [their] energies toward making the world suck less every week" (para. 50). They should do these things, Rhimes said, instead of using hashtags (or instead of engaging in hashtag activism):

> A hashtag is not helping. #yesallwomen #takebackthenight #notallmen #bringbackourgirls #StopPretendingHashtagsAreTheSameAsDoingSomething
>
> Hashtags are very pretty on Twitter. I love them. I will hashtag myself into next week. But a hashtag is not a movement. A hashtag does not make you Dr. King. A hashtag does not change anything. It's a hashtag. It's you, sitting on your butt, typing into your computer and then going back to binge watching your favorite show. (para. 47-48)

After the Orlando nightclub shooting in June 2016, Trevor Noah, a South African comedian and host of *The Daily Show*, similarly summed up the United States' seemingly complacent response to rampant gun violence quite simply: "We're shocked, we mourn, we change our profile pics, and then we move on" (as quoted in Claymore, 2016). *New York Times* reporter David Carr adds another dimension to the argument that hashtag activism can't be effective; he discusses "favoriting fatigue," wherein the digital causes of the day, week, month, year all start to blend together: "Another week, another hashtag, and with it, a question about what is actually being accomplished" (2012, para. 8).

Blogger Sam Biddle concedes that social media *has* proven useful in situations like the Egyptian revolution or Occupy Wall Street movement, but acknowledges that people using Twitter and Facebook to organize impromptu rallies or other events represent a small portion of users. "The rest of us," he has argued, "are fakers—half-assed retweet activists, who 'support' Iranian dissent or 'raise awareness' about homophobia with the same zeal that we click Like on a video of two cute cats playing with an alligator" (2012, para. 2).

Hashtag Activism as Effective

Many other people, some scholars, some not, including another 21 of my Twitter followers, will argue otherwise—that hashtag activism (or any technology-based social movement) *can be* and *is* effective. As indicated by Rainie et al.'s 2012 work about social media engagement in people's political and civic lives, almost 40% of all American adults have used a social media platform to share or learn about a political or social issue. Citing Robert Putnam's work, Freelon, McIlwain, and Clark (2016) argue that there exists a decades-long decline in traditionally defined youth civic engagement (i.e., that which requires interaction with established civic and political institutions, like governments):

> Recent scholarship in this area has observed that 21st-century youth may march to the beat of a different civic drum than earlier generations, preferring individually-motivated, digitally-enabled, cause-based activism to the more top-down, institution-centered, adult-directed civic styles of yesteryear. (8)

In fact, from the perspective of 169 representatives from 53 national advocacy groups in the United States, as researched by Obar, Zube, and Lampe (2011), social media can facilitate civic engagement and collective action in four tangible ways: strengthening outreach efforts, enabling engaging feedback loops, increasing the speed of communication, and being cost-effective. Laura Goodling, a Ph.D. candidate in rhetoric and composition at Georgia State University, even called for "MOAR Digital Activism, Please" (2014) in her article that used that very request as the essay's title. She acknowledged that the Internet and mobile technologies are changing the face of activism, just as Putnam and thus Freelon, McIlwain, and Clark (2016) have similarly argued, creating the necessity for a modified understanding of engagement.

Even Carr (2012) has come around to this notion of a modified understanding of political and social engagement. He highlighted a successful online petition started by a teenager to change the rating of the film *Bully*, which is about child-on-child harassment and violence, from an R to a PG-13 so that those most affected by the issue could actually see the movie. He noted that this softened his own cynicism about Web activism:

> Sure, hashtags come and go, and the so-called weak ties of digital movements are no match for real world engagement. But they are not only better than nothing, they probably make the world, the one beyond the keyboard, a better place. (para. 26)

This modified understanding of what actually constitutes civic and political engagement is something the arguments against the usefulness of hashtag activism fail to acknowledge. These arguments ignore the true goal or goals of this modified form of activism. Blimey Cow's YouTube rant comes close, poking fun at an answer to the question of what the true goal of activism is: "Um, I'm trying to raise awareness so that other people can take care of problems that I can't take care of myself" (2014). The sarcastic delivery of this line makes it clear that this is an answer deemed weak and unsuitable by the scriptwriters.

However, this is exactly one of the main goals of activism; it *has to be* one of the main goals of this modified understanding of political and social activism. Not every person can donate money to or volunteer with organizations focused on boots-on-the-ground (BoTG) activism, organize rallies, or write letters to or call their local government representatives—and even if they could, they all shouldn't necessarily advocate for the same cause in the same way. As Carr noted, new social and civic causes fight for our attention day in and day out, to the point that it is easy for us confuse them with one another or tire of them. For people with

finite amounts of time and money (i.e., everyone), how do they pick and choose which causes to promote? Easy—they engage in each cause as they can. They may, for example, donate monthly to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, volunteer with Habitat for Humanity on the weekends, tweet relevant articles with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter or #BringBackOurGirls, and change their Facebook profile image to the Human Rights Campaign Marriage Equality logo.

Stephanie Vie has suggested, in her article "In Defense of 'Slacktivism': The Human Rights Campaign Facebook Logo as Digital Activism," that "even small moves of support, such as changing one's Facebook status to a memetic image, assist by demonstrating a supportive environment for those who identify with marginalized groups and by drawing awareness to important causes" (2014, para. 1). Each action meant to further a particular civic or political cause has an effect, so it is erroneous to chalk some efforts up as ineffective. The effect may be relative in scope to the amount of effort exerted, but, as described below according to a multifaceted approach to understanding the sociological specialized online public (and counter-public) sphere, successful civic and political movements are comprised of efforts of varied sizes.

An Illustration: #BlackLivesMatter

As researchers at the Center for Media & Social Impact at American University's School of Communication, Freelon, McIlwain, and Clark examined in February 2016 how online media and other digital tools have contributed to the goals of the Black Lives Matter movement. They did so via analysis of three types of data: 40.8 million tweets, more than 100,000 web links, and 40 interviews with Black Lives Matter activists and allies. Although the scope of such analysis is beyond the scope of what this particular research endeavor could hope to accomplish within the confines of an academic semester, their conclusions are relevant and valid: Black Lives Matter and other related movements (i.e., those generally standing for anti-brutality) have been able to successfully leverage online tools—including hashtags—to facilitate social and political change as they define it.

This change was facilitated in a few distinct ways. First, it is important to note that the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag first came into being in July 2013 but was rarely used until the summer of 2014. It only became, in other words, a significant and meaningful part of the movement in the months following the initial Ferguson, Missouri, protests that began after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown on August 9, 2014. The researchers determined that, when the hashtag was being used frequently, social media posts by activists were essential in spreading Brown's story to communities outside of Missouri; in this way, protestors and their supporters were able to circulate their own narratives (particularly on Twitter) without having to rely on mainstream news outlets. Their goals in social media usage were education, amplification of marginalized voices, and structural police reform.

How Hashtag Activism Is Effective

Hashtag activism *is* effective to the extent that it accomplishes the goals of modified engagement because it creates multifaceted counter-publics, which are absolutely essential for accomplishing any social or political goal. To understand fully, however, how counter-publics are effective digitally and online, some background information is needed on counter-publics and their counterparts, publics. As the concept of publics sets the stage for the concept of counter-publics, publics will be discussed first.

Publics

From a sociological and rhetorical perspective, publics, originally described by prominent scholar Jürgen Habermas in the 18th century, "have become an essential fact of

the social landscape" (Warner, 2002, p. 49). Publics—and the public sphere in which they exist—are difficult to define, but their definition should be based on the fact that they come into being in relation to texts—defined broadly here—and their circulation. As Warner has noted, six aspects are often ascribed to publics.

1. A public is self-organized (i.e., organized by "nothing other than discourse itself") (p. 50). Space and physical presence, personal identity and the factors that comprise it, or common interest are not used to determine whether one belongs to a public because a public is understood to be different from "a crowd, an audience, or any other group that requires co-presence" (p. 53). Warner argues that "merely paying attention [to the ongoing discourse] can be enough to make you a member" (p. 53) of a particular public.
2. A public is also described by its status as a relation among strangers; in fact, "strangerhood is the necessary medium of commonality in a public" (p. 57). A public, Warner posits, does not make sense or exist in a situation where everyone could be known personally, where there were no strangers.
3. The address of a public is both personal and impersonal. Thus, public speech must be perceived in two ways: as addressed to us and also as addressed to strangers. As Warner put it, "We know that it was addressed not exactly to us, but to the stranger we were until the moment we happened to be addressed by it" (p. 57).
4. A public is constituted through mere attention. Although most groups (social classes, identities, etc.) encompass their members all the time (i.e., you are always an American until you live in another country; you are an American no matter your mental state or sobriety level, to use examples provided by Warner), a public does not function like this. A public is not a voluntary association, but a virtual entity (p. 61), and the existence of this entity is contingent on its members' attention and activity. This means that "**attention** is the principal sorting category by which member and non-members are discriminated" (p. 61).
5. A public is the social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse. Public communication is often contingent on dyadic speaker-hearer or author-reader relationships. Because no single text, voice, genre, or medium can create a public, all of these are insufficient to create the reflexivity, or concatenation of texts, necessary to form a public as an ongoing space of encounter for discourse. This means, at its simplest core, there must be exchanges of and responses to texts for a public to exist. In other words, a public is not sustained by one-way, transactional attention paid to just a single text or medium, but by a "multigeneric lifeworld… organized by potentially infinite axes of citation and characterization" (p. 63).
6. Warner then argued that a "public can only act within the temporality of the circulation that gives it existence" (p. 68). Put another way, the speed with which a public is created in response to a text or speech and the length of time that public remains in existence (i.e., the length of time that individuals sustain the public through their attention paid to the text or speech) affect how close a public "stands to politics" (p. 68). What this means is that the more quickly a public is created in response to *X*, the more quickly members of that public can form responses and opinions about *X* and engage in behavior that reflects those views.

Warner has also discussed the life of a public, which is "ongoing" (p. 68). Texts are not disseminated or published to be immediately archived; if they were, I would be inclined to believe they never actually had a true public. To have a public, texts must continue to be circulated through time and, as Warner has said, "this can be confirmed only through an intertextual environment of citation and implication [that] all publics are intertextual, even intergeneric" (p. 68). Warner recognized nuances to the ongoing feature of the life of a public by stating that the Internet and new media sources are "profoundly changing the public sphere

through changes *implied* in temporality… [which is becoming] increasingly organized as continuous rather than punctual" (pp. 68-69, emphasis added).

It is also important to note that publics can acquire and thus possess agency. Warner has argued that it "is also sometimes possible to attribute agency to the virtual corporate entity created by the space of circulation as a whole" (2002, p. 88). Publics can, he said, do all these things:

> They are said to rise up, to speak, to reject false promises, to demand answers, to change sovereigns, to support troops, to give mandates for change, to be satisfied, to scrutinize public conduct, to take role models, to deride counterfeits. (p. 88)

With this agency, Warner maintained, publics are privileged: "by definition those that can take their discourse pragmatics and their lifeworlds for granted" (p. 88) are normalized.

Counter-publics

Counter-publics are a form of publics, but ones that cannot conventionally acquire and possess agency, so they "mark themselves off *unmistakably* from any general or dominant public. Their members are understood to be not merely a subset of the public, but constituted through a *conflictual relation* to the dominant public" (Warner, 2002, pp. 84-85, emphasis added). Most social movements, those commonly supported by hashtag activism at the least, are forms of counter-publics. Take again, for example, the case of #BlackLivesMatter: a counter-public formed in response to the dominant narrative of the "indisputable" authority of law enforcement in the United States.

If a public is a dominating group, a counter-public is a dominated group, one that "finds itself in conflict not only with the dominant social group, but also with the norms that constitute the dominant culture as a public" (p. 80). Nancy Fraser noted that counter-publics are "'parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter-discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs'" (as quoted in Warner, 2002, p. 85). From this, Warner wonders how counter-publics can possibly imagine their agency.

As exemplified by how the Black Lives Matter movement leveraged its status on social media, counter-publics can imagine their agency via digital tools. Freelon, McIlwain, and Clark (2016) have supported this view: "Social media… uniquely benefits oppressed populations… [and levels] a media playing field dominated by pro-corporate, pro-government, and (in the United States) anti-Black ideologies" (p. 8). #BlackLivesMatter is a prime example of how a counter-public can acquire and thus possess agency. By taking advantage of unconventional avenues, like digital tools such as social media, representatives of this counter-public, like any counter-public, could make their voices heard.

Specialized Online Publics

Additionally, by virtue of existing online, some counter-publics are more specifically what Kowalewski (2013) has called specialized online (counter-)publics. They are characterized by the following:

1. They exist in digital spaces.
2. They rely on mutual interests among individuals and are driven by the circulation of texts and discourses around those shared interests.
3. They are inclusive of vernacular discourse and exist in relation to other discourses as part of a larger ecology.

Multifaceted Features (Peripheral and Core Participants)

It is clear specialized online counter-publics can take advantage of digital and online tools to acquire a sense of agency in spreading their mission, but how can they most

effectively do this? It is important to remember that the larger the counter-public (or public), the larger the awareness of its goal and the larger the possibility for expanding that counter-public (or public) even further. If publics and counter-publics are comprised of a number of people paying attention to one discourse at a particular time, it is essential to break them into constituent parts: their committed minority and their peripheral majority. The "committed minorities [that]… constitute the heart of protest movements" (Barberá, Wang, Bonneau, Jost, Nagler, Tucker, & González-Bailón, 2015, para. 1), really, those that are engaged in BoTG efforts, must be supported by peripheral participants to maximize the number of citizens exposed to the movement's messages. Those peripheral participants' aggregate contribution to the spread of a movement's goals and other messages, Barberá et al. claimed, is "comparable in magnitude" (para. 1) to that of the core minority of participants.

This critical periphery is most successful when it uses standardized hashtags because, per McVey and Woods, these "structure the chaos of online conversation (i.e., they form specialized online (counter-)publics) around semantically loaded phrases" (2016, p. 1); technological affordances (i.e., grouped hyperlinks) enable the texts (Tweets) to be rapidly circulated amongst strangers, forming "durable yet temporally delimited discursive connections" (p. 1). Thus, by expanding the size and demographics of the audience of messages sent by the committed minority via standardized hashtags, the peripheral participants can amplify the core voices and actions. Peripheral participants thus provide a way for more online citizens to be exposed to news and information about the counter-public's goals and actions, even (or especially) in the absence of mass media coverage.

Conclusion

Twitter users began humbly employing hashtags nearly 10 years ago; hashtags have since exploded exponentially in terms of instances and purposes of use. Most notably, hashtags are effective ways to spread information about civic and political movements to a large number of people who may otherwise be uninformed. This spreading of information is made possible by the hyperlinked grouping feature of hashtags that enables multi-faceted specialized online counter-publics to form, and their multifaceted nature enables the peripheral participants to better support the actions of the core minority of participants engaged in BoTG efforts; thus, hashtag activism *is* effective in that it equips counter-publics with this ability to acquire and enact agency against domineering publics.

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Music Festivals and the Self-Narrative: Detroit's Revitalization

Zach Vega

Braun Award for the College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences, Category Two

Nominated by Erik Trump, Professor of Political Science

From Saginaw, Michigan, Zach Vega graduated in May 2017 with a bachelor of arts in political science and a minor in Spanish; when he graduated, he was named outstanding graduate in Political Science. During his time at SVSU, Zach was involved in Model United Nations, the Writing Center, and Living Through Literacy, and he spent semesters studying abroad in Bilbao, Spain, and Taipei, Taiwan. In Fall 2017, he will be attending Michigan State University, pursuing a master's degree in urban and regional planning.

Zach writes, "What has inspired me the most in SVSU's political science courses is the ability to take theoretical knowledge and apply it to a tangible problem. This essay is my attempt to do just that. I have been fortunate enough to take courses with professors who challenge their students to not only contemplate philosophical ideas that span thousands of years of political thought, but to use these ideas on a daily basis. 'Music Festivals and the Self-Narrative: Detroit's Revitalization' and the subsequent theories used in the paper are the result of readings and lectures from Dr. Erik Trump's Art and Politics (PS 320) course. Throughout the semester, we studied art's impact on political thought in various societies and political regimes, and how that art influences the individual to think a certain way. Because art in all forms can be used to alter perception, it frequently experiences either contention or favorability with the U.S. public depending on its message. During my time in this course, Dr. Trump encouraged me to focus my essays on urban and regional planning, my graduate school major for next year. Thanks to Dr. Trump and the various other political science professors whose teachings have given me direction and purpose during my time at SVSU, I created this work, which provides additional resources to Detroit's leaders and their efforts to bring the city back to its economic and cultural heyday."

Each year, thousands of music lovers spend up to hundreds of dollars to gather in the summer sun to hear their favorite bands for a weekend. The South by Southwest (SXSW) music festival in Austin, Texas, attracts young people and corporations alike, the former looking for a unique experience and the latter seeking to capitalize on America's love for live music. One may wonder how cities like Austin and Chicago, Illinois, which did not boast a musical identity in the past, have completely transformed in the last few decades. Although the festival scene originated in the 1960s in the U.S., it was only recently that local governments began to see the distinct benefits of hosting such events. Often, the music featured at festivals like SXSW has little to do with the history or culture of the host city. Thus, one question that arises is why local governments are resoundingly supportive of music festivals that, at first glance, do not appear to coincide with their city's cultural identity. One simple answer is that music festivals have saturated the marketplace across the globe in recent decades and give no indication of slowing down. Cities like Austin and Nashville, Tennessee, have cashed in on this phenomenon and have effectively adopted the

persona of "music cities," reaping both economic and social benefits. This essay will argue that music as an identity creator is largely driving the success of music festivals and the cities hosting them. As a sense of community is formed with other like-minded individuals, festivals are able to draw in a demographic of young people with money, which gives the city an aesthetic of vibrancy and economic activity. This essay will argue that Detroit, Michigan, is in a favorable position to utilize the same model as these "music cities" and rebuild its economy by employing the music industry.

Literature Review

Political scientists, sociologists, and those in the medical field support the role of art, especially music, in the formation of identity and personal narrative. In regards to art in general, Murray Edelman argues that art's effectiveness in allowing for a sense of personal meaning is largely derived from the fact that it is most often ambiguous in nature (1-2). Edelman additionally states that art is more appealing when it is not mass-produced, because mass culture causes art to lose its antagonistic force (40). In other words, people who treasure their independence do not want to be exposed to art created by institutions because a sensation of institutionalized control of thought is a threatening one. It is also important to note that art, including music, is most often interpreted emotionally, not logically (52).

Many academics claim that music and identity are related, with individuals using music to find meaning in the external world and in themselves. Additionally, music is one form through which groups distinguish their own cultures from the cultures of others. John Blacking argues that differing musical styles are derived from individuals choosing which sounds they want reflecting their culture and, in essence, their identity (37). Therefore, according to Blacking, sounds have no meaning in themselves, but are given meaning by societal groups (46). This means that the same sound can take on differing interpretations depending on who is listening. The ability to assert differences in music is a quality present even in very early childhood, which allows children to identify the "self" as well as the "other." Ulrik Volgsten points out that infants are exposed to repetitive stimuli due to the fact that their interaction and capacity to understand the outside world are limited. When a child is exposed to a stimulus that is different from the ones to which he or she is accustomed, the child develops a sense of "self vs. other." Later, the child conceives of the idea of "self with other" (Volgsten 208-09). This means that familiar stimuli create communities because they are comforting and signify shared experiences.

Individuals thus use auditory stimuli and experiences to create a narrative of identity, or self-narrative. Music scholar Even Ruud claims music gives individuals the ability to understand others and themselves (39), which is similar to Volgsten's argument. By using music to self-reflect on one's thoughts or actions, an individual is better able to recognize his or her identity. Ruud argues that music can reflect everything about an individual, including politics, gender, religion, and ethnicity (45). Therefore, one's musical preferences can be used to predict behaviors in adulthood (46). Simon Frith, on the other hand, states that music is not a reflection of self-narratives, but a production of them (109). Frith's argument about music is similar to Edelman's about art in general: the artist is less important in art's meaning than the individual interpreting it (Frith 109; Edelman 1-2). Frith states that groups do not engage in music-related activities to define their cultural identity, but that their group identity is created through this activity (111).

John Blacking, however, differs slightly from Frith, arguing that music does not introduce new feelings to the listener, but only confirms feelings already held (40). Blacking states that music cannot instill a sense of community, as music is simply a means to recall past experiences. Therefore, if the past experiences of the members of a crowd were varied in nature, it is unlikely they would be able to identify as a group (40). Also, as Volgsten points out, these differences in community formation and preferred stimuli can date back to early childhood, making shared interests more difficult to build (211).

Regarding music genres, festivals, and community activity, John Street asserts that genre is important for context, especially in political engagement (56). For Street, music is a means to create civic participation within a community by promoting trust (70). Genre must be considered if music is to be used for a public purpose, as one genre may be entirely inappropriate depending on the situation and the environment in which it is being performed. Because genre is dependent on sound and style, Street's claim is similar to those previously mentioned, in that sounds are assigned meanings by cultures (Blacking 46) and that these meanings provide the frameworks for self-narratives (Ruud 39). This relates to music festivals and helps to determine whether one will be successful. Bruno Frey, for example, explains that music festivals and their rapid growth in the mid 20th century, as well as similar patterns in past centuries, are the result of abounding disposable incomes and more time and money available for celebratory occasions (29). Although Frey addresses the economic side of festivals and what conditions allow them to thrive, a gap in scholarship exists as to what attracts people to music festivals from a psychological perspective. By developing an understanding of how self-narratives and live music are related, one may ascertain methods that could be used to target particular demographics by emphasizing one genre over another.

This essay will synthesize the aforementioned theories to provide a cohesive analysis of music festivals and their application to the city of Detroit. It will utilize Edelman and Frith's idea that the individual, rarely the artist, creates art's meaning. Once this meaning has been formed, the individual, according to Ruud and Edelman, uses it to form his or her own self-narrative. This is the foundation of recognizing one's own identity (Ruud). Once this identity has been formed, the individual then seeks to form communities with others who share similar interests as a result of their analogous narratives so as to accomplish a sense of togetherness (Volgsten). This sense of togetherness formed out of shared culture and emotions is part of what unites individuals through music (Blacking). The other component involves Frith's theory that group identity is solidified through shared cultural experiences. In this way, although people may attend a music festival because they all like the same genre or style, their sense of community is founded in the experience of attending. To apply these theories effectively to Detroit, this essay will use Street's arguments about genre and context, as well as how music works to create social capital. Because music festivals abound when disposable income is present (Frey), it will be most advantageous to identify which genre of music attracts the demographic Detroit is likely seeking. This essay will argue that young people with disposable incomes are attracted to indie music, as well as indie music festivals, because of the genre's appeal to their self-narratives; therefore, Detroit can build its music industry around this genre to invite a demographic of young spenders into the city to revitalize the local economy and increase the population.

Detroit Economics and the Music Industry

Detroit's economy has been devastated over the past decade, and the population decrease is one telling sign of this devastation. The city's population currently stands at roughly 678,000 residents, a mere fraction of the 1.8 million that inhabited the area in 1950 (MacDonald). The loss of so many people has hindered economic development in—and the social cohesion of—the city. Music festivals and the cultural identity that they supply could be one solution to expediting the revitalization process. The city already has a rich musical history; according to *Crain's* Gary Anglebrandt, "For many people throughout the world, Detroit is as synonymous with music as it is cars" ("Detroit's Challenge"). During the mid to latter part of the 20th century, Detroit's music industry was defined by Motown, with the Motown Museum even describing the musical genre as the "Sound of Young America" ("Motown"). The problem with using Motown for the revitalization effort, however, is that its appeal is nostalgic. Although it evokes the Detroit of past decades, it is unlikely to attract the young spenders that the city will need if it is to rebuild its economy and population.

Motown, electronic, and hip hop music have, obviously, all contributed to Detroit's identity, but have not succeeded in becoming a major part of the city's modern narrative. Up to this point in time, Detroit has failed to build its music industry into one that would define it as a symbolically musical city, despite boasting a wide array of musical talent and despite, according to a study by Anderson Economics Group LLC, the music industry in Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Livingston counties being valued at $1.15 billion and employing around 6,000 people (Anglebrandt, "Study Puts Value").

With a billion-dollar industry already in the region and the historical narrative of music present, there is reason to believe that Detroit could become a city with a tourist draw. Although Detroit has gone from America's fourth largest city in 1940 to no longer placing in the top 20 most populous, signs of growth are present (MacDonald). Jennifer Conlin of *The New York Times* points out that from 2001 to 2011, "downtown Detroit experienced a 59 percent increase in the number of college-educated residents under the age of 35." This is likely due in part to the low cost of living the city affords. However, cultural identity may also play a significant role in this rising demographic. With more young people considering Detroit as a viable residence, planners must consider how the music industry and festivals could play into ensuring that this trend continues and that the population and economy rebuild.

Music Festivals, Demographics, and Group Identity

To ascertain the likelihood that Detroit would benefit from a more established musical identity, it is important to understand the demographics of music festival audiences. Eventbrite conducted a study in which it analyzed, through metadata, Twitter posts addressing 181 U.S. music festivals to determine the demographics of attendees. According to the surveyors, this model is sound because "Regardless of festival type or even age, music festival audiences align closely with heavy Twitter users" ("Music Festival Study"). According to the data, roughly 55% of festival attendees are ages 17 to 24, with the third largest group being ages 16 and under at 16%. Only around 13% of attendees were ages 30 and up ("Music Festival Study"). This means that the vast majority of festivalgoers are Millennials.

Festival attendees also appear to be financially secure in that down economies rarely hinder the success of festivals. According to the U.K. Festival Market Report 2013, when asked if the economic recession affected their decision to attend a festival, 40% of respondents said it did not. Although 27% stated they attended fewer festivals that year, hardly any respondents said they did not attend any festivals in 2013 ("UK Festival Market Report 2013"). This confirms Frey's claim that music festivals thrive when they can attract a target audience with disposable income to spend, regardless of the particular local economic conditions of the cities where festivals are held (29). Blacking's claim that meanings are created through collective reasoning can also be confirmed by the aforementioned statistics. According to Blacking, "We become aware that a stimulus is exciting only because of cultural experience" (41). Music festival attendees share a similar culture regarding their economic security and age range. Thus, their narratives are so alike that they assign analogous meanings to the music that they are communally listening to at festivals.

However, for Detroit to adopt music festivals into its plan for revitalization on the assumption that music's contribution to the self-narrative is the driving force, it is important to know exactly why people say they attend these events. Once again, according to the U.K. Festival Market Report 2013, 53% of U.K. respondents said they go simply for the music. This means that, if music is indeed the key motivator, Edelman, Street, and Blacking's claim that music and identity are interrelated can be used to determine what genre of music festival Detroit should host. Edelman, in his book *From Art to Politics: How Artistic Creations Shape Political Conceptions*, states, "Art and ideology ensure that there is no immaculate perception" (4). This means that art is almost always subjective, leading to

variations in interpretation. Because varying perceptions of reality exist, one may wonder what perspective (or reality) music festival attendees have adopted and how applicable their narratives are in the ongoing revitalization of Detroit.

The Indie Brand

"Indie" artists drive many of the U.S. and U.K.'s largest music festivals, including Detroit's Mo Pop Festival (Hooper). As it has already been established that young people with disposable incomes attend these festivals, it is logical to assume that the indie brand appeals to this demographic. An understanding of indie is necessary, however, to understand the self-narratives of indie music festivalgoers. David Hesmondhalgh, in his article "Indie: The Institutional Politics and Aesthetics of a Popular Music Genre," claims that indie is unique in that it was the first music genre to derive its title from the industry behind it. The genre redefined the way young people in the 1980s consumed music by promoting an image of creativity (35). The belief then, which continues to this day, is that creativity is more prevalent when corporate influence is scarce. As Hesmondhalgh writes, "indie culture itself … sees aesthetics as an almost inevitable outcome of certain institutional and political positions, whereby maintaining an institutional separation from corporations … is felt to guarantee aesthetic diversity and stimulation" (36). If this is true, then festivalgoers likely see themselves as more creative and individualistic because they are sharing in an experience that they perceive to be removed from institutional influence.

Hesmondhalgh and *CNN*'s Catherine Andrews point out that this understanding of indie, especially in music, is inaccurate in its modern context. Andrews writes that in the current music industry, the term has become muddied and is largely used as a marketing tool, as large record labels advertise bands as indie even though they are technically not (Andrews). This shift in the industry was the result of economic recessions that forced many of the early indie labels to either merge with those owned by large corporations or disappear altogether (Hesmondhalgh). Although the original characteristics of the genre have almost completely disappeared over the past few decades, the aesthetic appeal remains in the name. In this instance, the true definition is not as important as the perceived definition. Blacking states, "Music cannot express anything extramusical (sic) unless the experience to which it refers already exists in the mind of the listener" (39). The indie genre's appeal to Millennial audiences thus reveals a desire to be free from institutional influence, and if individuals seek others with related self-narratives to feel togetherness, as Volgsten claims, then it is evident why indie music festivals have generated so much success (209).

This means that if Detroit continues to host Mo Pop and other music events, and Millennials are the target audience, event planners should choose artists who exhibit the indie persona. If the ideas of anti-institutionalism and individuality are what young spenders want in a city's image, then that is what Detroit should promote in its music. As previously mentioned, very rarely are indie's true qualities anything more than public perception. However, should the anti-institutional persona change in terms of demand, or should the desired demographic change for some reason, Detroit's music scene will have to adapt as well. John Street in *Music and Politics* writes that because music is relatively cheaper to produce than other art forms, it "is well adapted to reflecting or responding to reality, and ... certain styles of music-making are disposed to take advantage of this potential" (48). In other words, Detroit event planners must be attentive to the current perspectives of their mass target audiences. Once this is understood, the music that reflects this reality must be the new musical identity of the city, assuming the target audience is one that provides the greatest potential for revitalization. Although Motown may be significant to the history of Detroit, its economic value is less than indie's because it does not reflect the reality that young people are experiencing.

Economic and Cultural Success of Cities with Major Festivals

Festivals like Austin's SXSW, Chicago's Lollapalooza and Pitchfork Festivals, and California's Coachella are all making their respective cities millions of dollars in both the short and long term. These events draw thousands of people for the music, tourism, and side events like the technology exhibition that coincides with Austin's SXSW festival (Kaydo). Major companies are paying attention to the trend as well. Because most of the attendees are in the Millennial age group, companies are seizing the opportunities to advertise heavily at festivals as well as on social media networks (Faughnder).

Additionally, this influx of advertising does not discourage festivalgoers from attending. Only 6.3% of U.K. respondents said advertising at music festivals put them off, and 23.1% actually said the advertising can make the event more enjoyable for fans ("UK Festival Market Report 2013"). Momentum and AEG Live also studied how young people perceive advertisers at music festivals and discovered "93 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds like brands who sponsor live music events, with eight in 10 citing branded festivals and concerts as the best way to engage with them" (Hampp). It thus appears the relationship between major corporations and Millennial festivalgoers is one of mutual benefit.

Simon Frith helps make sense of attendees' acceptance of advertisements. According to Frith, "[social groups] only get to know themselves as groups through cultural activity, through aesthetic judgment" (111). Therefore, because these brands are part of the shared cultural experience, they become part of each individual's culture as well as his or her perception of self. This means that Detroit could use its Mo Pop Festival as a means to generate corporate interests in addition to creating a music identity. One benefit of a festival like Mo Pop is that it attracts larger corporations like Fender, Pabst, and Jameson, but also allows for local businesses to promote themselves. The cultural experience of music festivals indicates that more Millennials would now purchase these brands because the brands played a role in the construction of their self-narratives.

City Crossover and Civic Engagement

Detroit's revitalization and rebirth of civic engagement depend in part upon each individual's ability to trust his or her neighbor. Street refers to Robert Putnam's views on civil associations when he writes, "It is trust that underpins the reciprocity and cooperation upon which self-government depends" (70). Music festivals could be considered one type of civic association in which multitudes are socializing publicly. Therefore, festivals, insofar as they bring together people who articulate a similar narrative with corporations that echo these sentiments through branding, have the potential to improve Detroit socially and economically. Because the indie genre is defined by anti-institutionalism, music festivals typically do not allow patrons the opportunity to participate politically. It would be antithetical to the image to see nongovernmental organizations or political organizations promoting themselves at such an event. However, in regards to Street's claim, these festivals are the beginning of civic participation. Although they are not explicitly political, their value in promoting civic engagement is derived from the fact that a community is being formed through shared experiences.

Additionally, by diversifying Detroit's economy through Mo Pop and other music events, Detroit can undo some of the damage that constructing major expressways such as Interstate-75 (I-75) caused. In a *National Public Radio* broadcast by Don Gonyea, W. Kim Heron, a Detroit journalist, states that Detroit's former music district was destroyed when I-75 was built through the city. Heron states, "'Our Beale Street is somewhere under I-75'" (qtd. in Gonyea). Fortunately, today's music industry can address this problem to an extent as well. Detroit's Mo Pop Festival, in its third year, was moved to West Riverfront Park, a 20-acre piece of land located on the Detroit Riverfront (Hooper). According to Ryan Patrick Hooper of *DBusiness* "After being closed off to the public for more than 40 years, the [Detroit RiverFront C]onservancy now sees West Riverfront Park [per Mark Wallace,

president and CEO of the Conservancy,] as an 'important connection to our neighbors in Corktown and southwest Detroit.'" The ability to cross over to different parts of the city will likely accomplish what Street argues is vital to a democratic city: trust resulting from civic sociality (70-71). Although Mo Pop is the clearest example of music creating social engagement in Detroit now, the city can also utilize its other venues like the Fillmore and the Fox Theatre to accomplish the same task.

Conclusion

Detroit's revitalization requires a multi-faceted approach, as one solution is not the answer to the city's economic woes. Music is one of the approaches that could be employed to a greater extent to improve the economics of the area. Music festivals have clearly been very successful over past decades, and their only threat at this time is that the market is being oversaturated as many local governments are seeking the same benefits. In Detroit's case, however, the benefits outweigh the risks. Detroit is a city in a position to capitalize on its history as a center for musical creativity and introduce a new demographic to the region that can jumpstart the economy. However, if Detroit's leaders do adopt this model and try to grow in the same way as Austin and Chicago have, they should consider how to implement this strategy in a socially just way. As any city begins to flourish, the cost of living increases, and the original residents are replaced by new arrivals. Detroit's economy will rely on a demographic of young people with disposable income, but its legacy will depend on how those who are affected negatively by these changes are regarded by their government. The coming years, should music change the dynamic of the city's identity and economy, will mean that great success, as always, will have to be met with responsible governance.

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International Trade and the Environment: A Tradeable Permits Solution

Jenni Putz
Braun Award for the College of Business and Management
Nominated by Micah DelVecchio, Assistant Professor of Economics

Jenni Putz graduated in May 2017 with a bachelor of science in applied mathematics and economics. During her time at SVSU, Jenni has been part of the Undergraduate Research Program, a tutor at the Center for Academic Achievement, the secretary of the Economics Club, and a student in SVSU's Honors Program. She presented her thesis titled "Mapping Income Inequality through Industrial Structure Analysis" in November 2016. She has been an author of three academic papers, one of which has been accepted for publication in the *International Journal of Education Management.* These papers have been presented at eight conferences, including two national conferences and one international one. Jenni will be attending the University of Oregon to pursue a Ph.D. in economics. She plans to focus her studies in public and labor economics.

"International Trade and the Environment: A Tradeable Permits Solution" was written as a term paper for the undergraduate course International Economics (ECON 441). The assignment asked her to apply the theories and models taught in the course to some aspect of international trade. Jenni used the broad assignment to apply international economics to the field in which she is most interested, public economics. To do this, she connected the trade theory to such public economics topics as environmental externalities and tradeable permits pollution reduction.

Much discussion regarding international trade has concerned its impact on domestic jobs and the manufacturing sector. Our most recent presidential candidates showed concern for new international trade agreements, particularly the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and campaigned on promises to bring lost jobs back to the United States. International trade and its impact on U.S. jobs is discussed quite often in the media and in politics, but one aspect of trade is often overlooked: its impact on the environment. International trade can have serious implications for the environment, and creating and enforcing environmental regulations is difficult.

Central to international trade is the topic of comparative advantage. A country has comparative advantage in production when that country can produce a good or service more efficiently and at a lower opportunity cost than another country. Countries should ideally produce and export the goods and services in which they have a comparative advantage. However, production becomes problematic when the country has a comparative advantage in a good that is harmful to the environment or when the method used to produce the good is harmful to the environment. The traditional theory of comparative advantage, however, does not consider any environmental externalities that may be occurring. Consider a small country, one that cannot affect the world price, that opens up to trade. Suppose the country is importing fish from another country, but the fishing method used to catch the fish is harmful to other sea-life. Opening the market to trade reduces the price of the good from P^* to P^w and would typically increase total surplus. This occurs because of the increases in total consumer and

producer surplus. Figure 1 shows a graph of a typical market, where the market is in an equilibrium state.

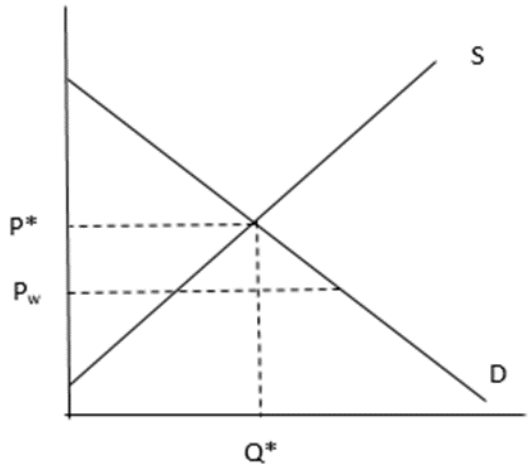

Figure 1. Goods market with international trade.

However, when incorporating the externality as in Figure 2, the market is now in disequilibrium because the cost to society (S-social) is greater than the private cost (S-private), and there is overproduction of the good, because society only demands a quantity of Q^s, but the market is producing a greater quantity at Q*. Due to this overproduction, dead weight loss, or "bad" trades, occur. This is illustrated in the shaded area of Figure 2. This dead weight loss would decrease the net surplus from trade, leaving only the triangle labeled "A."

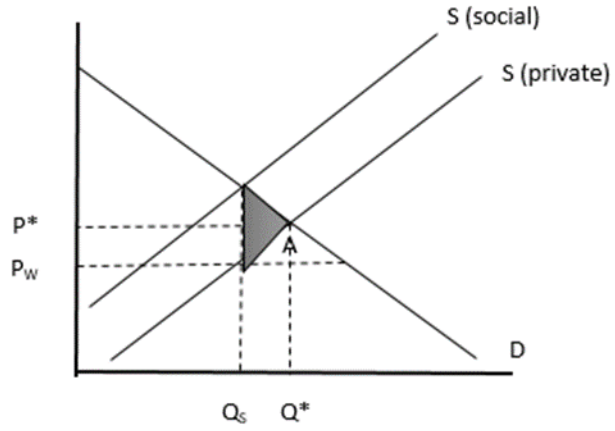

Figure 2. Goods market with international trade with a negative production externality.

These facts remind us that the incorporation of an externality distorts the gains from trade that we would typically see, causing a debate over whether trade is beneficial. Overall, several environmental harms, such as overfishing or logging, are exacerbated when opened to international trade because the market for these goods is expanded.

These facts also remind us that an externality scenario like this is not far-fetched. In fact, many disputes over trade due to negative environmental externalities exist. In 1991, the United States banned Mexican imports on tuna because the methods used to catch the tuna were killing large numbers of dolphins. Mexico felt that this was an unfair violation of their trade agreements, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) later ruled that the United States did not have the ability to dictate what happened to dolphins outside of their borders (U.S. Office of Technology Assessment, 1992). A similar case in 1991 resulted in the WTO ruling that the United States did not have the ability to prohibit imports on shrimp. The U.S. placed the restrictions on the shrimp because the methods used were killing off endangered sea turtles, thus causing a negative externality (U.S. Office of Technology Assessment, 1992). In 2000, there was also a dispute between the United States and Canada over lobster trade. Immense over-fishing of lobsters was occurring, to the point that the size of lobsters had decreased significantly. After negotiations, the U.S. and Canada agreed on a minimum size for lobsters, requiring that only lobsters meeting the minimum size at maturity could be traded (Tierney, 2000).

Several attempts at global environmental trade regulations have been made. The WTO, for example, provides exceptions for environmental trade rules. Special trade agreements, such as the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, have been enacted (WTO, 2016a). These agreements are meant to conserve exhaustible natural resources and to protect human, animal, and/or plant life. Additionally, the WTO has an environmental policy under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Article XX. According to the WTO, past cases covered under GATT protection involve "policies aimed at reducing the consumption of cigarettes, protecting dolphins, reducing risks to human health posed by asbestos, [and] reducing risks to human, animal and plant life and health arising from the accumulation of waste" as well as "the conservation of tuna, salmon, herring, dolphins, turtles, [and] clean air" (2016b). However, the WTO has such a difficult time enforcing trade policies that many countries have relied on creating their own trade agreements, many of which contain environmental protections.

With the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the United States, Canada, and Mexico formed a committee for environmental regulations. As a precursor to the committee, the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation was created. This agreement set guidelines for the intermingled environment of North America in the context of trade. The agreement aimed to foster the protection and improvement of the environment, support the environmental goals of NAFTA, enhance compliance and enforcement of environmental laws, and promote economically efficient and effective environmental measures (Commission for Environmental Cooperation, 2016). Shortly following this agreement, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation was formed. This established a governing body to serve as the overseer and enforcer of environmental regulations. This commission expands upon the goals set by the Agreement on Environmental Cooperation and develops recommendations regarding trade and the environment, such as pollution prevention, the transport of air and marine pollutants, and the conservation of habitats (Commission for Environmental Cooperation).

Recently, a new trade agreement, the TPP, has received much attention. The TPP includes guidelines for environmental protection as well. Specifically, the TPP allows member countries to uphold existing environmental agreements such as the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species, the Montreal Protocol, or the Marine Pollution (MARPOL) agreement (Froman, 2014). For example, according to Meltzer, the United States has free trade agreements with six of the TPP countries, with each agreement containing some form of environmental regulation; the TPP would allow the United States and other member countries to uphold their existing environmental agreements. With the enactment of the TPP, many believe that countries with low environmental standards will benefit due to an increase in foreign direct investment and pressure for higher standards from larger, more developed countries (2014).

From a policy standpoint, enacting more guidelines and objectives is not going to solve the problem. In practice, these guidelines are incredibly difficult to enforce and could have negative consequences. For example, some fear enacting the TPP would actually be harmful to the environment because the regulations will increase wildlife trade on the black market or encourage oil drilling in other areas of the world (Bale, 2015). Additionally, no one policy covers the array of environmental issues that arise with trade. Because many of the environmental disputes that I have discussed in this paper stem from the fishing methods and endangerment of sea-life, I will focus on these externalities in my policy. As I mentioned earlier, a negative externality is created when countries fish with harmful methods and trade those fish with another country. The private sector response to eliminating the externality would be to provide a Coase solution. The Coase Theorem states that when there are well-defined property rights, the party creating the externality and the party affected by it can negotiate the socially optimal level. Several issues with a Coase solution exist, however, in this context. First, property rights are difficult to enforce in this scenario because fishing can occur in international waters, where property rights are not in place. Secondly, with Coase solutions, there is a strong incentive to free ride. Suppose that our Coase solution is to have fishermen pay countries to fish in their waters. After the large majority of the fishermen pay their fines, the last few have an incentive to not pay at all, but they still have access to the water because most fishermen have already paid and the water is a public good that is available to everyone. Thus, an overall incentive to underinvest in pollution reduction occurs, and the negative externality will not be eliminated.

Based on these theories, the aforementioned private sector Coase solution is not an effective policy. Therefore, we need to enact policy to eliminate, or at least reduce, the externality. I suggest a policy of tradeable permits, which would assign fishing rights to certain parties. Fishing quotas are not a new idea; in fact, 16 countries have already enacted quotas (National Center for Policy Analysis, 2003; Stavins, 2003). To enact such a policy, a total quota of fishing would have to be set. Then, through an independent party, such as the WTO, individual quotas would be assigned to all the fishermen, thus designating property rights. Under the tradeable permits system, a Coase solution could be reached because there are clearly defined property rights and the incentive to free ride is eliminated because a fishery must have at least one permit to fish. Therefore, I believe that tradeable permits that can be traded between companies in various countries is the best solution to solving the externality that distorts gains from trade.

It is important, however, to consider the size of fishing companies in this scenario, because very large fisheries and many small fisheries exist simultaneously. It would be incredibly costly for the large companies to reduce their fishing to the levels set by the quota, and for many of the very small firms, the quota would be higher than their actual level of production. This is where the international trade of these permits would be implemented. Suppose a large fishing company (Company A) and a small company (Company B) are assigned a quota in which fishing must be limited to 500 units. Figure 3 illustrates the respective costs of meeting such quotas for each company. To reach the total amount of reduction, Company A faces a much higher cost. Note that Company A has a higher cost of reduction and must reduce their fishing by 350 units, whereas Company B only has to reduce by 150 to meet the total goal of 500. Thus, because it is costlier for Company A, it is more likely either to not participate or to engage in illegal activities to get around the requirements.

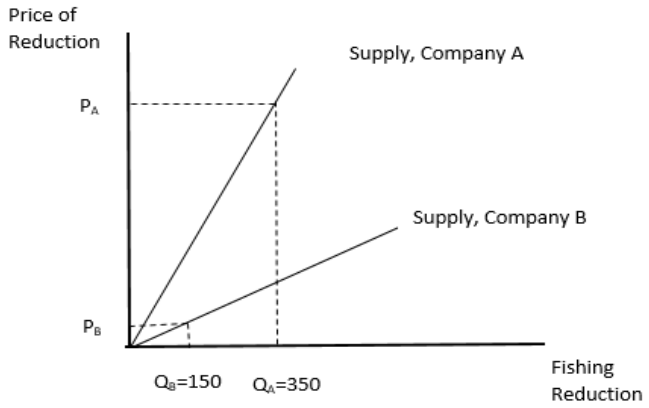

Figure 3. Fishing reduction without tradeable permits. Adapted from *Public Finance and Public Policy* (p. 160), by J. Gruber 2013, New York: Worth Publishers. Copyright 2013 by Worth Publishers.

If these two companies could engage in trade of these permits, the smaller company could sell their permits to the larger company. This practice ensures that the overall reduction is still met, but is less costly for the larger company to reduce. In addition, small fisheries will find it more profitable to sell their permits than to fish to the quota level (National Center for Policy Analysis, 2003; Stavins, 2003). In Figure 4 below, if Company B sells permits to Company A, then Company A can still engage in the harmful activities, but it will be easier for this company to participate in the reduction. Note that when permits are traded, Company A will only reduce by 425 units while the smaller company, which has a lower cost of reduction, will reduce by 75 units. Trading of permits allows both companies to participate in a way that is beneficial to both parties while still meeting the overall reduction goal of 500 units.

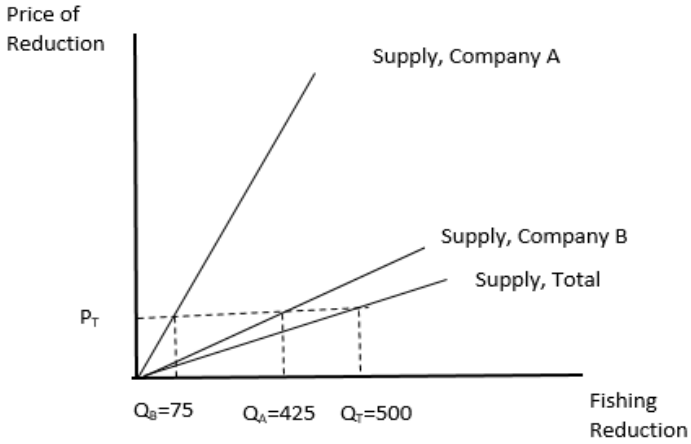

Figure 4. Fishing reduction with tradeable permits. Adapted from *Public Finance and Public Policy* (p. 160), by J. Gruber, 2013, New York: Worth Publications. Copyright 2013 by Worth Publishers.

Tradeable permits have been effective as a policy in reducing other forms of environmental degradation, such as pollution, and can be applied to various situations. For instance, Stavins (1998) discusses the consequences of a tradeable permits system implemented by the EPA to reduce sulfur dioxide (SO_2) emissions in hopes of reducing acid rain. Stavins notes that the trading program has been an overall success and that emissions reduction goals have been met and exceeded. Additionally, trading volumes have increased

over the life of the program and the program has a cost savings value of approximately $1 billion (1998). Analyses performed after the implementation of the tradeable permits program show that the benefits will far exceed the costs by a significant margin (Burtraw, Krupnick, Mansur, Austin, & Farell, 1997 as cited in Stavins, 1998). Similar results for SO_2 reductions were found by Keohane. Analysts have estimated cost savings of 16%-25% with the implementation of tradeable permits for SO_2 reduction, as compared to government enforcement of scrubbers (2003). In terms of carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions, estimates have stated that a mandated reduction of 20% with tradeable permits leads to net welfare gains of approximately $20 billion, an increase of several billion over other alternatives (Rose & Stevens, 1993). Another study shows that with effective emissions permits trading an 8% reduction in CO_2 emissions could be achieved with zero losses to income or efficiency. Additionally, some countries see efficiency gains up to 6% of their total gross domestic product (Karp & Liu, 1998). Substantial evidence suggests that tradeable permits have shown considerable gains if implemented correctly and efficiently for other areas of environmental degradation. Based on this evidence, a policy for fishing permits would also see gains in efficiency and an overall reduction in overfishing.

International trade and the environment are intertwined in many ways, but perhaps the most important aspect of the relationship is regulation between trading countries. Many disputes over environmental hazards and trade have arisen and have been solved by trade agreements or by the WTO. When it comes to the international trade of environmental goods, a negative externality can distort the total gains from trade. To reduce the externality, tradeable permits should be enacted for all countries participating in the trade of that good to ensure that the externality is accounted for, and that we see the gains from trade necessary for all parties to benefit.

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Ready… Set… SHORT STORIES!: A Tale on Teaching How to Write Short Stories

Marisa VanRyckeghem
Braun Award for Writing Excellence in the College of Education
Nominated by Pat Cavanaugh, Professor of English

Marisa VanRyckeghem is a resident of Washington Township, Michigan, who has been at SVSU for four years and will be starting her third semester of the Elementary Education Program in Fall 2017. Her major is elementary education mathematics, and her future plans include becoming a first or second grade teacher. She also plans to get her master's degree from SVSU's Macomb campus.

"Ready… Set… SHORT STORIES!" is a multi-genre project that was created in Teaching the Art of Writing (ENGL 380). Marisa informs us that a multi-genre project is a unique form of a research project. Instead of picking a topic, consulting library databases, and writing multiple pages about the information found, as is typically done for a research paper, this multi-genre project enabled Marisa to pick a topic and present the information through various genres. The multi-genre project is designed for creativity and presenting the information through visuals. In this project, Marisa discusses the process of teaching about the writing of short stories in an elementary classroom and presenting the information to students through the genres of a diary entry, a movie review, a wanted poster, her own short story, and an original board game. She then explaind through endnotes and explanations why she chose each genre, how each genre relates to the larger topic, and how she can incorporate each genre into a classroom lesson about the teaching of short stories.

Introduction

Teaching elementary students how to write a short story can be more difficult than one can imagine. Not everyone is a writer, and even the best writers may have a tough time coming up with ideas to write about. When looking for inspiration, all we need to do, however, is look at our surroundings. If it is a place we know, maybe we will remember an exciting or sad time we had there. If it is a place with which we are not familiar, our imagination can run wild with things that have or could have happened there. Any time we look around and observe, some idea can pop into our heads: a person we care about, a funny memory, something that just happened to us, or maybe something we want to move on from. Anybody can write a short story, for inspiration is all around us, and students need to learn this.

Students should also learn that many other genres can relate to a short story and can be used to show how short stories compare to novels. This project explains the best ways to teach elementary students about short stories (and how to write them) and the insights that students gain from writing short stories.

I picked the short story as my focus because I was given an opportunity to write short stories in school, and this made me confident in my writing skills. I wrote a short story in the sixth grade and had so much fun with it. I loved working on it every day in my classroom,

and my teacher was thrilled. She made a copy for the other sixth grade teachers to read, and she told my parents how proud they should be of my developing writing skills. I became all the more confident and enjoyed having opportunities to write creative pieces and to show my creativity in school assignments. I feel that more teachers need to give their students a chance to write short stories, and I bet they will be surprised by how much fun the students have and by the stories they produce. Students need these kinds of lessons to have some fun and to let their imagination control their writing.

Genre 1: Diary Entry

Dear Diary,

Today, I think I fell in love. His name is Shorts T. Ory, but he likes to go by Shor. He is the new student in my 2nd grade class, and he got my attention the moment he walked in the door. He is soooo cute, and he has so much character, and there is not one way to describe him! He luckily sits next to me, and I actually got to talk to him today! He and I have so many similar interests, such as singing, going on adventures, and playing make believe. He always tells me that he is a smaller version of his father, Main Stephen Thomas Ory. Shor likes it when I tell him stories about the vacations that I have gone on and the people in my family. He says that he likes to hear about places that he hasn't gone because this allows him to hear about the other parts of the world. I really like talking to Shor. When I grow up, I hope people can describe me in a certain way like people describe Shor's life.

XOXOXOXO,

Poe Try

Explanation

This genre of the diary entry, which is used to describe a person, in this case Shorts T. Ory, focuses on what a short story is. A short story can be stand alone or be portion of a story that may be from a larger work (Barkhuizen, 2016), and this was shown in the diary entry because Shorts is a smaller version of his dad, thus making him the short story. Short stories can be classified this way because they can be a simpler version of something more complex and involved. Also, short stories involve all the same elements that a novel could have. They will have main characters, plots, and settings just like a larger work; however, what makes it a short story is the length, and while there is not necessarily as much detail, you can still gain a specific picture of the setting and the characters.

A short story can also stem from a memory that a person may have, something the author wishes would happen, or just an image an author creates in his mind (Barkhuizen, 2016). The aspect of memory is shown in the diary entry when I talked about the author's

vacations and family. A short story can additionally be focused on an author's interests. This is because authors often use their own passions and hobbies as inspiration.

Endnote

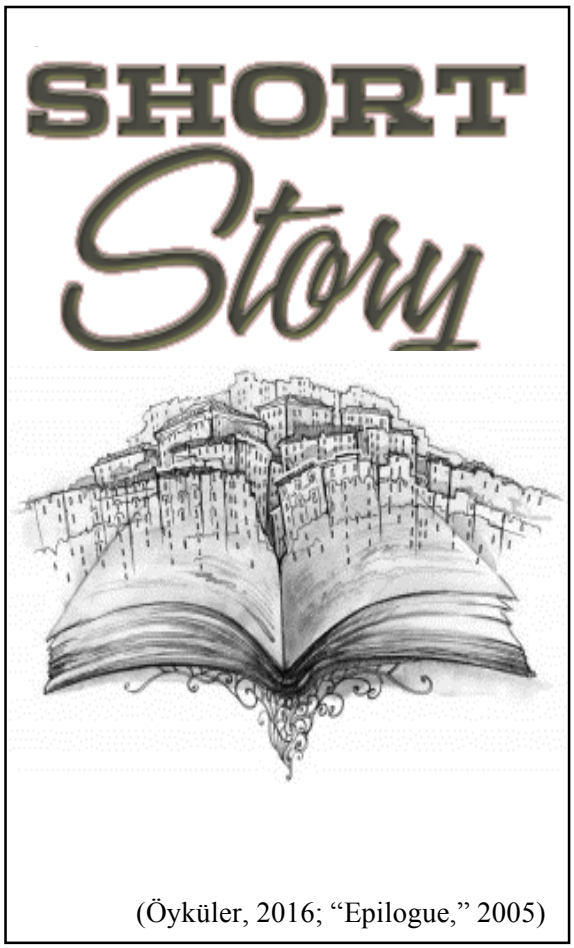
I picked this genre because I figured that a diary entry would be a great way to describe someone or something, especially a crush in school. I like this entry because it is a fun and unique way to think about a short story. It gives a personality to a short story as if it were a real person. I enjoyed creating a character to represent what makes a short story and then using the details about the character in a diary entry to express his personality.

I did not have that difficult of a time making the entry itself. I knew that this was the genre that I wanted to make, and I was sure of all the ideas that I wanted to express.

Genre 2: Movie Review

Short Story: Prequel to the Storytelling Series

Overall Rating:



(Öyküler, 2016; "Epilogue," 2005)

"Short Story allows us to see who we are as writers! We can see where we belong."

-Newsweek

"Short Story blew my mind! So many levels of thinking were involved when creating this work."

-The New York Times

"Wow, Short Story! I can't stop talking about it. There are so many conversations to be had about it! It drew my attention right away! I have a new outlook on stories."

-The Washington Post

Explanation

Short stories are written for a variety of reasons, but one of the most important in the context of an elementary classroom is that they help beginning writers express themselves and learn about their own skills. Stories can let authors explain their lifestyles, their interests, and what they like to talk about. Teaching elementary students how to write short stories is important because students can express their thoughts and memories in writing. In this way, short stories are an effective way for the students to communicate with others. Teachers and their peers can see what is meaningful to students and what interests them. This interest can reveal itself through different writing elements like details, vocabulary words, or complex character descriptions.

Writing short stories is also important because it can involve many levels of thinking for a student (Kasapoğlu, 2015). Short stories can also be a way for students to express their hopes and goals. Students sometimes, but not always, base a story on themselves, so writing a short story can provide a sense of confidence in themselves if a character of theirs is working towards a similar goal. They are more excited to write when they have an inspiration from their own lives or desires.

Short stories also draw the attention of the elementary reader right away merely because they are shorter. This is important because in school elementary students might have a harder time reading larger works, or they just might not be interested in a long story. They are going to be drawn to a shorter story because they may be able to see the message of the story right away.

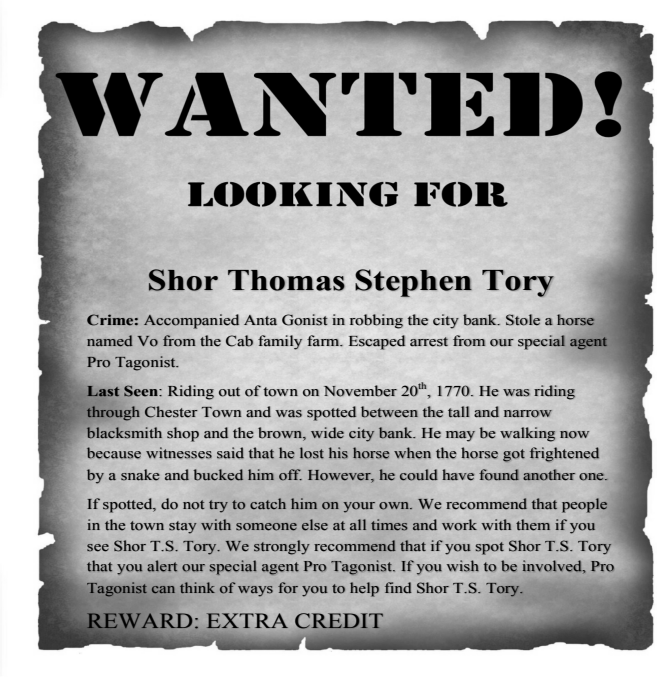
Short stories can also elicit diverse opinions on what the story means. As a result, students often want to talk about their story with their peers to see if they "got" it. This will encourage the students to work collaboratively with their peers, which is also important in school. This practice may also encourage students to edit their stories together.

Endnote

I used the genre of the movie poster and my fictitious quotes to emphasize the importance of short stories. A teacher could explain that short stories are read by many people, and this could be stressed through a review. The quotes that I created also enable my readers to see that short stories can be looked at in depth. There are so many positive aspects to writing a short story, and I wanted to use this genre to show that teachers are not the only ones who think so.

I really wanted to use this genre because I love movies. When I was thinking about my genres, I knew I wanted to include one that was movie related, but I had a tough time trying to figure out the most important aspects of writing a short story and how to explain them to the students. What I liked best about the genre of the movie poster was being able to use my interests to teach students. This, in itself, could be a great example to show to my future class; I could explain that I used my interests to explain the importance of a short story, which often takes the author's interests as an inspiration for a topic.

Genre 3: Wanted Poster



WANTED!

LOOKING FOR

Shor Thomas Stephen Tory

Crime: Accompanied Anta Gonist in robbing the city bank. Stole a horse named Vo from the Cab family farm. Escaped arrest from our special agent Pro Tagonist.

Last Seen: Riding out of town on November 20th, 1770. He was riding through Chester Town and was spotted between the tall and narrow blacksmith shop and the brown, wide city bank. He may be walking now because witnesses said that he lost his horse when the horse got frightened by a snake and bucked him off. However, he could have found another one.

If spotted, do not try to catch him on your own. We recommend that people in the town stay with someone else at all times and work with them if you see Shor T.S. Tory. We strongly recommend that if you spot Shor T.S. Tory that you alert our special agent Pro Tagonist. If you wish to be involved, Pro Tagonist can think of ways for you to help find Shor T.S. Tory.

REWARD: EXTRA CREDIT

("Wanted…A few moments of your time," 2013)

Explanation

Teachers can use the genre of the wanted poster to help students see the primary aspects of a story: characters, setting, time, problem, and solution (or resolution). In this case, the characters are Shor T.S. Tory, Antagonist, and Protagonist; the setting and time are the town in 1770; the problem is that a criminal is on the loose; and the problem can be solved by finding the criminal or letting the special agent know if the criminal was seen. These are elements that a teacher can use to explain how to write a short story. Each element can be a different focus taught on subsequent days, and through reading other short stories, students can pick out these characteristics more easily. In this instance, the "Crime" portion focuses on the characters who were present. The "Last Seen" focuses on the setting and includes the problem that Shor T.S. Tory had and how he fixed it. The students can see these characteristics and use them in writing their own short stories.

The last section of the wanted poster also focuses on how the people looking for Shor T.S. Tory could get more involved. It mentions working with others, which can be an effective way for students to write short stories. Teachers can use activities and examples like these to get the students thinking about working cooperatively. When students are writing short stories, they can work together to generate ideas.

Endnote

I wanted to use this genre because I could create my own sections on a wanted poster that would include all the characteristics of a story. I really liked the idea of having a poster because this is something that will stand out to the students. I also thought it was clever to use the wanted poster because the wanted poster does not just have to be about the short story as a whole. The wanted poster could also be something that the students create for one of

their characters. This could get them thinking about their characters, the characters' relationships, and even the setting in which the characters appear.

The only difficulty that I had in making this genre was making all the information fit. I wanted to cover all the characteristics of a short story, but they didn't all fit on the poster. This may have been a blessing in disguise. When there is too much information, sometimes the students don't always want to read all of it. Besides, too many words could take away from the visual itself. I feel like trying to cover all the main points without just writing an essay was the most difficult part of this genre.

What I like best about the wanted poster is that I got to create a character, Shor Thomas Stephen Tory, as well as the people and places he saw. I had fun coming up with the names for each of the characters. I also enjoyed trying to implement all the patterns and rules for a short story, but having to describe them in another way.

Genre 4: Short Story

The Idea Has Yet to Come

The paper sat alone on the dark wooden desk, patiently waiting for its writer to come back and finish his creation. The desk was the biggest piece of furniture in the room, which was full of bookshelves, a few movie posters, and a large window on one wall. The sound of heavy footsteps was a relief to hear because this meant that the paper would not remain unused and blank for long…. or so the paper thought. The writer pulled the chair back and started anxiously to think about ideas for a short story. The paper thought that this wouldn't take long; it would only be a short time. It is only a short story, and it only has four true dimensions. How hard could it be?

For the writer to be ready for his masterpiece, he needed to read other pieces from the other geniuses who wrote short stories. He had already done this, and the paper knew it. He has done his research, and he knew what he needed to do to work: he just had to focus on the four W's. The writer stood up and walked over to a poster hanging on a wall. He stared blankly at the poster hoping for a spark of interest. The paper sighed; the first W the writer needed was the characters. The writer needed to figure out Who was the focus for him. A good and a bad focus is essential to make up, and this could be his start. He could gain inspiration from this poster that had a character with some glowing sword called a lightsaber on it. The writer chuckled when an idea popped in his head, and he slowly walked towards the window. He slid his hand across the window, and he felt the cold. While the paper waited for the writer, he knew that this was the inspiration for the second step, the Where and sometimes When. The writer used his own scene for the second and third W's, because he truly enjoyed the view from the window. Nevertheless, as the writer moved his hand across the window, his expression shifted from one of wonder to one of confusion. The writer walked back to the desk and slumped in the chair defeated. The paper gleamed with joy, for this could be the final step—the What, the paper thought. The writer had the answer sitting right in front of him; he could use his own experience and memories to come up with his idea. A What could be anything he wanted it to be.

As the writer slid his hand towards the pencil, the paper could not be more excited. It was every paper's dream to become the final creation of the writer. Every day, papers waited to be a part of a success. The writer finally had a hold on the pencil and picked it up with a new sense of imagination. However, as the paper waited, the writer only put the pencil on his ear and then stood up once again. The paper would not become the masterpiece today, but it would be a masterpiece soon. It would become the short story of a writer who is struggling to write, which later became the short story "The Idea Has Yet to Come."

Explanation

My short story can be used to teach students how to incorporate the aspects of who, what, where, and when. A teacher can explain to a student how to write short stories in school by having them read short stories. When they practice reading short stories, as they would with my example, the students can see that, overall, the story is very short, but it does involve the same elements as a novel would. Characters, a setting, and some problems and resolutions should be included. The story itself can also involve other elements, like details, to describe the setting, more complex relationships, or character descriptions for the reader to gain a better understanding of what a story should include.

Finally, through an example like "The Idea Has Yet to Come," teachers can show to students that anyone can write a story because anyone can be creative and use anything they say and do as inspiration. Students can draw examples and ideas from their own lives to come up with possible scenes or problems facing a character. Using their own personal life experience will give them ideas because if they have had certain thoughts or actions, they may already know what their characters will think and feel.

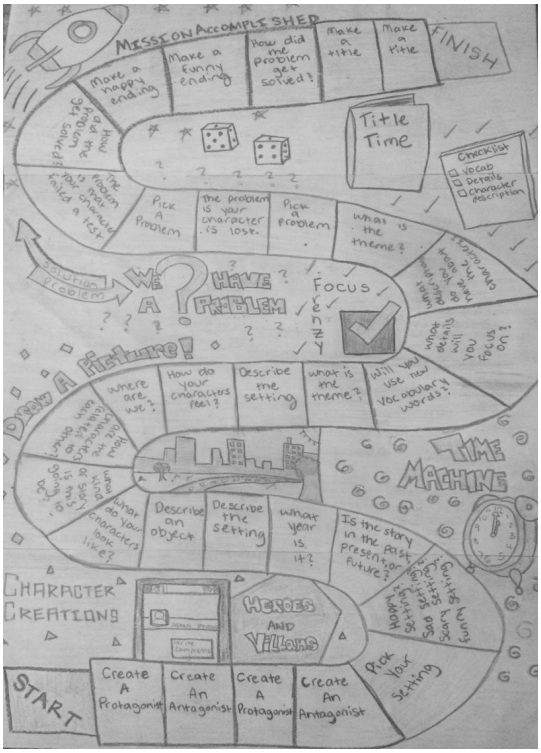
Endnote

When I picked this genre, it seemed appropriate that I would provide an example of a short story because then the students would be able to read yet one more example. I made "The Idea Has Yet to Come" about writing a story to give the students a better understanding of how they can come up with ideas. The most important part about creating this genre was that I could write a short story involving all the main elements as an example. Students can read it, but also learn about the writing process as well.

When I started writing "The Idea Has Yet to Come," the difficult part was coming up with the characters and how I would portray them. I wanted to write a short story about creating a short story, but I wanted to make this piece centered towards elementary school children. Thus, I had to create a character they would recognize, in this case, the paper. What I liked best about writing "The Idea Has Yet to Come" was using some of my own interests (e.g., the movie poster). When I write, I like to add more details to the characters or scenery to make them stand out to a reader.

If I were to change something about "The Idea Has Yet to Come," I would maybe add even more details to give the students a better understanding about the many elements that can go in a story. I want them to understand that in addition to the basic elements of a story, each person will create a story differently. Some people will use more details than others, and others could present the information differently and make their tale just as great. A short story is personal to authors; how authors gain their inspiration or decide what elements they will include is entirely up to them.

Genre 5: Board Game



Endnote

The genre of a board game was a perfect way to show the steps of how to write a short story. The students are able to play the board game and each spot on which they land will take them to another "world" or "task." Each square asks them to come up with another element of their short story. This particular genre can be about educational fun—students can learn something as they are playing. They can also be actively engaged in drafting a story as they move around the board. I picked this genre because this could be something fun and interactive for students and myself. (As a teacher, I could play the game with my class, or the students could play the game together.) I knew that a board game was a way for teachers to explain the steps of writing a short story without having to lecture all the time. This is a hands-on and a minds-on activity to review students' knowledge about writing.

It was difficult to create the layout of the board because I knew that there were many tasks that I wanted to incorporate. I wanted to cover all the main elements of a short story and make sure that I had enough spaces on the board. This was difficult to fit on the paper evenly. What I liked best about this genre was that I was able to give the students multiple opportunities to create their own story, but could put a fun twist on it depending on where they landed. I enjoyed drawing the board, but what I liked best about this genre is that it enabled me to teach in a creative way. I like being able to show that teaching is not always about lectures and to show my students that you can still learn while having fun.

Conclusion

After working on this project, I have a greater understanding of the benefits that teaching how to write short stories can have on elementary students. Teaching this lesson can involve so many different activities, but all can still focus on the same elements of a story. Short stories can have a strong positive impact on students' writing skills and on their attitudes towards learning. Students can use short stories to express who they are, not just as writers,

but as individuals. Teachers may be able to see students' interests in their writing pieces. There are so many ways that a teacher can go about teaching how to write a story and that is what makes it personal. Short stories give choice to teachers and students.

I know from experience the benefits that writing a short story can have on a person, and after reading articles about the effects of writing stories, I will use the information I have learned in my future classes. Because the process of writing a story can be primarily focused on the student, this approach will give each student confidence and teach them how to work independently. I also have learned that when writing a story, group work can be an effective way to help students come up with ideas and topics. I definitely want my students to have as much time to work with their peers as possible, but I was not always sure in what ways to have groups work together. After researching this topic, I now know more effective strategies to cover the aspects of a story in ways that include both independent and group work.

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The Prevalence, Incidence, Risk, and Rate of Musculoskeletal Injuries and Sudden Illness in Marching Band and Color Guard Members: A Critically Appraised Topic

Alissa C. Rhode and Clayton Westdorp

Braun Award for the College of Health and Human Services, Category One

Nominated by David C. Berry, Professor of Kinesiology

Alissa C. Rhode is from Grosse Ile, Michigan, which is a small island in the Detroit River. She is working towards a bachelor's degree in athletic training to be completed in May of 2018 and then a doctorate in physical therapy. She hopes to work in the performing arts to help dancers and marching band members perform to the best of their ability.

Clayton Westdorp, an athletic training student from McBain, Michigan, graduated from SVSU in May 2017. He will continue his studies at the University of Toledo, where he has a graduate assistantship in the post-professional athletic training program.

This paper was written in Athletic Training Practicum III (KINE 344). In this class, Alissa and Clayton were given the option to write a paper on a topic that interested them. Marching band and color guard, they maintain, are athletic activities, yet there is often limited to no medical coverage linked to them, unlike traditional sports. This paper thus creates a case for medical coverage of marching band and color guard by athletic trainers based on injury and illness. Moreover, this research shows the value of athletic trainer-based health care in diverse populations. Clayton writes, "It is my hope that upon reading our research, individuals will emerge with a new outlook on both marching band/color guard participation and athletic training-based health care. As the profession of athletic training continues to grow and evolve, research such as this will help solidify the role of athletic trainers in the health-care model."

Abstract

Clinical Scenario: Marching band (MB) and color guard (CG) are popular physical activities; however, unlike organized and sponsored athletic programs, there is limited to no medical coverage despite the risk of injury and illness. **Focused Clinical Question:** Among high school and collegiate MBs and CGs, what is the prevalence/incidence, risk or rate, and type of musculoskeletal injuries (MSI) and sudden illness (SI) reported during activity? **Search Strategy:** Articles were identified from *PubMed*, *CINAHL*, *MEDLINE*, *Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine Collection*, and *ScienceDirect* using the search [*"marching band" OR "color guard" OR "marching athlete" AND injury*] from January 1990 to October 2016, resulting in 141 articles. Following screening (of title and abstract), six articles were reviewed. Four met the inclusion criteria: (1) peer-reviewed, cross-sectional studies, (2) high school- or college-aged members, (3) available abstract, (4) English

language, (5) inclusion of prevalence/incidence and risk/rate of MSI and SI. **Evidence Quality Assessment:** Two reviewers independently assessed studies' level of evidence (LOE) and quality using the Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine (2009) and Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) instruments. Data of interest included the following: subjects, injury/illness prevalence/incidence and classification (descriptive statistics [mean, standard deviation (SD)]), and risk/rate of injury/illness (e.g., odds ratio, risk, confidence interval [CI]:95%; reported or calculated) for MSI and SI. **Results and Summary of the Search:** Four studies met the inclusion criteria (LOE=2b). STROBE scores ranged from 12-23 (0-36 technique; average=18.62±4.37). Pooled sample size was 2,272, in college-aged members (n=3) and high school-aged members (n=1) with MB only (n=1), MB and CG (n=2), and unidentified (i.e., MB or CG) members (n=1) over different season lengths. All studies agree MB and CG are strenuous activities with significant potential for lower extremity (LE) MSI as it was between 27%-87.7% of reported injuries (n=3); illnesses were 22-34%. One study found an overall injury rate for one week of band camp to be 124.03/1,000 exposures, while the LE injury rate alone was 68.18/1,000 exposures. Injury rates in another study ranged from 21/100 students for piccolo players to .05/100 students for snare drummers. In comparison, MB and CG sustained 0.7 and 1 injury per hour during practice (149/216.1) and performance (19/19.2) time respectively; while marching performance resulted in 3.6 injuries per hour (15/4.2). Incidence of injury during band camp was reported at 267 (267/178=150%) and 423 (423/224=188%) over two seasons. A final study reported a MSI prevalence of 25% of survey participants. Limitations to these studies include the following: (1) inconsistent operational definitions, (2) inconsistent method, (3) self-reported data, (4) poorly reported data, and (5) small sample size. **Clinical Bottom Line:** Results strongly indicate that MB and CG are likely to sustain LE MSI and the nature of the activity predisposes members to certain types of injuries. **Implications:** MB and CG are athletic activities often performed by unfit individuals; thus, athletic trainers should be present to provide injury prevention and manage MSI and SI when they arise.

Clinical Scenario

Marching band (MB) and color guard (CG) are popular organized team-based physical activities in secondary school and collegiate settings, yet there is often a limited amount of medical coverage for participants. Originally, MBs accompanied armies onto the battlefield, tasked with directing movements and relaying signals during armed conflicts. The standard MB evolved over the years from a military asset to an entertainment display. In 1907, the University of Illinois Marching Illini were selected to perform the first halftime show in a football game against the University of Chicago.[1] The transition from military strategy to a visual and auditory spectacle for the masses is second to none. Modern MBs have progressed into well-oiled machines of precise, coordinated, low-load cyclical movements practiced for up to 12 hours a day during the preseason and countless more hours during the performance season. Working alongside the MB, CG has also transitioned from a military asset that once rendered military honors to a visual expression of hand-eye coordination, balance, and agility. CG members on today's new battlefield demonstrate synchronized choreography as they flip, toss, and spin equipment, including flags, rifles, and sabers, to provide a visual experience for viewers.

In the 21st century, MB and CG are often seen in combination with athletic events (usually American football games) as halftime entertainment. Although there is no denying the difficulty involved in MB and CG performances, the individuals who partake in this activity rarely receive the care associated with such physical feats. Participating in MB and CG has numerous health and social benefits, and therefore such participation should qualify as an athletic activity. When used in conjunction with dietary management, participation in color guard was shown to result in a "decline in body mass index, increase in muscularity, and decrease in cardiovascular risk status."[2] MB has also been demonstrated to meet "the

criteria for moderate activity in adolescents and therefore significantly contributed to overall physical activity." [2] In addition to the physical benefits of MB and CG membership, the psychological benefits are comparable to those provided by other sports.[3] Participation in MB and CG can "entail feelings of confidence, pride, energy, and group loyalty contributing to adolescent personal growth," just as in traditional sports like soccer or football.[2]

Accompanying the benefits from participation, previous research (though limited) has demonstrated that an injury and illness risk is involved in MB and CG participation. For example, injuries may result "from the demands of playing an instrument, handling a piece of equipment, or from the art and style of marching."[4] Injuries can also result from complicated neuromuscular activity and muscle coordination such as eccentric muscle contractions that occur in common movements like running or high-step marching.[2] The MB injury spectrum is diverse, and cases of delayed onset muscle soreness, swollen deformed joints, fatigue, muscle strains, and other musculoskeletal injuries (MSI) have been documented.[2] With over 27,000 participants in collegiate MB alone, an enormously underserved population appears in need of medical care for their sport due to the potential risk of injury. The reduction of risk and treatment of subsequent injuries can be provided by a certified athletic trainer (AT).[5]

Focused Clinical Question

What are the prevalence/incidence, risk or rate, and type of MSI and sudden illness (SI) reported during activity in high school and collegiate MB and CG members?

Level of Evidence and Key Findings

The following is a synopsis of the level of evidence and key findings from relevant articles as they pertain to MSI and SI prevalence/incidence, risk or rate, and type of condition:

- Existing literature was searched for studies of level 2b evidence[7] or higher that investigated the prevalence/incidence, risk or rate, and type of MSI and SI reported during activity. Level of evidence was used to assist in finding appropriate evidence.[7]
- Four cross-sectional studies met the criteria for inclusion.[2,4,5,6]
- Lower extremity (LE) MSI rates in three studies ranged from 27%-87.7% of reported injuries, and illnesses were 22-34%.[2,4,6]
- Results strongly indicate that MB and CG participants are likely to sustain LE MSI, and the nature of the activity predisposes members to certain types of injuries.
- One study found overall injury rate for one week of band camp to be 124.03/1,000 exposures; the LE injury rate was 68.18/1,000 exposures.[5]
- Injury rates in another study ranged from 21/100 students for piccolo players to .05/100 students for snare drummers.[4]
- In comparison, MB and CG participants sustained 0.7 and 1 injury per hour during practice (149/216.1) and performances (19/19.2); marching performances resulted in 3.6 injuries per hour (15/4.2).[6]
- Incidence of injury during band camp was reported at 267 (267/178=150%) and 423 (423/224=188%) over two seasons.[2]

Clinical Bottom Line

Moderate evidence suggests that MB and CG participants are likely to sustain a LE injury because of participation in their respective activities.

Strength of Recommendation. Level B evidence (per the 2004 Strength of Recommendation Taxonomy) shows that MB and CG members are likely to become injured, although not necessarily ill, during the season. The Strength of Recommendation Taxonomy scale grade is determined by the quality and consistency of included evidence. Level B evidence indicates that the "recommendation is based on inconsistent or limited-quality patient-oriented evidence."[8]

Search Strategy

Terms Used to Guide Search Strategy

PICO is a commonly used acronym for generating search strategies in medical research. A specific population, intervention, comparison intervention, and outcome are established to filter articles and limit search results. PICO, in this particular case, considers the following:

- **P**opulation: collegiate OR high school AND marching band OR color guard
- **I**ntervention: participation in marching band OR color guard
- **C**omparison: none
- **O**utcome(s): prevalence OR incidence OR risk OR rate OR type of musculoskeletal injuries OR sudden illness

Sources of Evidence Searched

The following information databases were searched for relevant articles to be included in this review:

- *Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature* (*CINAHL*)
- *PubMed*
- *The Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online* (*MEDLINE*)
- *Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine Collection*
- *ScienceDirect*

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion

To be included in the appraisal, articles were required to meet the following criteria:

- Investigate prevalence, incidence, risk, rate, or type of MSI and SI
- Be an observational, peer-reviewed, cross-sectional study
- Provide an available abstract
- Be level 2b or higher
- Be limited to English language
- Be limited to humans and to college- or high school-aged populations
- Be written within the last 16 years (January 2000 to October 2016)

Exclusion

Articles containing the following criteria were excluded from the review:

- Studies using non-high school or collegiate members (e.g., army)
- Studies using a mixed subject pool (e.g., adult and adolescent)

Results of Search

Four studies were identified and met the inclusion criteria; all were full reports. Two studies examined rate of injury,[5,6] one study examined incidence, [2] and one study examined prevalence.[4] A summary chart of the extracted data for the five studies can be found in Table 1 (based on the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine's 2009 Levels of Evidence).[7]

Best Evidence

The studies included in this critically appraised topic (CAT) utilized the "best" evidence. (See Table 1.) These studies were selected because they focused on the appropriate population, they graded with a level evidence 2b or higher, they investigated injury or illness in MB and CG, and they included at least one of the following key outcomes: prevalence, incidence, risk, rate, or type of MSI and SI.[7]

Implications for Practice, Education, and Future Research

All studies in this review demonstrated that MB and CG members are more likely to sustain a MSI while participating in their activity compared to SI.[2,4,5,6] SI accounted for 22-34% of all reported conditions, while LE MSI accounted for 27%-87.7% of reported injuries.[2,4,6] ATs covering MB and CG would be able to manage and reduce injury incidence and rate by utilizing key domains in their scope of practice.

Despite the possible benefits linked to medical coverage of MB and CG members by ATs, a few variables can prevent ATs from reducing risk accordingly. First, high costs are associated with medical coverage. ATs in colleges/universities and high schools often have several sports and hundreds of athletes to provide population-based health care coverage at any one time. Adding MB and CG coverage may be impossible with current staffing due to the sheer volume of members (+125 athletes). To provide appropriate coverage, schools would likely need to hire additional staff members (i.e., ATs) or reduce coverage for other sports, placing all sports at higher risk for injury or illness. MB and CG have an estimated health care units (HCUs) rating of 10.56 per the *Recommendations and Guidelines for Appropriate Medical Coverage of Intercollegiate Athletics* published by the National Athletic Trainers' Association.[9] This HCU indicates that there should be one full-time AT covering MB and CG. However, other sports, such as football, have a HCU of 15.8 indicating that the potential need for the AT is greater in the case of limited staffing.

Despite the costs associated with MB and CG coverage, the costs associated with injury may be greater. The majority of injuries reported by Beckett, Seidelman, Hanney, Liu, and Rothschild were ankle sprains.[4] The average cost of non-surgical treatment of an ankle sprain that involves wrapping the ankle is $128 per injury.[10] This means that if bands have approximately 125 MB and CG members combined, as many bands do, it is not unlikely that MB and CG members could spend upwards of $9,856 per year on ankle sprains alone. A key aspect to lowering healthcare costs is prevention, and improperly managed ankle sprains can result in higher costs due to "recurrent instability, chronic pain, osteochondral lesions of the talus, premature osteoarthritis, and other significant long-term disability"; as such, sprains are considered a public health issue.[11] As noted by an athletic training summit on public health,

> Athletic training intersects with and furthers the objectives of public health. These include osteoarthritis (OA) in general and chronic management of posttraumatic OA in particular; concussion management and return-to-participation guidelines; sudden cardiac death prevention relating to emergency action plans and screening initiatives; heat-illness prevention related to heat-acclimatization and environmental policies; prevention of overuse injuries (ulnar collateral ligament and shoulder injuries in youth baseball players); disaster relief efforts; and shifting to models of

wellness, optimal performance and disease and injury prevention rather than treatment of injury and illness.[12]

Because of their unique position to provide care to MB and CG members, ATs can work to reduce the greater public health issues that begin in adolescence. An AT can properly manage the condition and reduce maladies of ankle sprains (recognizing that this is only one of the possible injuries that a MB or CG member can suffer). ATs are highly qualified, multi-skilled health care professionals who serve a valuable role in the performing arts settings. Moreover, ATs improve functional outcomes and specialize in patient education to prevent injury and re-injury. Preventative care provided by an AT has a positive return on investment for employers. ATs can also reduce injury and shorten rehabilitation time for their patients, which translates to lower absenteeism from work or school and reduced health care costs.

The National Athletic Trainers' Association released 13 guidelines for band directors to implement to reduce injury for their members.[13] However, directors may be unable to effectively implement these guidelines for several reasons. For instance, one guideline states to "hold and manage sousaphones, drums, flutes and other instruments correctly to avoid ergonomic injuries."[13] This is a good guideline in practice, but directors often have little knowledge of ergonomics, unlike an AT. Also, even when correct ergonomics are used, members can become injured because of the required position, as demonstrated by the high rate of flute and piccolo injuries.[5] An AT could more effectively implement these guidelines to prevent and manage injuries more effectively than a director could.

ATs have typically been seen in the collegiate and high school settings, but have continued to expand into other settings. Today, ATs are found in the performing arts (i.e., ballet and orchestra), in the military, and in hospital clinics. These nontraditional settings demonstrate that ATs have a broad range of skills that can be applied in a multitude of settings, and, given such, the AT would serve well to cover MBs and CGs.

Although this CAT demonstrates the need for ATs to be involved in the care of MB and CG participants, continued research should be conducted to solidify this rationale. Future research should include large sample sizes, well-designed data collection methods, and full-season data collections. Studies should also be performed on other musical performers such as drum corps because the techniques and practices performed by these individuals are often more rigorous than those of collegiate and high school MB participants.

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Table 1. Summary of Data Extraction

Author(s)	Study Question	Sample	Design
Kilanowski JF[2]	What are the frequency and types of injuries sustained by student members of a high school MB?	178 and 224 high school-aged MB members during the 2005 and 2006 preseason, respectively	The study retrospectively inspected MB camp health clinic logs for a 2-year period.
Beckett S, Seidelman L, Hanney WJ, Liu X, Rothschild CE[4]	What is the prevalence of MSI injury in collegiate MB and CG members?	1,379 members (average age=19.8 years) of 21 collegiate MBs who were above 18 years of age and currently participating in a collegiate MB or CG program in the 2012 season	An electronic survey of 46 questions was developed and distributed to collegiate MB members. Directors of collegiate MB and CG programs were contacted through an electronic recruitment letter to invite active MB members to complete the questionnaire.
Moffitt DM, Ross AC, Mansell JL[5]	What is the injury rate during the preseason for a collegiate MB?	154 collegiate MB members	Members were instructed to self-report any type of injury experienced using the form provided as soon as possible after it occurred. Researchers were available at every practice to collect forms.
Mehler A, Brink D, Eickmeier K, Hesse D, McGuire J[6]	What are the potential trends or indications of the types of injuries that may occur in a MB at the collegiate level?	337 collegiate MB and CG members	Forms were filled out by the band member at the time of injury, and it was collected by a medical staff member. At the end of the season, an exit survey was completed by all MB members to expand upon information previously gathered.

Table 1. Summary of Data Extraction (continued)

Author(s)	Outcome Measures	Results	LOE
Kilanowski JF[2]	Injury/illness incidence	The most common chief complaint was LE MSIs, followed by gastrointestinal distress, heat distress, trauma, upper extremity MSIs, and other illnesses. Significant positive correlations were found between the day of camp, blisters, menstruation, insect bites, asthma, heat distress, and musculoskeletal chief complaints.	2b
Beckett S, Seidelman L, Hanney WJ, Liu X, Rothschild CE[4]	Prevalence	25% of respondents reported sustaining a MSI as a direct result of participation in MB or CG. Females and those with a higher body mass index were significantly more likely to sustain a MSI.	2b
Moffitt DM, Ross AC, Mansell JL[5]	Injury rate	An overall injury rate of 124.03/1,000 was found with the highest instrument section injury rate found in the mellophones at 220.0/1,000 exposures. Males (65.53/1,000 exposures) were slightly more likely to experience injuries than females (57.14/1,000 exposures).	2b
Mehler A, Brink D, Eickmeier K, Hesse D, McGuire J[6]	Injury rate	85.5% of the injuries reported involved the LEs. Of the LE injuries, the ankle was most commonly injured, followed by the knee and the foot. First-year members constituted only 33.1% of the band, but accounted for 40.9% of injuries reported. The injury rate for practice was .7 injuries per hour, performance was 1.0 injuries per hour, and marching performance was 3.6 injuries per hour.	2b

ADHD in Girls

Shannon F. Layton

Braun Award for the College of Health and Human Services, Category Two

Nominated by Mark Giesler, Associate Professor of Social Work

A May 2017 graduate of SVSU's undergraduate Social Work Program, Shannon F. Layton hopes to work with children and families. During her time at SVSU, Shannon maintained a 4.0 grade point average while working several jobs simultaneously and serving as the sole care-giver to her young daughter. She plans to return to school to earn a master of social work, so she can take her skills to the macro level, writing social policy and building community-based programs.

Currently a resident of Frankenmuth, Michigan, Shannon has lived in dozens of cities in Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Florida, and Virginia, and attended a total of ten K-12 schools in three of those states. The frequent moves during her formative years and her experiences as a member of the under-served single-parent population reinforced for her the importance of community and support structures for families with young children.

Shannon's work on ADHD in girls began as an independent study under the supervision of Dr. Mark Giesler. She was inspired to pursue this research after her daughter was diagnosed with ADHD and after witnessing the particular difficulties her child faced, difficulties often exacerbated by her daughter's exceptional intelligence, which often left her misunderstood by her teachers and peers. As Shannon learned more about ADHD, she realized that the academic and social struggles she faced while growing up were likely related to her own undiagnosed and unsupported ADHD. Not wishing to see her brilliant child experience the same struggles, she embarked on this research project, so she could become her daughter's strongest ally, advocate, and supporter.

Although our knowledge of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) continues to grow, considerable gaps in the literature remain, specifically as they relate to girls with ADHD; this is due, in part, to most past studies having included only boys, (e.g., Hinshaw, Carte, Sami, Treuting, & Zupan, 2002). More recent studies have revealed some differences between the sexes (e.g., Becker, McBurnett, Hinshaw, & Pfiffner, 2013; Elkins, Malone, Keyes, Iacono, & McGue, 2011; Seymour, Mostofsky, & Rosch, 2016). The purpose of this paper is to explore the literature about girls, from elementary to high school age, who have been diagnosed with ADHD, as well as the difficulties specific to this population. Taken together, this information may provide a unique basis for appropriate and effective treatments for girls with ADHD.

ADHD, previously classified as a behavioral disorder, is currently categorized as a neurodevelopmental disorder (O'Hare, 2015). ADHD affects the prefrontal cortex, an area of the brain that controls executive function (EF) and is extensively connected to other areas of the brain (Miller, Nevado-Montenegro, & Hinshaw, 2012). Impairments in EF can result in deficits in such skills as "planning, organization, response inhibition, sustained attention, set shifting, working memory (WM), and reasoning" (Miller et al., 2012, p. 657), as well as emotional regulation (Nadeau, Littman, & Quinn, 2015). Within ADHD are several subtypes, including hyperactive/impulsive (HI), characterized by aggressive, hyperactive, and impulsive styles of play and interactions; inattentive (I), characterized by an inability to focus on conversations, multi-step tasks, or organization; and combined (C), which is characterized

by a variable blend of the ADHD-HI and ADHD-I symptoms (Nadeau et al., 2015). The disorder is often comorbid with such disorders as oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) or conduct disorder (CD), among others.

Because of the internalizing of symptoms, girls with ADHD are more likely to be diagnosed with comorbid anxiety or depressive disorders (Nadeau et. al, 2015). As Nadeau et al. note, EF challenges are present for both boys and girls diagnosed with ADHD; these challenges vary depending on the subtype, but differing social expectations for boys and girls alter the experience had by each of the sexes. For example, deficits in EF function seem to have an impact on social relationships and social skills for girls with ADHD, deficits that do not appear to be matched in boys with ADHD. Although some amount of active and aggressive style play is acceptable for boys, girls are far more likely to be socialized to be agreeable and cooperative, which can lead to unique difficulties for girls with ADHD-HI or ADHD-C who do not exhibit socially acceptable behaviors. ADHD-I is believed to be the most prevalent diagnosis for girls, but can be easily missed due to the subtle nature of the symptoms; individuals with this subtype exhibit behaviors that are more closely aligned with the social expectations for girls to be quiet and agreeable.

Communication skills, which dominate girls' social interactions, can be especially difficult for girls with ADHD, particularly for girls with ADHD-I who often miss social cues or who shy away from social interactions. As detailed by Nadeau et al. (2015), the ability to use WM to recall previous conversations, to plan responses during conversations, and to refrain from interrupting or emotionally erupting are the building blocks of stable friendships with peers. They go on to state that, although girls with ADHD are less likely to have CD, ODD, or issues of hyperactivity than are boys with ADHD, these girls are more likely than their male counterparts to internalize problems, may experience more psychological distress, and are at a higher risk for developing serious psychiatric disorders as they age.

Utilizing self-, parent-, and teacher-reporting scales as part of a randomized controlled trial, Becker et al. examined whether the sex of children with ADHD-I accounted for any relationship between internalized symptoms (e.g., depression and anxiety) and negative social preferences (e.g., the way individuals believe they are viewed by others, how individuals view themselves in relation to others, and how perceptions held by others inform the way the individuals are treated). The researchers hypothesized that although these internalized symptoms would likely be stronger for girls than boys, a significant difference between the sexes would not be shown. The study sample, recruited from San Francisco Bay Area schools, pediatrician offices, and child psychiatrist offices (as well as parent online postings and word of mouth), consisted of 110 boys and 78 girls between the ages of 7 and 11. The teachers reported on children's social preference as it related to the number of classmates who disliked/rejected or liked/accepted them. Self-report by the children regarding the internalizing of symptoms measured symptoms of anxiety and depression. The parent-report related to parent-observed symptoms of depression. The findings derived from the scales indicated that the relationship between negative social preference and the internalizing of problems was stronger for girls than boys; in other words, girls experienced more depression and anxiety as a result of social difficulties than did boys (2013).

As compared to boys with ADHD, girls with ADHD will more often internalize criticism, are more likely to report feeling shame for precocious impulsive behaviors, and have a more negative self-image (Becker et al., 2013). Because peer groups in general tend to be smaller and more exclusive for girls than for boys and thereby provide less flexibility in social interactions, girls with ADHD are more likely to experience relational aggression; to experience difficulties in social relationships with peers, parents, and teachers; and to have friendships of poorer quality. According to Becker et al. (2013), girls with ADHD who experience peer neglect are at a higher risk for depression and will also blame themselves for peer rejection and social difficulties. Experiencing more peer rejection than boys with ADHD, girls with ADHD also tend to alienate their peers and to be less popular with their peers as they get older (Nadeau et al., 2015).

Other studies have likewise worked to explore the differences between boys and girls with ADHD. For example, Elkins et al. (2011) examined (1) whether the impact of ADHD on preadolescent adjustment in academic, interpersonal, and behavioral realms was comparable between boys and girls, and (2) the significance of each ADHD subtype for both sexes. The authors' work was an extension of a longitudinal twin study investigating adolescent origins of substance abuse. The sample pulled from this cohort was first screened through parent-reported symptoms of ADHD and CD, which fit the criteria set by the fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)* and for indicators of academic disengagement. The resulting sample was made up of 998 individuals (520 girls and 478 boys). The sample was then separated into four groups, which were then sorted according to the three ADHD subtypes, as well as a group with no diagnosis of ADHD. Reports of adjustment were taken from children and parents during a family visit and from teacher ratings sent by mail (2011). Additionally, within the study done by Elkins et al., academic achievement, motivation, and aptitude were measured through teacher-reporting, whereas such problem behaviors as not studying at home or turning in homework on time were measured through parent-reporting. Relationships were rated by children through self-reporting scales concerning self-confidence, perceived level of popularity among peers, and self-concept (i.e., goth, jock, girly-girl, nerd). Children were also asked whether they had been bullied by peers to assess victimization while teachers reported on "how popular or well liked the child is relative to other students" (2011, p. 535). The authors also gathered mental health, treatment, and medication information through parent- and child-reporting during clinical interviews to assess for comorbidity and prior treatment.

Elkins et al. (2011) revealed through their data analysis that, although the severity of the symptoms of ADHD was consistently similar between the sexes, the impact of those symptoms produced very different results between the sexes and ADHD subtypes. When children with ADHD were compared to those without ADHD, "girls with ADHD were more negatively affected than boys in the academic and social realms" (p. 541), and girls with the ADHD-I subtype did worse than boys with the ADHD-I subtype, specifically regarding having lower GPAs, decreased academic motivation and academic expectations, and poorer peer relations and self-concept. Although the clinical findings of Elkins et al. showed few differences between the sexes where symptoms and treatment utilization were concerned, the significant differences in the social and academic realms pointed to greater adjustment problems during adolescence for girls with ADHD, especially with the ADHD-I subtype.

Experiencing more difficulties with social relationships and having greater instances of internalized symptoms have not been the only differences to be found for girls with ADHD. Seymour et al. (2016) conducted a quantitative study to examine "the impact of increasing cognitive demands on response control" (p. 141) among two large samples of children, those with ADHD and those without ADHD, the latter being termed typically developing (TD). The authors also compared results between the sexes. The sample consisted of children aged 8-12 years; 81 children with ADHD, 41 of whom were girls; and 100 TD children, 47 of whom were girls. The researchers used a Go/No-Go (GNG) task, where the participants pressed a space bar when green spaceships appeared in a sequence with red spaceships, followed by a more complex GNG task with increased cognitive load. In the latter scenario, the test subjects pressed the space bar for green spaceships and for red spaceships that were preceded by an even number of green spaceships. The error rates of the differing groups were examined to determine any patterns.

Based on prior research, Seymour et al. hypothesized the differences between girls with ADHD and TD girls would depend on the task, especially when there was an increase of cognitive load, but boys with ADHD would do worse than TD boys more broadly on both simple and complex tasks. Their findings supported their hypothesis. Results suggested that for children with ADHD, boys experience greater deficits in primary motor control than girls, and WM impairments exist in both sexes. These findings also suggest that, even with a minimized cognitive load, boys with ADHD exhibit deficiencies in response control when compared with TD boys, deficiencies that continue when cognitive load is increased. On the

other hand, girls with ADHD exhibit response control relative to TD girls when cognitive load is minimized, but response control deficiencies are revealed when cognitive load is increased. These results have been taken to mean that increased cognitive load has a greater impact on the response control of girls with ADHD than of boys with ADHD, particularly when compared with TD children (2016). This trend could also indicate that girls' symptoms may remain masked until cognitive load increases; this information could similarly explain why girls tend not to show behavioral problems until having reached puberty, which typically begins around the time a child starts middle school, an environment in which cognitive loads and expectations increase for children generally (Nadeau et al., 2015). As the need for more complex EF skills increases, the need for support in these areas becomes more evident.

Studies also show that the impacts of unsupported childhood EF deficits are long-lasting. Miller et al. (2012) utilized data from a longitudinal study on executive function (EF) that investigated behavioral, neuropsychological, social, and family functioning of 140 girls with and 88 without ADHD. Baseline testing was conducted when girls were between the ages of 6 and 12, with follow-ups between 11 and 17, and again between 17 and 23. The researchers hypothesized deficits in EF would be predictors of "worse outcomes in young adulthood across the domains of academic, socioemotional, occupational, and global functioning in girls with and without ADHD" (p. 658). Results revealed this study to be consistent with previous work, indicating EF was predictive of later outcomes with the strongest predictors being WM and global EF, or the sum of EF skills, overall. Deficits in WM, the study showed, interact with attention. In addition, WM is involved in remembering rules, learning, reasoning, and goal achievement through the manipulation of information. These abilities are believed to be important academically and with regard to job performance, and they point to the importance of early EF support during childhood "to reduce the risk of developing a range of negative outcomes" (p. 666).

In a separate assessment based on data from the previously cited longitudinal study, Miller, Loya, and Hinshaw (2013) hypothesized (1) that similar EF trajectories exist for girls with and without ADHD, but greater impairment occurs for girls with ADHD across time and (2) that "changes in EF abilities would predict changes in ADHD symptoms across time" (p. 1006). Researchers utilized measures of EF that were well-established and validated to consider firstly, cognitive task functioning, which includes planning, response inhibition, attention, and organization; secondly, attentional processing and response inhibition; and, thirdly, auditory WM. Results of this study showed EF abilities improved in both groups with some trajectories diverging based on childhood ADHD status. Those who showed improvement in EF also showed improvement in symptoms consistent with ADHD-I and ADHD-HI subtypes. Those with childhood ADHD showed greater improvement in global EF at higher rates, but no marked difference in improvement occurred when assessing response inhibition and WM.

Although there appear to be no considerable sex-based differences in either the severity or the experience of adjustment problems, the impact differential is quite distinct. Studies show that, when compared to boys, girls faced higher rates of internalizing symptoms; comorbidity with anxiety and depression; and greater difficulty with social and relational interactions with peers, caregivers, and teachers. Furthermore, girls diagnosed with ADHD-I seem to fare worse overall. Taken together, the reviewed literature provides a basis for forming a treatment plan by offering a better understanding of what girls with ADHD face day-to-day, as well as how their experiences differ from boys with ADHD and between subtypes (Elkins et al., 2011).

Interventions that have been found to be effective in the treatment of ADHD are based on a comprehensive approach and utilize a family psychoeducational model. Interventions may include cognitive behavioral therapy to help children with ADHD moderate their behavior; careful coordination between teachers, caregivers, and helping professionals; and a strong emphasis on positive reinforcement (O'Hare, 2015). In fact, in a study of single- versus mixed-gender group treatment, it was found that girls who participated in single-gender group sessions, which provided opportunities for the practice and

reinforcement of prosocial behaviors, showed increased levels of assertiveness, self-management, and compliance (Babinski, Sibley, Ross, & Pelham, 2013). Correlations also have been found between a negative social climate in the family home and disrupted social-emotional development for girls with ADHD (Peris & Hinshaw, 2003), suggesting the importance of involving a child's family in any treatment plan. As was previously noted, particular issues are raised for girls who lack appropriate social and relational skills, such as increased instances of depression and anxiety (Nadeau et al., 2015); in light of this information, special consideration may need to be given to the building of those skills, as well as the development of a support network for girls who may be experiencing peer rejection or avoidance.

As EF abilities are shown to improve from childhood to early adulthood, it is critical to implement interventions as early as possible for all children, but especially for girls given what is known about the increased likelihood of negative social, economic, and academic outcomes when these deficits are left unsupported (Miller et al., 2012; Miller et al., 2013). Additionally, according to Florida International University's Center for Children and Families, interventions with a focus on psychosocial components and a particular emphasis on behavior modification are recommended; such interventions should include elements for parents (or caregivers), schools, and the child. In this integrated model, the greatest importance is placed on teaching parents effective skills for dealing with their children's ADHD and related behaviors (n.d.). After completing an evaluation to determine a child's functional impairment in home, school, and peer settings, target areas for treatment can be identified.

Most parental skills training is accessed through books or video education sessions. One area of focus is the importance of positive reinforcement for good behaviors over negative reinforcement of problematic behaviors (Center for Children and Families, n.d.). Given the greater prevalence of girls to internalize symptoms (Becker et al., 2013), the focus on positive reinforcement may help mitigate this tendency. Being specific when giving directions or commands is likewise important. Giving a child a general statement, such as "be good," does not fully inform the child of what the expected behavior consists. Being brief when giving instructions can also support deficits in WM, as the child will be less likely to become overwhelmed. Clearly stating consequences for noncompliance and always following through on those consequences additionally create reliable expectations for the child. Utilizing daily charts with a point system or token economy helps to further reinforce positive behaviors, as does providing a system to immediately address problematic behaviors. A daily reporting system can also be integrated into the classroom, so behaviors that occur in that setting can be addressed on a daily basis in the home, providing further opportunity for reinforcement (Center for Children and Families, n.d.). Utilizing these parent-focused interventions may aid in changing a negative social climate in the home, an element linked to disruptions in girls' social-emotional development (Peris & Hinshaw, 2003).

Prioritizing the positive reinforcement of desired behaviors over the negative reinforcement of problematic behaviors should also carry over from home to school. Publicly praising positive behaviors in the classroom could assist in counteracting the negative internalization of symptoms. Likewise, private reprimands are of significant importance. When considering how emotional regulation tends to be problematic for children with ADHD, and especially for girls who are impacted by a social expectation to be proficient with such regulation, a private reprimand may mean the difference between whether a child has a "meltdown" or is able to process the information being given by the teacher. A daily report card, as mentioned above, is another intervention that could be utilized in the classroom and serve as a tool to share information and reinforce lessons between school and home. Among the benefits of this tool are the ability to track progress in real time, showing students where they started versus where they are, and the ability to immediately reward and celebrate preferred behaviors and successes (Center for Children and Families, n.d.).

For interventions used directly with children, those that would benefit girls most would be related to the systematic teaching of social skills, social problem-solving skills, and

ways to develop close friendships (Center for Children and Families, n.d.). Social skills to be emphasized should include communication, which, as previously noted, dominates girls' social interactions (Nadeau et al., 2015); participation, especially during group activities when the cognitive load may be increased and WM may be taxed (Seymour et al., 2016); and coping with teasing, which may promote psychological distress levels and the internalization of problems. Interventions to assist in social problem-solving should involve developing skills related to problem identification, brainstorming, choosing and implementing solutions, and then evaluating outcomes. The development of these skills could guard against the internalization of problems by helping girls to recognize ways in which circumstances may be responsible for issues rather than the girls constantly defining themselves as the problem. Girls can also learn the important skills of planning and implementation, known to be areas of deficiency for children with ADHD. Finally, although all children, with or without a diagnosis of ADHD, benefit from having and maintaining close friendships, for girls with ADHD, having a close or best friend is a protective factor against peer victimization and social problems (Center for Children and Families; Nadeau et al.).

In comparison with boys diagnosed with ADHD, research shows girls diagnosed with ADHD face increased difficulties regarding social skills and social relationships, often hindered by an increased need for complex communication skills. Girls with ADHD are also more likely than boys to develop psychiatric disorders as they age and experience a greater likelihood for the internalization of problems. Integrating interventions between home and school will aid in cultivating a structure of support for girls with ADHD. When the focus of intervention is on developing social and problem-solving skills, cultivating friendships, and utilizing a network of support that includes child, parent or caregiver, and school, girls with ADHD will be introduced to practical tools that will help them manage the issues they face.

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Knot Theory: Principles and Application

Alec Ward and Dylan E. McKnight
Braun Award for the College of Science, Engineering and Technology
Nominated by Amy Hlavacek, Associate Professor of Mathematics

Alec Ward is from Almont, Michigan, and graduated *summa cum laude* in May 2017; he majored in mathematics and minored in economics, and during his time at SVSU, he conducted research under the guidance of mathematics professor Dr. Hasan Al-Halees. Alec presented his research at the 2017 Michigan Mathematical Association of America (MMA) Section Annual Meeting at Ferris State University. Alec also worked as a mathematics tutor at the SVSU Math and Physics Resource Center for over two years. He is planning on attending Indiana University in Fall 2017 to pursue a Ph.D. in mathematics.

Dylan E. McKnight is from Montrose, MI. He graduated *magna cum laude* in May 2017 with a bachelor of science degree in mathematics and physics. Much of his undergraduate career was spent doing research in physics and mathematics, and he presented his work in elliptic curve cryptography at the MAA Mathfest in 2016. He plans to attend graduate school at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln in Fall 2017, with hopes of receiving a Ph.D. in mathematics. He tutored at the Math and Physics Resource Center for four years and was the president of Math Club for two years.

Alec and Dylan wrote the following paper for their Abstract Geometry course (MATH 471). The intent of the assignment was to explore an area of mathematics related to geometry that had not been covered in the class. This work involved writing a paper and giving a presentation on their topic to the class. Alec and Dylan's main focus while writing the paper was to provide a brief introduction to the many elementary concepts in knot theory and give reasons for the importance of these concepts. Besides the fact that they were writing on the more difficult concepts of knot theory, which include the Dowker notation, the Jones polynomial, and mutants, to a general mathematics audience, one of the biggest challenges in writing the paper was arranging the contents of the paper so that the material would be presented logically and concisely.

Introduction

Knots are seemingly simple objects that are experiencing a bit of a renaissance. Although once at the center of chemistry and physics research in the late nineteenth century, advances in atomic theory led to knot theory diminishing as a topic of interest in the sciences. However, as chemists and physicists lost interest in knots, mathematicians picked up where they left off. Throughout the early twentieth century until today, the mathematical study of knots, or knot theory, has existed as a prominent area of research (Adams, 2001). The recent work of such eminent mathematicians as John Conway and Vaughan Jones has made knot theory one of the most changing and active areas of research in mathematics. Furthermore, it is becoming apparent that nineteenth-century scientists may have prematurely written off the applications of a theoretical inquiry of knots; concepts, such as

the Jones polynomial and Dowker notation for knots, are leading towards cryptosystems that may prove to be resilient to attacks by quantum computers.

Before knot theory became an established field of study in mathematics in the late nineteenth century, the seemingly inherent interest humans have for knots resulted in a long history of analyzing, studying, and cataloging them. Many cultures even regarded knots as having significant roles in their religious beliefs. Such religious views put knots in an abstract and theoretical context long before knot theory did. Of particular interest in regards to the abstract human exploration of knots before the advent of knot theory is *The Book of Kells* (Banville, 2012). This text, created by Celtic monks around the eighth century, juxtaposed the New Testament with intricate illustrations, many of which included two-dimensional depictions of complicated knots (Gilbert & Porter, 1994). Although the study of knots was not its intended purpose, the collection of two-dimensional representations of knots found in *The Book of Kells* can be regarded as one of the earliest attempts to document various knots, a task central to the mathematical field of knot theory.

Despite a rich history of knots in human culture, the rigorous study of knot theory as a mathematical discipline did not emerge until the latter half of the 1800s. This emergence was fueled by the ideas and works of Peter Tait, a Scottish physicist. Tait, inspired by recent experiments and theories of his contemporaries, conjectured that each element could somehow be described as a unique knot. To represent each element as a knot, Tait began systematically listing distinct knots, drawing their two-dimensional counterparts, and categorizing them according to the number of times the knot crossed over itself in the projection. He published his listing of knots in 1885, and Tait's methodical listing and grouping of knots kindled the beginning of knot theory. Soon after Tait's listing of knots was published, mathematicians, such as C.N. Little, began analyzing and improving upon Tait's work, subsequently leading to the birth of modern knot theory (Adams, 2001).

To understand the mathematical study of knots, numerous concepts and objects must be clearly defined. Naturally this begins with defining a mathematical knot. Despite being reminiscent of a traditional knot, the mathematical knots studied in knot theory are fundamentally different. Colin Adams has given the following elementary description of a knot: "A knot is just a knotted loop of string, except that we think of the string as having no thickness and its cross-section being a single point. The knot is then a closed curve in space that does not intersect itself anywhere" (2001). Following this description, the simplest knot possible would just be a closed loop. This knot is referred to as the unknot or trivial knot. Often, the knot is represented with a two-dimensional drawing, which is the projection of the knot as it exists in R^3 (a three-dimensional space) onto R^2 (a two-dimensional plane); these are the three-dimensional (x,y,z) space and the two-dimensional (x,y) plane respectively. It should be noted that a place where a knot projection overlaps itself is known as a crossing.

When one considers only the definition of a mathematical knot, several important and fundamental questions in knot theory become evident. Given two knot projections, how do we know if they represent identical or distinct knots? What are the characteristics of knots that can help classify, rank, or distinguish them from one another? Could every knot be identical? Can a given knot be simplified into component parts that also satisfy the definition of knots? A large part of knot theory is dedicated to exploring such questions. This paper will attempt to outline and explain the necessary definitions, results, and tools that mathematicians have developed to answer the aforementioned inquiries that are central to knot theory. Also, in an attempt to demonstrate potential applications of knot theory, we will discuss a straightforward, yet secure cryptosystem based on results in knot theory.

Preliminary Definitions and Concepts

Knots are often represented as a projection. A projection of a knot is a two-dimensional representation, and seemingly different knot projections may in fact represent the same knot. It is often difficult to discern whether knot projections represent the same

knot. Therefore, developing a systematic method to determine when two projections represent the same knot is desirable. For instance, a set of actions that would change the appearance of a knot projection, but not the knot the projection represents, would mean if one could alter a particular knot projection to appear as another knot projection, using only that set of actions, then the two knot projections were identical all along.

Early in the development of knot theory, German mathematician Kurt Reidemeister described three separate changes, now known as Reidemeister moves, that can be applied to a knot projection; these preserve the corresponding knot that the initial knot projection represents (Adams, 2001). Even more importantly Reidemeister showed that for any two projections that represent the same knot, a series of Reidemeister moves and planar isotopies, which are deformations of the knot projection that do not change the crossings in the projection nor allow the projection to pass through itself, can always be used on one projection to make it appear identical to the second (Adams, 2001). The three Reidemeister moves, which are commonly referred to as Type I, Type II, and Type III Reidemeister moves, are defined as follows and illustrated in Figure 1:

- Type I Reidemeister moves enable us to remove or add twists to a section of a projection.
- Type II Reidemeister moves enable us to move a strand from one side of a loop to another.
- Type III Reidemeister moves enable us to slide a strand from one side of a crossing of two other strands to the other side of that crossing.

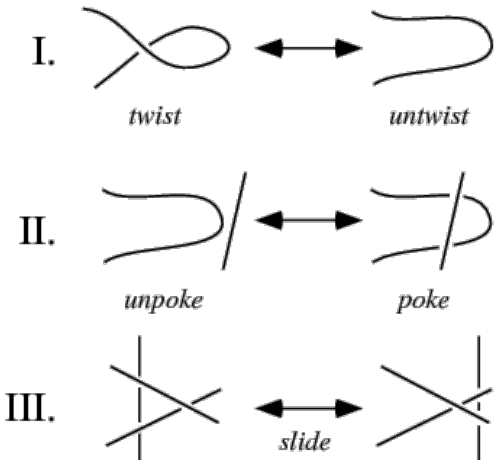


Figure 1. The three Reidemeister moves when applied to a section of a knot. ("Reidemeister Moves")

Reidemeister moves are an example of a broader class of deformations known as isotopies. Essentially, Reidemeister moves applied to a knot projection are two-dimensional representations of ambient isotopies being applied to the knot, with an ambient isotopy on a knot being any deformation of the knot in R^3, besides those that cause the knot to pass through itself or shrink a section of the knot to a single point. In the subject of knot theory, two knots are defined to be equivalent if they are linked by a combination of ambient isotopies. This means that when a Reidemeister move is applied to a knot projection, it does not change the knot represented by the projection (Adams, 2001).

The definition of equivalent knots and the concept of Reidemeister moves begin to answer some of the fundamental questions noted above. In particular, Reidemeister moves enable one, in theory, to eventually confirm when two separate knot projections represent the same knot. However, the inadequacies of Reidemeister moves are exceedingly evident. Reidemeister moves alone are unable to show that two knot projections represent distinct

knots. This is because each Reidemeister move that is applied to a projection only preserves the knot it represents. Moreover, there is no known proof stating that if a knot projection cannot be made to resemble a second knot projection in a given number of Reidemeister moves, then the knots are distinct (Adams, 2001). Therefore, despite how powerful Reidemeister moves are, they alone are not able to answer if all knots are in fact identical. Thus, to continue the quest of classifying, distinguishing, and understanding knots, more concepts and characteristics must be explored.

Because Reidemeister moves will always enable a person to change one knot projection into another projection, given that they represent identical knots, defining characteristics of knot projections preserved by Reidemeister moves could lead to the distinguishing of knot projections. For instance, if one knot projection had a certain quality and a second did not, and it was known Reidemeister moves preserve the status of this quality, one could confidently assert that the two given knot projections represent knots that are distinct. Such qualities of knots are known as knot invariants. Identifying knot invariants and subsequently using them to affirm that certain knots are, in fact, not equivalent is a central aspect of knot theory (Adams, 2001).

Presently the list of known knot invariants is large. However, many of them are difficult to compute from a given knot projection. Therefore, it is desirable to identify knot invariants that can be easily determined. One such invariant is tricolorability. To discuss tricolorability, we must first define strands. In a given projection, a strand is a segment of the knot that goes between under-crossings, with only over-crossings in between (Adams, 2001). If the minimum amount of colors needed to color each strand of a knot is two, then it is possible for a knot to be tricolorable. In addition for a knot to be tricolorable, at each crossing either all three of the colors must be present or only one of the three colors be present. For example, the trefoil knot is tricolorable, as shown in Figure 2.

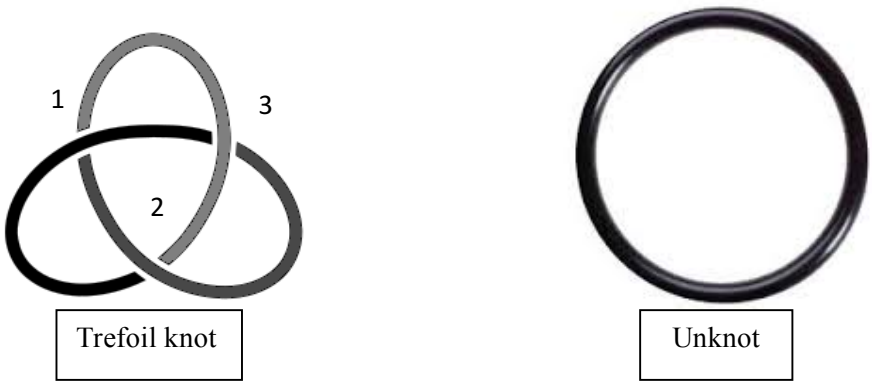


Figure 2. The trefoil knot is tricolorable, but the unknot is not. To show this, if the color from crossing 1 to 2 is red, then the color from crossing 2 to 3 would be green, and the color from crossing 3 to 1 would subsequently be blue. The unknot only requires one color and is therefore not tricolorable ("Eternal Knot").

We see that at every crossing, either one or three colors come together, thus satisfying the definition of tricolorability. Because the unknot projection only consists of a single strand, it can be given only a single color, so the unknot fails to be tricolorable. Because of this, tricolorability enables us to actually prove that the two projections depicted above do not represent the same knot and therefore are not equivalent. To prove tricolorability is a knot invariant, one must "test" that each Reidemeister move leaves the tricolorable status of a knot projection unchanged. Such a proof is straightforward (but is left out of this paper to preserve space). An approach for distinguishing two knots, given a projection of the knots, has thus been established.

Another important idea in knot theory is determining whether a given knot is simply a result of two or more other knots being combined. To explore this question, the operation of composition or sum of knots must be defined. Given two knots, J and K, we may define their composition as J#K. To perform the operation, one must remove an outside segment from the knot projections of J and K, and link the resultant gap with two lines in such a way as to avoid introducing crossings into or removing crossings from the projection (Adams, 2001). For example, we can consider the composition of the following two knots found in Figure 3.

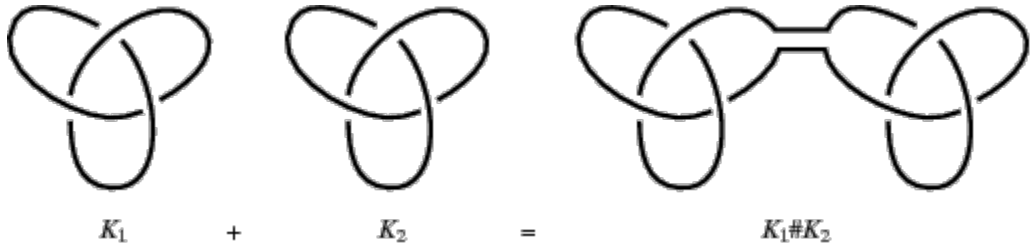


Figure 3. The composition of two trefoil knots ("Knot Sum").

The identity element for the composition of knots is in fact the unknot, which can be observed in Figure 4.

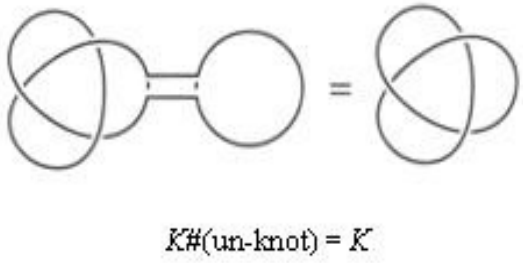


Figure 4. The identity element of the operation of knot composition is the unknot. Composing any knot with the unknot will not change the original knot ("'Slipping' into Knot Theory").

It can be seen that by planar isotopy the composition of any knot with the unknot, as in Figure 4, results in the original knot. If some knot is the result of the composition of two nontrivial knots, then the knot is called a composite knot. A knot that is never a result of the composition of two nontrivial knots is known as a prime knot (Adams, 2001).

Tangles and Mutant Knots

Like most areas of mathematics, the advancement of knot theory relies on our understanding of a number of definitions and terms. Several of the key concepts of the subject have already been presented, and the purpose of this section is to introduce a few more that are important to the subject of knot theory. The definition of a mutant knot follows directly from that of a tangle, so we begin by defining a tangle. According to Adams, a tangle is a "region in the (knot) projection plane" such that when "surrounded by a circle, the knot crosses the circle exactly four times" (2001). This is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. The dotted line encloses a tangle. The only requirement for a tangle is that the knot crosses the dotted line *exactly* four times (Adams, 2001).

As already mentioned, the definition of mutant knots follows directly from the idea of a tangle. Essentially, given a knot and its knot projection, a projection for a mutant of this knot is constructed by "cutting out" a tangle in the original projection and reflecting it about a vertical axis or horizontal axis or rotating the tangle 180 degrees. After performing one of the three operations on the tangle, the four ends of the tangle that were "cut" out of the projection are then "glued" back onto the projection (Adams, 2001). Figure 6 consists of a knot and one of its mutants.

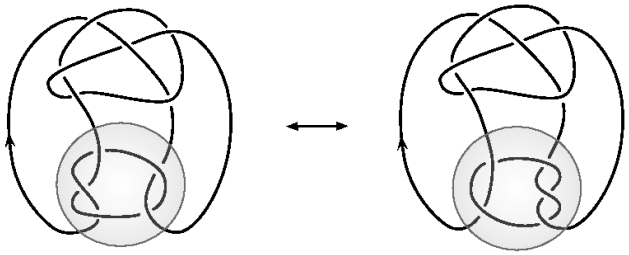


Figure 6. Two mutants of the same knot. Notice how the only thing changed was the section enclosed by the circle, which is a tangle (Nawata, Ramadevi, & Singh, 2015).

The reasons mutant knots are of particular interest in knot theory is that they are generally very difficult to distinguish from one another. Recall that a large concern of knot theory is devising and computing knot invariants to show that certain knots are distinct. Currently, no known knot invariants can differentiate a knot from its mutant knots. In fact, it has been shown that knots that are mutants of each other always possess the same status of tricolorability as well as the same hyperbolic volume, Alexander polynomial, Jones polynomial, and HOMFLY polynomials, all of which are common knot invariants used in knot theory, some of which will be discussed in the next section (Adams, 2001). It is clear that given the knot projection of two knots that are mutants of each other, it would be difficult for a person to determine that they are not equivalent. In fact, finding a knot invariant that could aid in distinguishing mutant knots from one another is one of the most prominent open problems in knot theory.

Knot Notation

In its earliest stages, the subject of knot theory focused largely on tabulating knots. In modern terms, tabulating knots refers to systematically listing distinct prime knots in order of their crossing number (Adams, 2001). One can easily see the difficulty in using "trial and error" to generate the knot projections for all of the prime knots with a particular crossing number. Therefore, mathematicians have developed numerical notations for knots, which not only enable one to assign a knot projection a combination of numbers, but also

"generate" a knot projection when given the numerical knot notation. Several notations have been conceived, and they have aided mathematicians in tabulating the prime knots (Adams, 2001).

One of the most prominent of these knot notations is the Dowker notation. The basis for this notation was developed by Tait and later improved upon by Canadian mathematician Clifford Dowker. This notation aided in the successful tabulation of prime knots up to thirteen crossings in the early 1980s. This was quite an accomplishment given that, to date, prime knots have only been completely documented up to sixteen crossings (Adams, 2001).

Given a projection of a knot, the Dowker notation for the knot can be quickly determined. To begin, a person would choose an arbitrary crossing on the knot and label it "1." Next, he would impose some orientation on the knot and depart the crossing from the understrand. Then, while traversing the knot, he would label each crossing with a successive whole number. When labeling a crossing with an even integer, he must also consider whether he is currently on an overstrand or understrand. If on an understrand, the even integer is given a negative sign; it is given a positive sign if on an overstrand. Odd integers are always assigned a positive value. This process is continued until a person has completely passed through the knot once. Each crossing will be approached twice as one traverses the entire knot, and each crossing will be given two numbers. Furthermore, each crossing will receive an odd and even integer. Because each crossing is assigned an odd and even integer, to represent a knot diagram using this labeling scheme, one can simply list the even integers in the order of the odd integers with which they are paired. This listing of even integers is the Dowker's notation for a knot projection (Adams, 2001); this concept is shown in Figure 7.

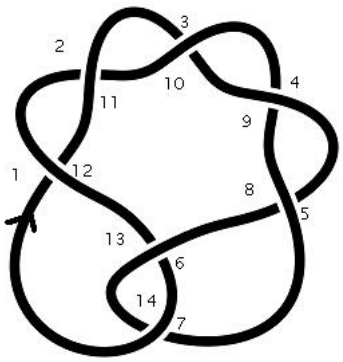


Figure 7. A knot projection with its corresponding Dowker notation. The sequence for this knot is 12, 10, 8, 14, 4, 2, 6 ("The Argoknot").

The most important attribute of Dowker notation is the fact that if given a sequence of even integers, one can employ Dowker notation to generate a knot diagram. This is simply done by recognizing that each even integer in the list can be paired with a subsequent odd integer and then generating the knot projection by reversing the algorithm described in the preceding paragraph (Adams, 2001). Somewhat surprisingly, however, is how effective Dowker notation is at generating unique knot projections. For instance, in the case of using Dowker notation to generate a knot projection from a given sequence of even integers, if the resulting knot projection represents a prime knot, then that sequence of even integers is unique to that knot (Adams, 2001). Moreover, because knot tabulation primarily focuses on prime knots, then Dowker notation is clearly a great tool in this pursuit. The ease of determining the Dowker notation of a knot, as well as its ability to represent oftentimes unique knots, makes it central to the subject of knot theory. Furthermore, these attributes of the notation result in its use in a knot-based cryptosystem.

Knot Invariants and Polynomials

Knot invariants are cornerstones in the subject of knot theory. As we previously discussed, invariants are essentially characteristics of knot projections that do not change as a result of Reidemeister moves and planar isotopies. The number of invariants established in knot theory is far too great to introduce in this paper, and the only knot invariant discussed in detail so far has been tricolorability. However, certain invariants are undeniably more useful than others. When it comes to evaluating the worth of an invariant to the study of knots, two primary qualities of the invariant should be considered. The first quality concerns how easy it is to evaluate or determine the value of the invariant when given a knot projection. Invariants that can be quickly evaluated (such as the invariant tricolorability) are far more valuable than invariants that are difficult to compute. The second quality that determines an invariant's meaningfulness is its ability to distinguish a large number of knots from one another. Consider again the invariant of tricolorability. When tricolorability of a knot projection is determined, two outcomes are possible: either the projection is tricolorable or it is not. Therefore, despite being easy to evaluate, tricolorability often falls short in being able to differentiate a large number of knots.

It turns out that the knot invariants that most successfully fulfill the two qualities discussed belong to a class known as "knot polynomials." Essentially, a knot projection is assigned a polynomial based on certain characteristics of the projection. The first knot polynomial established was the Alexander polynomial. This polynomial was first conceived by American mathematician James Waddell Alexander II in the 1920s, and every knot polynomial established since is based, in part, on it (Adams, 2001).

Numerous ways to determine the Alexander polynomial of a knot exist. In this paper, the method presented by Charles Livingston in his text *Knot Theory* will be illustrated. Given a knot projection of "n" crossings, one must induce an orientation and then, beginning at any crossing, traverse the projection, and number the crossings from 1 through "n." One must also arbitrarily number the strands of the knot projection 1 through "n." Finally, one must construct an ('n x n') matrix, A, based on the labeled projection. The determinant of a related matrix will result in the Alexander polynomial (Livingston, 1993).

The rules for constructing the matrix are as follows. For each crossing, one must first determine the type of crossing it is. If the understrand can be rotated clockwise and match the overstrand, it is a right-handed crossing. Conversely, if the understrand can be rotated counterclockwise to match the overstrand, it is a left-handed crossing. At each crossing, there will be four numbers, a number associated with the crossing, and three numbers associated with the strands (one strand passing over and separating a terminating strand from an emanating strand) (Livingston, 1993). See Figure 8 for a depiction of these right- and left-handed crossings.

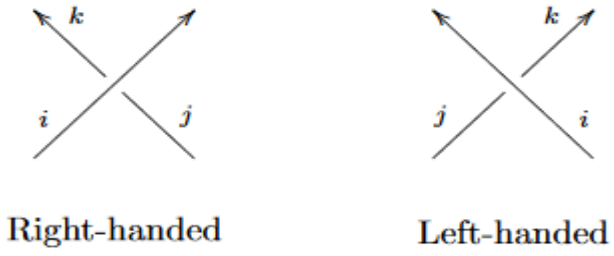
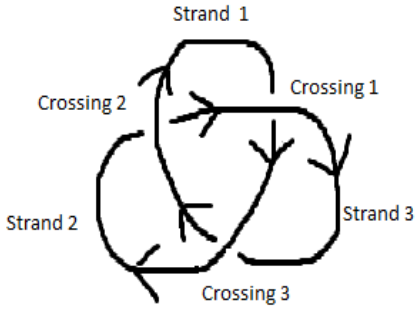


Figure 8. The difference between a right-handed and left-handed crossing. Notice strand "i" passes over strand "j" for right-handed, while the opposite is true for left-handed (Collins, 2006).

The following rule enables the matrix to be completed: If a crossing designated "c" with strand "x" passing over terminating strand "y" and emanating strand "z" is right-handed, then $A_{c,x} = 1-t$, $A_{c,y} = -1$, and $A_{c,z} = t$. All other entries in row c of the matrix will be 0. Furthermore, if the same crossing were left-handed, then one would assign $A_{c,x} = 1-t$, $A_{c,y} = t$, and $A_{c,z} = -1$ and let every other entry in row "c" be 0 (Livingston, 1993). It should be noted that $A_{m,n}$ represents the value of the entry located in the m^{th} row and n^{th} column of matrix A.

Once this matrix has been created, the n^{th} row and column are removed, resulting in a (n-1) x (n-1) matrix. The determinant of this (n-1) x (n-1) matrix will result in the Alexander polynomial (Livingston, 1993). It should be noted that when applying this method to calculate the Alexander polynomial, depending on how the projection was labeled, the resulting Alexander polynomial of a knot may differ by a factor of t^k for some integer k (Livingston, 1993). This means, if one uses this method to determine the Alexander polynomial of two knot projections and the resulting polynomials are not related by a factor of t^k (such as t^3+t^2 and t^3+t), then the projections must represent different knots. We conclude this section with an illustration of a calculation of the trefoil knot's Alexander polynomial in Figure 9.



Crossing 1 (Left-handed): i = 3, j = 1, k = 2

Crossing 2 (Left-handed): i = 1, j = 2, k = 3

Crossing 3 (Left-handed): i = 2, j = 3, k = 1

$$\begin{pmatrix} t & -1 & 1-t \\ 1-t & t & -1 \\ -1 & 1-t & t \end{pmatrix}$$

Figure 9. The 3x3 matrix constructed using the previously discussed algorithm. To compute the Alexander polynomial, the last row and column must be deleted to form a new matrix. The determinant of this new matrix, t^2-t+1, is the Alexander polynomial of the trefoil knot (Collins, 2006).

Cryptosystem Based on Knot Theory

One of the most fascinating applications of knot theory is in the field of cryptography. One can apply Dowker's notation and mutants to create a cryptosystem having the potential to be resilient to attack by quantum computers. This is a highly desirable property. Most of our current cryptosystems are based on the factorization of elements of algebraic fields, such as $\mathbb{Z}_p$. (Factoring large integers can be highly time consuming on traditional computers, which is what lends them to creating secure cryptosystems). However, on quantum computers, it has been shown that tasks such as integer factorization can be easily completed. This leaves the majority of our current data encryption techniques vulnerable to attacks conducted by potential quantum computers (Marzuoli & Palumboi, 2011).

However, if one were to use knots to encrypt information, the task of cracking the encryption is theorized to be difficult, even for quantum computers. This is due to the property of knots known as mutants. Mutant knots are definitely not equivalent, but they have a number of equivalent knot invariants (Adams, 2001). Furthermore, factoring the component knots from a connected sum is at least as difficult as factoring large integers (Marzuoli & Palumbo, 2011). Therefore, composing any knots with the mutant of a second knot would make deciphering the second knot from the connected sum very difficult.

Annalisa Marzuoli and Giandomenico Palumbo have developed the following cryptographic scheme, which somewhat resembles a classic RSA cryptosystem. The RSA cryptosystem is one of the most commonly used public key cryptosystems and is named after its developers: Ron Rivest, Adi Shamir, and Leonard Adleman. The following example can help us to better understand this system and knot theory's applicability to it. Suppose Alice is trying to send a secret message consisting of knots to Bob. Suppose this message is composed of a finite sequence of knots, $L = \{L_1, L_2, \ldots L_n\}$. Furthermore, suppose Alice and Bob have agreed upon a finite list of prime knots, $K = \{K_n \mid n= 1, 2, \ldots k\}$, from the known list of prime knots and instructions on how to mutate each prime knot. The steps for sending the encrypted message are then as follows:

1. Bob and Alice agree upon a list of K prime knots, along with some protocol for mutating each of the K knots. Alice mutates the list of knots to form a new list, K'. The list K and the instructions for mutation are private.
2. Alice then takes the new list of mutated knots, K', as well as the message she is attempting to send, L, and performs an ordered composition of knots on them. The new sequence of knots $\{L_n\#K'_n \mid n = 1, 2, \ldots , k\}$ is translated into Dowker notation and sent to Bob. The list of knots L#K' written in Dowker notation is public.
3. Bob receives the sequence L#K'. Because he knows the Dowker notation for all of the original knots K and the mutation instructions, he is able to recover the Dowker notation for each knot L_n from the sequence of L#K'. Then, Bob can use the Dowker notation to construct the knot projection for each knot L_n. This leaves Bob with the original message L.

This system has some definite advantages over systems that employ large prime numbers. It has been known that systems that employ integer factorization consume large amounts of data, which has led to the investigation of alternate cryptosystems. Factoring the knot compositions found in the cryptosystem is at least as difficult as factoring large integers (Marzuoli & Palumbo, 2011). This fact ensures this proposed cryptosystem will be at least as protective as current encryption systems and has the potential to be even stronger.

The only obvious drawback of the system is that the secret message being sent must be in the form of a sequence of knots. As a result, a way must be devised to transform an arbitrary message into a sequence of knots. Perhaps this could be done by somehow relating the message to a series of Dowker notations and constructing the message L from there.

Conclusion

The above information was merely a brief introduction to the vast field of knot theory. Although we covered many of the main topics, including Reidemeister moves, invariants, compositions, mutants, and polynomials, we have merely scratched the surface of what would be considered a detailed introduction to knot theory. Many crucial topics were not covered and some only mentioned in passing. These include links, Conway's notation for knots, braids, torus knots, hyperbolic knots, and volume. Such important concepts were left out because they are not necessary in the development of the aforementioned cryptosystem. Furthermore, cryptography is not the only application of knot

theory. Applications linked to physical sciences such as biology, chemistry, and physics also exist.

Given the plethora of open problems and applications in knot theory, mathematicians, those doing pure as well as those doing applied mathematics, will be busy with knots for the foreseeable future. More importantly, many of knot theory's most fundamental questions have yet to be answered. This includes finding knot invariants that would be able to distinguish all knots from one another and finding more efficient methods to generate all of the prime knots of a given crossing number (Adams, 2001). Because many of the essential knot theory questions are unanswered, it is fair to say our current view of the subject is shrouded in mystery. It is this enigmatic quality of knot theory that helps make it one of the most fascinating subjects in mathematics.

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Unpacking Culturally Relevant Practices in Urban Classrooms

Makia Brooks
Braun Award for Graduate Programs
Nominated by Deb Smith, Professor of Teacher Education

Makia Brooks, who is from Detroit, Michigan, is pursuing her master of arts in teaching degree with a literacy specialist endorsement. She graduated from Michigan State University in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in English Education. She has worked in the Metro Detroit area as a middle school English Language Arts teacher for the last three years. While at SVSU, Makia has been named to the Dean's List. In April 2017, she welcomed her daughter, Ava, into the world.

This paper was written for Secondary Reading Programs (TEMS 512). In this course, students read, analyzed, and discussed texts relevant to middle and high school audiences, emphasizing the importance of instructional methods. Students were asked to show their understanding of the International Literacy Association (ILA) standards by implementing and critically analyzing a K-12 literacy program in their respective school districts. Makia felt inspired by the connection between culture and cognitive growth, and she sought to explain how urban school systems may improve through collaborative discourse.

Introduction

Culturally relevant educational approaches and cultural competency stem from the imperative to reach students' needs beyond the classroom. Students are more than their academic standings or standardized test scores—each child offers a plethora of demographical, cultural, and dynamic perspectives on the world. Instead of studying culturally relevant approaches within a binary of "school" lives versus "home" lives, this paper seeks to flesh out the transformative power of embedding culture into literacy practices and curriculum across grade levels and content areas. Culturally relevant practices and competency approaches should be viewed as part of a sociocultural consciousness needed by educators, counselors, administrators, and every academic that greets students at the school door. This practice requires an affirming attitude toward what students value and how those values are strengthened through autonomy and instilled through trust. Although it may be dangerous to simplify *culture* to a set of collective beliefs, rituals, and perspectives, it is important to note the spectrum upon which academic culture, student demographical culture, and ethnic culture lie.

For the purposes of transparency and, perhaps, enlightenment, the focus of this paper is a middle school in metro-Detroit where the student body is diverse in terms of household income and social class, and where a program emphasizing culture was implemented. Criteria used to analyze this program and the data it produced included various journal articles about urban learning, early childhood literacy, and literacy research. In one such article, "Beyond Cultural Awareness: Prospective Teachers' Visions of Culturally Responsive Literacy Teaching," Jennifer D. Turner advocates for culturally responsive teaching in literacy classrooms because of its empowering role for teachers: "Vision has great potential as a teacher education tool that facilitates reflection, elicits beliefs and ideals, and uncovers values and dispositions" (2007, p. 22).

In addition to studying the cultural competencies within emerging and advanced teachers, the literacy program at this Detroit school required inclusion of cultural practices in curriculum and teaching methods. Participants in the program were encouraged to critically engage in and analyze the merits and possible pitfalls of including culture in the classroom on such a broad scale. Furthermore, ensuring all educators understood the depth of cultural competency and relevancy was imperative.

As we learned in our class discussions and readings, the International Literacy Association (ILA) Standards for Exemplary Reading Programs include ten essential criteria for effective programs that adhere to the goal of improving student literacy and strengthening comprehension skills over time. These criteria, or standards, are as follows: (1) student learning is enhanced by the reading program; (2) students like to read; (3) students are achieving reading success; (4) administrators (building or district) are involved in the reading program; (5) teachers, parents, and the community are involved in the reading program; (6) the school and/or district offer support services to the program; (7) listening, speaking, and writing are integrated into the reading program; (8) reading activities occur outside of school; (9) comprehension strategies are taught in the reading program and applied in other content areas; (10) the reading program is consistent with sound theory and appropriate research (*Standards,* 2010). Motivating students through encouragement and enjoyment, consistent reading and writing practices, community involvement, and comprehensive strategies that are utilized in and outside of school through supportive and collaborative services are key factors in the ILA standards. Culturally relevant practices can seamlessly interact with these standards through methodical attempts to reach the "whole" student. This requires building and sustaining relationships, rigor, and relevance. In terms of relationships, inclusive classrooms (regardless of logistics like grade level, ability, or content area) should prioritize a positive and productive student climate. Rigor is not merely assigning multiple tests that adhere to ability level; rather, it is challenging students to reach beyond their comfort levels and push themselves and their thinking forward. Lastly, culturally relevant practices should be of importance to the student body and what members of this group value. This is especially needed now as emerging technologies and growing forms of communication continue to advance. Literacy is not a one-form-suits-all practice; it falls upon a spectrum of ideas that must be continually challenged and advanced.

Secondary Literacy Program Analysis

Within the Detroit middle school where the program was implemented, the consensus around culturally relevant teaching practices and responsive teaching atmospheres varies dramatically among colleagues, administrators, parents, and intervention aides. Initially, the term *culture* became a discussion point of ethnicity and gender rather than student equity and teacher responsibility. Although administrators highly advocated for the program and a less than one half of a percent of teachers felt outraged and patronized, a commonality was the idea that if *culture* was already deeply engrained in the school, what was left to learn. However, once the action plan was introduced and discussed, there were many differing opinions on whether to redefine the cultural climate of the school or continue with the methods already in place. Table 1 references the work of the ILA and shows the program standards, as well as strengths and weaknesses linked to each standard (*Standards,* 2010).

Table 1: Program Standards Strengths & Weaknesses

Standard	Strengths	Weakness(es)
The reading program enhances student learning.	Culturally relevant teaching practices require application of reading strategies across all content areas. A variety of texts are provided that adhere to and are relevant for student lives. Learning is enhanced by using youth culture games.	There is a lack of specificity in the program as to what teachers need to include in their lessons. Cultural relevancy may not mean the same thing to each student. Some students may disengage with certain learning styles.
Students like to read.	Students are given appropriate texts, and time is allocated for them to engage with these texts. Student interests generate topics; reading may expand to visual stories (films, clips, music videos).	Teachers and administration must not assume every student will benefit from similar texts and assignments simply because they fit a certain demographic.
Students are achieving reading success.	Data-driven assessments are used to inform literacy practices. Students are given agency and autonomy to select their own texts.	Students may feel obligated to read a certain selection because they feel it fits their culture; this may not expand their cultural palette.
Administrators (building or district) are involved in the reading program.	Administrators ensure teachers have adequate and necessary materials to ensure student success. Research-based curriculum informs teaching practices and guidance.	Administrators may request or require additional data backing to justify certain discussions or activities. Some activities or assignments may not sufficiently tie into the Northwest Evaluation Association data scores and could be deemed unnecessary or inconsequential.
Teachers, parents, and the community are involved in the reading program.	Parents track reading progress at home with graphic organizers. Celebratory reading initiatives such as presentations linked to Black History Month, Latino History Month, Women's History Month, etc. reinforce cultural awareness. Parents help create inclusive classrooms and cultural cultivation by offering personal stories tied to the curriculum.	Some teachers may have cultural biases that could affect their relationship-building efforts and instruction of cultural competency.
The school and/or district offer support services to the program.	Intervention services are offered to ensure students understand the materials. Literacy coaches work with teachers to strengthen the curriculum and facilitation of strategies.	Cultural awareness may be too vague for struggling students to conceptualize. Intervention specialists may not share the same methodology as classroom teachers and misrepresent information.

Standard	Strengths	Weakness(es)
Listening, speaking, and writing are integrated into the reading program.	Literature circles promote a multitude of perspectives on a reading. Socratic seminars are beneficial in this program because students' voices are at the forefront. Cultural competency requires an inclusion of challenging voices and perspectives.	Students may be unresponsive if pressured to discuss their culture. Introverted or uncommunicative students who struggle with speaking in large groups may feel heightened anxiety when asked to speak on personal matters.
Reading activities occur outside of school.	Required at-home reading logs and consistent journaling will encourage consistency in student comprehension and writing. A community partnership—involving libraries, shelters, churches, and community-building programs—gives a more in-depth perspective into culture.	Tracking work at home may be problematic if students are not communicating with parents or guardians. Ensuring that reading practices are being strengthened on an individualized level may require extra steps from parents, administration, and teachers.
Comprehension strategies are taught in the reading program and applied in other content areas.	Close reading and book discussions encourage students to demonstrate their analytical skills. Teachers across content areas model interaction with culture-specific activities before requiring student participation. Similar strategies may be utilized across content areas with little amendment. (For example, students may interact with the same online poll site in each of their classes but utilize the questions differently.)	Ineffective or inconsistent facilitation of an activity in one content area may confuse students when it is used in another.
The reading program is consistent with sound theory and appropriate research.	Collaborative time is allotted to teachers during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), staff meetings, and district meetings to further discuss the dynamics and logistics of the program. Professional development opportunities are offered to strengthen understanding of cultural competency and its integration into the classroom.	As this is a relatively new program to the district, some teachers do not feel comfortable including it in their curriculum because it threatens their traditional teaching methods. Measures should be taken to ensure all teachers are on the same page in understanding what is implied by cultural competency and relevancy.

These strengths and weaknesses are seen in the opinions of various stakeholders. The principal met with district administrators to discuss how this program segued naturally into the school's code of conduct and mantra. He loved the idea that students would reflect on what cultural sustainability meant to them and their education; specifically, he said he was "looking forward to seeing what strategies teachers would use to make the program make sense to students." When asked about concerns or disadvantages of the program, he

said he would want "additional data to support teachers using unconventional methods to teach culture." His response is not unique. Many administrators understand the need for teachers to be invested in the community of their district and in students' lives outside of school. For example, in their study "Enacting a Social Justice Leadership Framework: The 3 C's of Urban Teacher Quality," Deena Khalil and Elizabeth Brown discussed the prevalence of school administrators having urban educators who understand the obvious and sometimes divisive socioeconomic factors in place: "District and school leaders identified teacher candidates' experiences, awareness, and understanding of urban culture as absolute necessities to become reflective urban educators" (2015, p. 80). Implementing culturally sustaining practices in an urban school district requires teachers who can empathize with and advocate for students' struggles and successes. Every act classroom teachers perform resonates and reveals a lot about what is valued and sustained by their students.

Special education teachers within this school liked the idea of including culturally relevant practices in the classroom, but voiced their concerns about how this would impact students already struggling with literacy. These teachers asked, "How do we help them understand such a broad topic without hindering their progression?" and "If our students already struggle with mastering basic literacy practices, how can we feasibly make this practice accessible and enjoyable for them?" The sixth-grade specialists in particular wanted to collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure students were transitioning well from the elementary school, where consistency and order abound. In discussions with classroom teachers about possible interventions and collaborative moves with the special education aides, the concerns became whether the aides would effectively explain the cultural competency piece in ways that successfully provided an overview of their curriculum. As one participant said, "What if my IEP kids aren't receiving the cultural piece the way I intend? I could explain it one way in class but it could be entirely misrepresented during a one-on-one session with their specialist."

Parents of children attending this school seemed to be the most understanding and open to the idea of a culturally sustaining curriculum. Those who needed an overview of cultural competency eventually felt it would be a positive boost to their children's self-awareness and -esteem. One parent thought the reflective nature of including culture in the classroom would enable her child to "see beyond the bad that's happening in some of these neighborhoods…. [T]hey need to think about the causes of some of these behaviors instead of reacting so blindly." This idea that culturally relevant practices would be a transformative process for the children shifted the conversation to one of education as social justice. When this dynamic was addressed in a large group forum among colleagues, there were whispers of resistance and scoffs of "well, I don't need them telling me how to do my job." Khalil and Brown have similarly acknowledged this resistance as a challenging development: "While cultural awareness and communication both involve knowledge and skills, commitment is a disposition. Dispositions may be challenging to develop, because they are essentially a component of a teacher's personality" (2015, p. 86). This too was seen in the school under study. Although some parents felt this program benefitted students' cultural enrichment, some teachers saw the implementation as a personal affront to their traditional teaching styles.

Action Plan for Improvement

To increase the effectiveness of culturally relevant practices and competency, all teachers must adhere to a transparent and specific method. This approach will alleviate any discrepancies between what is meant by *culture* in relation to literacy and how it is expected to be implemented in curriculum and teaching practices. There should be a move from viewing culture as a racial schism and instead seeing the multitude of factors that may influence a broader definition of culture. Youth, dance, and Internet cultures are a few of the many variations of the term. Students are extremely invested in each of the

aforementioned cultures and have created their own norms around each. These ideas are supported by educational theory. In his article "Linking Contemporary Research on Youth, Literacy and Popular Culture with Literacy Teacher Education," Robert Petrone connects academic standards to an actualized meaning of *culture*:

> the [Common Core State Standards] conceptualized *culture* as the nexus of the Humanities and Social Sciences, suggesting that the development, enactment, expression, and therefore the study of popular culture does not only cohere within texts (in a literary sense) but also within how and why people lead their everyday lives. (2013, p. 243)

This initiative seeks to expand the view of culturally relevant practices to include factors that are relevant to students' lives while maintaining the integrity of cultural competency.

Knowing these facts, within such a program, teachers will work toward including the following methodical practices in their curriculum:

- Reflective writing assignments
- Interactive online collaborative activities
- Youth culture-centered discussions and activities
- Multi-modal activities (with a focus on kinesthetic or dance)
- Pop culture as literacy
- Social activism in writing

Moreover, to improve this program, each teacher must consistently and proactively include some form of cultural relevancy by using stories, games, or social activities. Daily journals, online group activities, dialogic discussions, or technological inclusion—use of apps and social media—are to be encouraged when facilitating lessons. Teacher accountability will be measured through multiple check-ins, as well as informal and formal meetings. Plans should include at least two activities or assignments related to cultural relevancy, and they should be specified in the lesson. Overall progress of the program will be weighed by student understanding of certain activities—whether there is a routine-based system students know to follow. Informally, *culture* will become a buzzword throughout the school. Students should be able to converse about the many forms, dynamics, and skills gleaned through their culturally relevant assignments. They will begin to own the term *culture* and utilize it in their thinking; then it will become transformational in their learning of any content area.

A Specific Literacy Coaching Session

During our personal narrative unit, I collaborated and coached a colleague through implementing culturally relevant approaches. We designed, revised, discussed, and implemented two weeks' worth of lesson planning together to ensure a constructive cultural approach. The essential question guiding our plan was "Why is it important to defend our beliefs?" Students were asked to organize and write a narrative essay about a time in which they had to defend themselves or someone else. My colleague and I found this unit to be most beneficial to use in unison with culturally relevant practices and cognitive approaches. To initiate our session, we set observation times for one another and discussed specific approaches we would each implement. Additionally, we agreed to complete a post-lesson conference form, which included the following discussion questions:

- What went well in the observed lesson?
- Were culturally relevant approaches used deliberately to strengthen the overall lesson?
- How did students respond to the lesson?
- How was the lesson modified for students with disabilities?
- Overall, what was the tone of the lesson, and was it well received by students?

We also chose to note any particularly problematic, disengaged, or distracted participants in the lesson.

Prior to observing one another's lesson, we agreed on a class hour to observe and approved the list of aforementioned questions. My colleague noted the ease with which I discussed issues like culture, discrimination, adversity, empowerment, and strength. She also inquired when I became comfortable sharing personal experiences during my teaching. Too often students are asked to share personal stories without the teacher offering to do the same. My students know probably more than they should about my personal life because I like for them to feel safe expressing themselves and their stories. Classroom spaces should not be toxic environments where students feel pressured to conform to popular beliefs or shrink away from sharing their opinions for fear of ridicule. Moreover, I explained to her the importance of oral storytelling when facilitating lessons on personal narratives.

My observation of her lesson on personal narratives and beliefs proved engaging as well. Although both of our units began with a journal prompt on the essential question, she played a video clip of an armed forces commercial and began a discussion about patriotism and civic duty. Students were engaged and provided high-level thinking responses in their dialogic discussion; however, I did not observe the teacher sharing any personal anecdotes or connections to the video. I noted this in the observation form for further discussion. She continued her lesson by polling the students who knew someone in the armed forces and asked what beliefs they were defending. One student laughed and replied, "My cousin joined the army so he would have more money. Is getting paid a core belief?" Admittedly, I was unsure how she would handle this outburst and did not know if it would throw her lesson off course. She smiled and told the student that monetary benefits are an extrinsic motivator that influences beliefs. I noted her lesson was amended for struggling students by inviting the special education liaison to participate in the lesson's discussion. Activities using Know-Want to Know-Learned (KWL) charts and journal prompts enabled students to reflect on their knowledge of beliefs and defense. She effectively incorporated the hook, modeling, transitional activities, and individualized student time into her lesson. During our post-lesson conference, we discussed her reservations about including personal stories, and I provided suggestions on how it could have provided depth to her lesson.

Reflection

Initially, I was unsure how my chosen topic would tie into ILA Standards, if it was grounded in enough data for a full spectrum of synthesis and study, or how invested I would become over time. I was inspired by literature I read in a district professional development meeting and wanted to analyze the program further. Culture in relation to urban education and demographics has always intrigued and influenced my teaching practices.

Upon reflecting on my role as a literacy specialist, collaborator, and facilitator of culturally relevant practices in conjunction with this lesson, I recognize the importance of open-mindedness, as do others in the field. Advocating for student voice and autonomy during lessons on cultural pedagogy as a necessary practice, Kristin Still and her colleagues have even studied the implementation of culturally responsive teaching in their journal article "Critical Perspectives on Urban Teaching and Learning: Four Projects in One Urban College of Education"; there, they acknowledged "research indicated that students gain knowledge of culturally-responsive urban education but have few opportunities to practice it" (2011, p. 31). I agree; part of my role as a literacy specialist and facilitator of the program is to ensure teacher confidence as well as self-efficacy in students.

I also realize that personal beliefs surrounding culture vary for each educator's formative fingerprint. Our own schooling influences perceptions surrounding school and the role of the teacher. While I didn't think my personal beliefs on culturally relevant practices would change dramatically, I realize they have been actualized and strengthened. If anything, I have greater fortitude and confidence in facilitating lessons around the practice while providing a data-driven rationale for utilizing the practice in our district. To be fully honest, when I learned culturally relevant approaches would be implemented into our district curriculum, I began to inquire about the specifics and dynamics of the program.

After reading through research and initiating conversation with administration, I learned that cognitive, linguistic, behavioral, motivational, and sociocultural approaches are laden and present throughout the program. Culture has always been a major motivating factor in education—it is the reason for variance within urban, rural, suburban, and international schools. Requiring teachers to make culture a deliberate practice was an intriguing one, backed by prominent research, and I knew it was one I wanted to further analyze to strengthen my own methods and provide context for my colleagues.

One challenge during this project was witnessing the backlash of some colleagues who emphatically denied the benefits of culturally constructive practices. Their feelings ranged from acceptance to indifference to disdain. Without taking their objections to the program personally, I wondered if we could collaboratively construct a list of benefits and pitfalls of the program. Elective teachers were unsure how to make subjects like gym or business culturally relevant. Core teachers felt their already solid teaching practices were being picked apart and patronized by a program that assumed some teachers were better equipped to teach culture to urban students than others. Instead of heightening this divisive thinking, we must consider ways in which urban educators act as innovators and advocates for their students: "Culturally responsive teachers are committed to designing and implanting instruction that strongly supports literacy learning because they hold visions for success for diverse students rather than images of deficiency and failure" (Turner, 2007, p. 13). Effective educators must rely on a combination of data-driven research and the needs of their students to inform their practices and curriculum.

Diversity has played a significant role in this program. Accepting culture as a fluid term was essential throughout the project. Cultural competency stems beyond the boundaries of demographics like ethnicity, socio-economic status, or gender; culture is emerging and adjusted constantly by innovative educators, students, and researchers who challenge linear approaches to the term. School culture, youth culture, Internet culture, pop culture, fashion, and dance culture are all facets of the overarching themes in the program. Diversity must become a bridge between our disposition on culturally relevant practices and assumptions made about the program. I learned how to remain resilient with my methods and strengthen communication with colleagues who may be unresponsive to change. Moreover, I continued to foster methods around facilitating effective practices, constructively criticizing additions of emerging teachers, and being open to change in thought. Completing this project has impacted my teaching by creating a formidable fervor for sustaining culture in the classroom. It has challenged my leadership skills, fostered an open-minded approach to collaboration and critique, and allowed me to advocate for the growth of students in my classroom and district.

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Classroom Portfolio

Sarah Stedman

Diane Boehm e-Portfolio Award

A junior from Grand Blanc, Michigan, pursuing a graphic design degree at SVSU, Sarah Stedman will graduate in May 2019. While here, she has served as the secretary for the Art and Design Creative League and helped to design the body of the 2017 Cardinal Formula Racing car.

Sarah's Three-Dimensional Design (ART112) class, for which this e-Portfolio was created, is one of the mandatory foundation courses for the graphic design program. (She reminds us that three-dimensional, or 3-D, design is the practice of designing artwork in a physical space rather than simply on paper or on the computer. In other words, it is the design of sculpture or anything that can be measured by height, width, and depth.) The purpose of this e-Portfolio, which was created for instructor Phillip Hanson, was to document her work throughout the class and discuss how she came to her final solution for each of her assignments. In her portfolio, Sarah explains the physical process for creating each sculpture, details what she learned, and documents her personal struggles and successes over the course of the project.

By completing this e-Portfolio, Sarah maintains she gained new confidence in her writing abilities. By the end of this writing project, she acquired not only a writing sample to display to future clients and employers but the ability to effectively discuss her work with—and defend her work to—this same audience. Sarah recommends that students looking to complete this project in the future reflect on their finished artwork as well as their experience while creating the pieces. Such analysis can help individuals explain their work and discover their own artistic style. To view Sarah's e-portfolio, visit http://sarahstedmanblog2.blogspot.com/2016/02/project-one-solids.html.

Professional Portfolio

Kylie Wojciechowski

Diane Boehm e-Portfolio Award

Kylie ("Ky") Wojciechowski graduated from SVSU in May 2017 with a bachelor of arts degree in professional and technical writing (PTW), along with a minor in philosophy. In her time at the university, Ky served as a tutor at the SVSU Writing Center; the president of the Association of Professional & Technical Writers; a junior researcher in the Center for Usability Studies and Universal Design; and an information management co-op at The Dow Chemical Company. A member of the sixteenth class of the Roberts Fellowship, Ky also held various roles at *The Valley Vanguard:* general reporter, news editor, editor-in-chief, and web editor and content strategist. She will begin her graduate studies at the University of Michigan in the School of Information in Fall 2017 to focus on user experience research and design.

Ky created the first iteration of her e-Portfolio in her Honors English 111 course with Diane Boehm in Fall 2012; since then, she's re-conceptualized and revised her e-Portfolio many times for her PTW internship courses—RPW 386 in Winter 2016 and RPW 486 in Fall 2016—to tailor the focus and content for different audiences, mainly employers and graduate school admissions staff members.

Ky believes her e-Portfolio has allowed her to digitally compile and archive her abilities and skills in the areas of writing, editing, and design in one neat, easily accessible place. Her e-Portfolio includes work she's completed for her courses, jobs, and internships, along with other pieces that are part of extracurricular endeavors she's pursued for the purposes of professional development or volunteer service.

Ky can't underscore the importance of e-Portfolios enough, especially for design and writing students: "Having these projects in my e-Portfolio means I'm able to point to one specific web location to advocate for my competence in any of the key areas of skill for professionals and academics in my field. My e-Portfolio—more than any other tool or method—has truly allowed me to serve as an advocate for myself in both academic and professional circles." Ky's e-Portfolio can be accessed at http://KyWojciechowski.com.

A Cleaner and Healthier Future: Environmental Waste and Its Impacts on Human Health

Carson Chapman
First-Year Writing Award, First Place
Nominated by Karen Horwath, Instructor of English

Carson Chapman is a biology major who hopes to attend dental school. When he is not studying the sciences, he likes to exercise, snowboard, fish, and spend time outdoors. Carson also really enjoys spending time with his family. He says this is what inspired him to write about environmental waste, considering the negative effect it will have on future generations. His essay addresses why people should feel threatened by waste and how the trash crisis can be tackled.

Introduction

As I sat quietly in the back of my parents' car, listening to music with two hours remaining on our road trip, I looked to my left out the window and saw the huge accumulation of garbage in the highway's ditches. I thought to myself, "Should I be concerned that this will negatively affect my health?" Eventually, I wondered if I should be worried about the impact it will have on my future kids and even their kids. Along with litter, all types of waste pose negative health effects to human beings, animals, plants, and planet Earth itself. As industrialization and expanding populations have expanded, so too has the amount of waste produced.

In recent years, people have become concerned that as waste increases, it will only have negative impacts on humans and the planet. Although some say climate change and other negative environmental patterns are a hoax, I assure you they are real issues. Although government research centers and programs exist to address the circumstances of environmental waste, the results do not look promising. All around the world, heavily populated and urbanized locations create more and more waste each year. To understand the effect of environmental waste on human health, we must consider these questions: What are the primary causes of environmental waste? Why should people be concerned with addressing the problems of waste? What are possible solutions to lessening the threat of waste on human health? The large amount of environmental waste that exists is a problem, and the health of current populations and future generations depends on whether the problem can be solved. We must attempt to solve it through current waste management means, as well as further research for improved waste management technology.

Situation

Environmental contamination can negatively impact human health. This contamination is often induced through the seeping of toxic waste materials into soil and waterways. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), many sources of contamination are detrimental to our health and can cause cancers, delays in physical or mental development, and death. The EPA insists that anyone is susceptible because contamination can occur in various ways, such as through exposure to heavy metals and microorganisms. On top of this, manmade contamination could be happening in your own backyard. From septic fields to fertilizers in your garden, bacteria can seep through soil

directly into waterways, posing a high risk of illness to anyone who comes into contact with the bacteria. People have become concerned with natural and manmade contamination because what were once thought of as just inanimate objects (like geological formations, human waste, and plant fertilizer) are now found to cause physical and mental ailments from their bacterial counterparts ("Human Health…"). People did not always know that microorganisms, unseen by the human eye, could carry diseases and invade humans. However, as research advanced, regulations regarding health impacts from industry were developed and eventually implemented.

The Toxic Action Center, a nonprofit organization in New England devoted to cleaning up and preventing pollution, states, "Waste is growing in volume and toxicity … at an alarming rate." The center claims that American industrial corporations have nearly doubled their output of waste in the last 50 years. Take Dow Chemical, for example, located in Midland, Michigan. Headquartered right in our own Tri-Cities, "Dow produces 600 million pounds of toxic chemical waste yearly, as reported in 2010" (Williams). According to the EPA, 97% of those chemicals are treated and recycled (qtd. in Toxic Action Center). Do the math and you realize that 3 percent equates to 180,000 pounds of waste that is land disposed. That means the waste is put directly into a landfill, in accordance to state law, where it then sits, allowing toxins to seep into the ground. This seeping is the reason why parks near Dow Chemical and this dump site must have signs warning of contamination that read "AVOID CONTACT WITH SOIL AND RIVER SEDIMENT." According to the Toxic Action Center, the government has been occupied with this issue in industry since before the creation of the Clean Water Act in 1972. Millions of dollars lost in the fishing industry due to contamination-related fish deaths first brought attention to water pollution. Montague argues that "[n]ationally we have no clear solution for dealing with waste" (qtd. in Toxic Action Center). Knowing that people have this unsure feeling should only further our concern for how waste should be addressed in the future.

Today, waste is only continuing to grow in volume. The more urbanized a country becomes, the more trash it tends to produce. In her article "The World's Trash Crisis and Why Many Americans Are Oblivious," global development writer Ann M. Simmons discusses how much waste is being created, why Americans are oblivious to it, and the threats waste makes to our environment and health. According to Simmons, "public waste systems cannot keep pace with urban expansion and rapid industrialization." The key word here is "rapid." She touches on the fact that population growth is too intense and likely to blame for this huge problem with no solution in sight. Exponential trash collection is happening all around the world, in every developing nation, and it is drowning some of the poorest countries in toxicity. Often in the slums, waste goes uncollected and it accumulates into giant heaps of garbage. Although this provides a source of scrap-picked food for the lowest economic tier of people, Simmons explains that it exposes them to hazards like lead and mercury poisoning. Those who are most concerned about this are not the ones eating from the trash, but rather those in charge of it. Cities in these developing countries spend 20 to 50 percent of their budgets on waste management, says Simmons. However, this is such an economic and biological burden that it is now drawing the attention of other countries.

Impacts

As I noted earlier, one impact of waste on human health is contaminated consumption. This occurs when waste enters groundwater or the food chain and is then ingested by a human, directly resulting in adverse health effects. In her scholarly article "Waste Dumps in Local Communities in Developing Countries and Hidden Dangers to Health," health education lecturer Gloria Anetor discusses that as population sizes increase around the globe, the amount of waste genereated is increasing as well. Anetor claims that "this waste is very disorderly and offers many health risks from toxic metals, paints, plastics, and other hazardous materials" (247). By disorderly, the author means that the way in which waste is managed by various organizations is still counterproductive, in that "old school"

landfills enable toxic materials to enter our ecosystem (265). That entrance into our ecosystem directly impacts the health of humans, because such contaminants can then be ingested once they are in our water/food ("Human Health"). The ingestion of these contaminants, even just remnants of them, can cause multiple illnesses, some life threatening.

Not only does disorderly handling harm humans, it also harms the ecosystem and the earth itself (Anetor 249). This harm is often a result of waste management organizations using outdated technology or strategies. Outdated incineration equipment or landfill situations negatively affect the environment; incineration emissions release toxins into the atmosphere that contribute to air pollution, and landfill seepage releases toxins directly into groundwater sources that contribute to water pollution (Anetor 250). This is exactly why Dow Chemical uses signs warning us to avoid contact with nearby rivers. In my interview with Travis Griffith, the recycling director of Mid-Michigan Waste Authority, he expressed the same concerns with incineration and landfills: "Landfills are effective when [they are] out of contact range with humans. [The s]ame goes for incinerators." However, Griffith also stated that change needs to be made: "We can't live forever with seeping toxins and air emissions that can seriously hurt us."

A third impact of waste on human health is contaminated water and nitrates in fertilizers. They pose risks to the very plants that keep us alive. As plants photosynthesize and produce oxygen byproducts, we breathe that oxygen into our lungs where it is distributed to cells within our blood that carry nutrients. Besides producing oxygen, plants also serve as food crops that we ingest to survive. In her article "States Lack Rules for Radioactive Drilling Waste Disposal," *High Country News* editor and environmental writer Jodi Peterson states that the oil drilling process creates unnecessary amounts of left-over toxic material that can kill fish, plants, and possibly humans. "This byproduct is thrown back into the environment, with little to no regulation in place, and it is downright bad for our environment," claims Peterson. She supports her claims with EPA statistics that state that left-over radium, a naturally radioactive element, that is improperly disposed of eventually ends up in livestock, fish, and food crops through water contamination. Humans are then very susceptible to this radiation, considering our survival consists of eating livestock and food crops. To add to this, the very fertilizers used to grow this food have nitrate residue, as previously mentioned. Clearly, the situation at hand needs to be addressed and solved on a large scale to stop harm being done to humans and earth.

Causes

Sometimes when problems occur, people are likely to point fingers at other individuals, and it is no different in this situation. Many people believe that individuals create too much household waste. In her magazine article "Waste Not, Want Not: How Packaging Can Help Tackle Food Waste," managing editor of *Hospitality Magazine* Danielle Bowling claims that the amount of food waste is projected to jump 10 percent by the year 2050. Currently, food scraps represent 12.5% of the total annual solid waste collection in America (Toxic Action Center). This is due in part to faulty packaging where damaged goods may seem inedible to the consumer, and throwing the product out is an easy option. These days, the disposal of various household-use products like detergents and soaps also comes as easily as pouring them down a drain. This is where toxicity arises.

Although too much household waste is an issue, it is likely that there are bigger factors at play, such as deep-rooted sociological factors in culture.Within American culture, there is the notion of a throwaway lifestyle—one connected to our vast consumerism. The ease, simplicity, and inexpensive qualities of one-use products expose this generation to large amounts of waste, more than ever. Montague points out that individual citizens also produce too much waste as part of the American lifestyle. He states that on top of the 12.5% representation of food scraps, another 30.9% of the nation's yearly trash is containers and packaging. Bowling claims that manufacturers can easily change packaging designs to lessen the amounts of waste and keep food undamaged/safer. This may be true, but often we are not

disposing harmful materials that can adversely affect our health. In fact, ecosocialist author Simon Butler claims consumers are the least of the environmental waste problem. He states that "While consumerism and the throwaway lifestyle definitely attribute to waste, consumers really have no control over the main producers of pollution." When Butler says this, he is pointing his finger at the big companies like Dow that are producing extremely toxic chemicals. The primary cause to focus on, rather than individual consumer habits, is industry.

Industrialization is the most likely cause of environmental waste that harms humans. Most solid waste is produced by businesses and these "byproducts contain the most chemicals and toxins," according to the EPA ("Human Health…"). Much like household waste, there is a lot of industrial waste, but industrial waste offers much higher toxicity. Travis Griffith believes the primary cause of environmental waste stems from industrial growth. He concluded that "as industry grows, so does the amount of resources that are discarded." This just makes sense; with the expansion of a company, an increase in used resources follows. In his article "12 Industries That Are Actually Growing," investment columnist and editor Daniel Indiviglio mentions the 2010 mining boom, where drilling of oil and gas was rampant. The mining supply industry grew exponentially and employed over 100,000 people. As the amount of mining increased, so too the amount of air emissions from equipment, as well as the amount of discarded materials. This is the perfect example that ties into population growth. Considering the Earth's population is climbing to 8 billion, that is a lot of future employment—and a lot of potential resources—to be discarded.

Solutions

One potential solution to the problem of environmental waste affecting human health is waterway collection. Waterway collection concerns the process of gathering and recycling trash that has accumulated in our water systems. This reduces the amount of toxins within our drinking water, leading to a healthier future. In his *Issues in Environmental Science and Technology: Waste as a Resource*, Paul Williams addresses how the planet's natural resources are depleting quickly, but aims for maintenance through waterway plastic collection. Although he does not look at the health aspect, he offers insight towards a solution of recycling waste in general, which in turn lessens the amount of toxins in our water systems. Williams states that "with proper polymer sorting, the recycled outcome is pure and ready for reuse" (13). He is essentially saying that if trash and plastic sorting is done correctly, there will be less rejected product and processing costs will be lower. The cost-effective application of this solution makes it a beneficial option. One problem with this, however, is the difficult nature of the sorting task. If a person happened to see the pictures of Rio de Janeiro's waterways before the 2016 summer Olympics, she would understand that trash and plastics often become one lump of garbage as they collect within water systems.

The next best solution is the continued use of landfill and incineration strategies. These techniques offer a moderate amount of residual toxins and emission byproduct, while achieving the goal of waste management. In "Identifying Potential Environment Impacts of Waste Handling Strategies in Textile Industry," Dalia Yacout discusses possible ways that human-generated waste can be minimized. According to Yacout, "Landfills and incineration both have carcinogenic and ecotoxicity potentials, yet they are the currently most effective means for eliminating waste" (10). She is stating that although the released byproduct of these wastes may be somewhat harmful, until further research recommends new waste management methods, our best bet is incineration and landfills. The only problems are that of seeping with landfills and dioxin emission with incineration. According to Simmons, a widely-known example was the Love Canal tragedy of the 1970s. Because insufficient research was done into the underlying soil layers beneath a landfill in a New York town deemed the Love Canal, flooding associated with wet winters led to the seeping of chemicals. Huge numbers of families were impacted, whether it was via disease, future generations having birth defects, or government-funded relocation. The Love Canal tragedy was a prime example of how waste management can go horribly wrong.

The most promising solution for preserving the health of humans is implementing state-of-the-art handling techniques. Waste-to-energy plants accept waste and then combust it at very high temperatures to produce heat used to convert water into steam; that steam is then used to generate electricity (Yacout 15). The remaining ash is then put into landfills, which is much better for human health and the environment, rather than putting solid waste directly in the ground. Yacout claims that "[t]he potential of waste-to-energy should be considered in further studies, as its implementation would be preferable in the textile industry" (17). In other words, Yacout believes waste-to-energy has less of an impact on the environment than incineration and landfills; therefore, its usage should be considered. Not only does it offer cleaner reduction of waste and proper residual handling, it also offers heat recovery to produce electricity. The unfortunate downside to this solution is the economic aspect. Although many developing countries are the largest producers of waste, they are unable to budget for this technology. These countries must go about using conventional methods, which in turn have more harmful impacts on humans.

Conclusion

Ultimately, if we want to sustain our species and a healthy environment for future generations, we must act. Everybody should care—for their own wellbeing and for the health of their future children and grandchildren. Traditional waste management methods should soon be replaced by newer technologies for effective handling of potentially dangerous wastes. My generation is right in the middle of this chemical industry growth. Personally, I do not want to get physical ailments from waste or have my children's lives be impacted from toxins in waste.

The large amount of environmental waste that exists is a problem because the health of current populations and future generations depends on whether the situation can be solved. We must attempt to solve it through current waste management means, as well as further research for improved management technology. Unfortunately, we must act quickly because waste only continues to grow in volume and toxicity. Along with the growth comes adverse effects on human health and our environment, but we know the root of the problem lies with industry. Fortunately, current waste management techniques like incineration and landfills are efficient. After obtaining the appropriate funds, waste-to-energy plants should be implemented globally in areas where waste management is most needed. This lack of funding needs to be resolved, so we can once again have a clean Mother Earth. This may take many years, possibly decades, but a healthy future is possible.

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Contact

Kellie Rankey
Tyner Prize for Fiction
Nominated by C. Vincent Samarco, Professor of English

Kellie Rankey is from Bay City, Michigan, and started at SVSU in 2015; she is a creative writing major and philosophy minor. Kellie works on the staff of the campus literary magazine, *Cardinal Sins,* and is a member of the Honors Program. In the past, she has been recognized by the Michigan Youth Arts Festival as well as the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition, from which she won a national gold medal and other regional awards. Kellie writes short fiction, flash fiction, and poetry, and reads as much as possible to keep her ideas fresh and enticing for readers. To further her education in creative writing, Kellie plans to pursue master's and doctoral degrees in the field of English in the hopes of becoming a college professor.

The assignment that inspired "Contact" was a creative final project in a general education English class studying thematic approaches to literature (ENGL 204). Students were simply asked to write their own short story after having read and studied them all semester.

This was the kind of job worked out of obligation, just a short walk from home. *The ad said no experience needed, it will look good on your resume, you'll do well with the animals because you're so good with our cat.* Anna tried to swallow her mother's lecture and stepped out of the house to head to the pet store.

That morning, the ad was cut out and taped to the microwave. Every month when the bills came, they collected on the kitchen counter until her mother decided to thumb through them. She looked through her readers, eyes drawn in a pinch, and mulled over the numbers to make minimum payments. Every month, this eventually whipped her into a fit. She'd throw down the stack at hand and spout something about money not growing on trees, about being confused, about whose fault it was. Some time later, she would head out, pick up a newspaper, and look through the Help Wanted section. Her clippings were suggestions to various members of the family: Dad could work a part-timer at the 24-hour print shop after his day job, and her older brother should consider the wait staff position at Cracker Barrel. Anna must work at the pet store. *It's good money, save some for gas, I can't cover your phone bill this month, if you want a car pay for the insurance.* A collection of grievances stacked on her like paperweights.

The door to the pet store had one of those tinkling bells that whacked the frame as it opened. Anna walked inside, noticing the smell first and the animals second. It wasn't that it was bad, just different. She wasn't sure. Rows of cages and display cases stacked up from the concrete floors, and she slid past these on her way to the back of the store. There were rabbits, cats, and puppies on one side, flanked by lizards, chameleons, and fish on the other. Inevitably, she stopped to look at the puppies, who stared directly into her. Dogs, she thought, have the gift of permanent childlike wonder at the world. No limitations. The adjacent aisles of pet supplies were an afterthought.

The owner emerged from a back room when the bell slapped the door. Anna stood up from where she was squatting to look at the man. He was a knick-knack, his tall body well-suited to corners and shadows, but his voice was all business. After a short interview, she was hired.

* * *

Work was easy. *Come in, check a sheet to see what animals to feed, clean cages, keep the store clean, make sales.* Try to sell people on the animals they're looking at. The only specific rule her boss had was that she avoid naming the animals.

"It makes the separation harder. We want them to move fast. Remember that they're a product."

The job made her feel like she was grown up, even though she was just working shifts after high school. She paid the bills she could manage, but her mother's fits continued. Dad would certainly manage well as a work-from-home customer service representative, and her brother's imagined Cracker Barrel stint had given way to a receptionist spot at the local hospital. It seemed like her parents always needed more than she could give. She thought about this a lot while working.

When she left each day, the pet store came home with her. The smell—a mixture of bedding, urine, and something undefinable—sneaked in between the fibers of her clothes and stuck to her hair so that every day, she had to change and shower when she got home. She was toweling her hair dry when her father popped his head into her room.

"Dinner's all set if you're hungry."

"Oh, good," she said, looking up. "What is it?"

"Venison, mashed potatoes, and asparagus."

Hair damp, she was down at the kitchen counter not much later filling up a plate. On work nights, it became common for Anna to forego eating at the dinner table and head to her room to start homework. From her room, she could hear the family chatter and then laughter. She sighed. It couldn't be helped.

At her desk, she quickly divvied up the meat on her plate, which bled as she cut it. Work had been stressful that day and she wanted to eat fast. A strand of hair slid into her face and the pet store returned to her; it was so hard to wash out. She lifted a cut of the venison to her mouth. When she bit into it, she was shocked at the cord of fat that stopped her teeth. *Any other day*, she thought. *Any other day*.

At the start of her shift, there'd been a scuffle in the rabbit cage. Only a few of the animals fit shoulder to shoulder at the spaces around the food bowl, which left an ostracized few cramped behind the others. One began to fight and soon the cage was a blur of hair and blood. At the end of it, one rabbit was dead and a few wore gaping wounds like sashes around their necks. The blood sunk into everything, and even when she cleaned the mess up with new bedding and food, Anna couldn't push the image away. The absence of the injured rabbits, which her boss had moved to a cage in the back room, kept the brutal scene fresh in her head for hours. She'd spent the rest of her shift watching the cage from the corner of her eyes.

Now she looked down at the venison. The blood had spread around the plate and colored the edge of the mashed potatoes. From her mouth, the fatty piece of meat had dropped and splashed blood into the asparagus. It was scrunched up with a line mashed in it from her teeth. It looked like the rabbits' necks. The potatoes became bedding, and she became a rabbit. Her eyes moved to the side of her head and she saw the gruesome scene unfold before her: rabbits' fur in her mouth, the frenzy for food, the unstoppable urge to be dominant. She didn't know which rabbit to blame for the death, but she came to feel it was her fault. Dinner became a lost cause.

* * *

Two weeks later one of the puppies wasn't eating. He'd sit in the corner of the puppy enclosure and shake, and each day customers would lean in toward Anna at the register and say something about it.

"You know," said one past the back of her hand, "there's a puppy in there that just doesn't look right."

"I've heard that sort of thing can spread easily, and to other animals."

"You should tell your boss about that sick puppy. If it's got something bacterial, it could spread to people."

It wasn't from a lack of Anna's attention that the dog never got better. When the shop was empty, she would walk over to the enclosure and look at the puppy and think about how sad the whole deal was. Nothing could be done. She watched the symptoms for a week according to the owner's second-most sacred tenet: *wait a few days before telling me about sick animals*. This became difficult when the dog started vomiting. When she told her boss, the puppies went on sale.

The next day the puppy was gone. Her boss was bent over the cage cleaning the floors when she asked him where it was.

"Went to a good home, he did. Family came in with a few kids, and they felt so bad for the thing—'And it's so cheap' the mother said. They seemed like real good people."

This was a welcome comfort for Anna. She pictured the family with the dog, kids throwing Frisbees, the dog lolling out of a car window on the way to a campground, parents at PetSmart buying gourmet food; the family was tied together by the animal. These daydreams made shifts move fast.

Her last task of that day was to clean the rabbit cages. She changed the straw bedding and filled their water and food bowls. Every week, there were new rabbits. They seemed to move quickly, and they were easy to sell. All you had to do was get a customer to hold them, especially if they had kids. It was easy to get attached that way, and she knew it, but Anna couldn't resist holding the animals when the owner wasn't looking. She had to move the animals to a different cage while she cleaned their display cage anyway, so when she picked one up she held it close to her chest. The animal was hot and she could feel its nervous heartbeat in her arms. She noted how soft its white fur was and nuzzled it close to her face before dropping it into the temporary cage. When she picked up the next rabbit, she felt a lump on it.

Over the next few days, this lump swelled. Customers noted this when they brought their purchases to the counter, and Anna chalked it up to paranoia. *Wait a few days, it's just a blemish, it'll clear up.* The worst of the suggestions was that the rabbits were surely bringing back the plague. Anna nodded gravely as a woman theorized about the animals and their sicknesses, but when the woman left, trailing birdseed, Anna stifled a grin. She imagined the comedy of a whole slew of pet store rabbits carrying the Black Death. Something struck her about this and she laughed. She didn't mention it to her boss.

The next time she cleaned the rabbit cage, more of the rabbits had lumps. She watched for signs of illness in them, but they all ate and drank as much as before, played as much as before. Every day behind the register, she couldn't help but to dream of the rabbits dancing like children in the enclosure. They'd sing "Ring around the Rosie," and she'd hum along with them. When the song rolled into "we all fall down," she'd imagine the rabbits picking themselves back up to sing again. Life bled into life, and outside her reverie nothing was unusual except for the lumps. They were surely cosmetic.

This was her speech, her fine-print anecdote meant to entice customers into buying. But they weren't biting. One of the rabbits left her hand wet after she picked it up, and her once-over of the rabbit revealed a small hole in its skin. Pus clumped around the hole, a fresh trickle mingling with that which had come before it. Anna gagged and ran to the bathroom to wash her hands, holding out the dirtied hand as far from her body as she could get it. She collected herself before returning to drain the growth. When she tried to squeeze the spot, the rabbit yelped in such a pitiful way she had to stop, and in the morning, it was dead.

At closing time, the owner came to Anna with a plastic bag in hand. *The rabbits need to go, they aren't selling, the customers believe the plague is on them, the woman with the birdseed has taken her business elsewhere.*

"Well, I wish I knew someone who wanted a rabbit right now," Anna said. "I can always ask around."

"No need," he replied, raising the bag. "They have botflies. They're not gonna sell. Even if I bother to treat them, no one's going to buy them." His voice was untouched by

despair. “Break their necks and put them in the bag. Then freeze them. I’d have you dump ‘em out back but I don’t need those flies in my dumpster.”

Anna’s stomach dropped and her mouth moved to form the “no” she wanted to say. Her eyes drifted from her boss to the rabbits. Bright eyes like the puppy, like every animal she’d seen in the store; she guessed the gift of wonder struck them all. Something about taking that from them brought the lump back to her throat, where it stitched itself a cozy spot and choked her with unease. She wondered about rabbit transcendence. What could a rabbit heaven look like? Surely there was no rabbit hell. If there was one, maybe the rabbits would be like people. It’s hard to think about hell without thinking about people. Anna was immobilized by the idea of rabbits at a dinner table with bills, botflies festering in their skin, smaller rabbits passing the vegetables, a family of rabbits talking about their day while they oozed pus. A fly slipping out. This daydream dragged a minute into a lifetime.

Her boss was handing her the bag. “It’s tough the first time,” he said. “But this is business.” The bag said THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU. Anna began to cry. She walked back to the freezer and opened it to put the bunnies inside. Wiping her eyes, she dug down into the dimly-lit chest to find a private spot for the bunnies. Out from inside a clear bag, eaten by frostbite, the puppy looked back up at her with empty eyes.

Diorama Americana

Kellie Rankey
Tyner Prize for Poetry
Nominated by Arra Ross, Associate Professor of English

Kellie Rankey is from Bay City, Michigan, and started at SVSU in 2015; she is a creative writing major and philosophy minor. Kellie works on the staff of the campus literary magazine, *Cardinal Sins,* and is a member of the Honors Program. In the past, she has been recognized by the Michigan Youth Arts Festival as well as the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition, from which she won a national gold medal and other regional awards. Kellie writes short fiction, flash fiction, and poetry, and reads as much as possible to keep her ideas fresh and enticing for readers. To further her education in creative writing, Kellie plans to pursue master's and doctoral degrees in the field of English in the hopes of becoming a college professor.

The poems in *Diorama Americana* are the result of a number of assignments in a creative writing class focused on poetry (ENGL 305). The poem "American Stigmata," for example, was inspired by a prompt to revitalize an old draft with new and significant edits. All poems written in the class became part of a final manuscript assignment, in which they had to be arranged into a short collection.

Politicking and Nitpicking

At the slightest prompting, Grandma would say
red sky at night, sailor's delight
red sky in morning, sailor's warning.
It's a sickness my mother catches in full.
She damns red where it pops up,
won't buy red cars. Won't wear red.
Her logic escapes the two of us but she's
mumbled something about red stars
bleeding the sky dry.

Dry is what I would say if you asked me
could you describe Grandpa's skin in the casket?
Under the makeup dusted over him he's shell-shocked
white. The mortician played McCarthy, painted red
into cheeks while the body was tapped like a tree
that would breathe one last breath in leaving.

When I leave my husband, it's for someone younger.
We've lost love like change to couch cushions;
wind's blown our cherry to ash. I'm a classic
Cosmo girl, learn my tricks turning pages, know
how to make belts strain against bulge. On dates
cherry stem to mouth, a fumbling of tongue.
A knot that twists open on the napkin.
A red fist unclenching.

Plenty of red sky mornings dredge

into mundane days, pushcarts heavy
with collection for the days that will
drench and storm and writhe. One day
I get a fortune cookie that reads
        expect the best but prepare for the worst
and I don't know what sky to look for
in the morning.

To Willard Wigan, for Finding Something in the Needle Eye of Nothing

I remember looking down the nose
of microscopes at Lichtenstein's girls
the order of dot next to dot
the military precision of each
never touching, afraid to love its neighbor
and yet the picture strung together
from across the room.

I wonder if the space between them
became negligible when I forgot it was there
or if such careful closeness sells?

You hold up a needle. A sculpture
unravels before me, leaves
its paint-coat hung at the door.
What's left is…
one grain of sand, a strand
of nylon, some housefly's hair,
a matter of weeks.

This wasn't the same as before;
under the lens the furthest distance
is chanced between atoms and particles.
It's an intimate moment there, no glue
holding that flag in mini-Armstrong's hand.
Instead, friction. Choice.

You blink. I close my eyes. I dream
of dipping those comic strip prints in water
and watching the spots of color run
along the paper, into each other.

The Distance between Us

The city boy moved to Michigan and decided
seagulls are the pigeons of the Midwest.
For months, they're leaves tossing in the sky,
candy wrappers and newspaper pages blown about.

He says the birds have no morals, how silly
to forget the beach for a French fry
and end up under some tire, spit out

as rolled dough, printer paper, broken bones.
The wing flaps an eager hello
with each passing car. It's funny, he thinks,
this Midwestern hospitality.

There's a thought like a thorn he can't dislodge.
He knows the phrase "bird's eye view" has its roots
somewhere. He's stuck on the birds, how they might see us:
people like ants between trees, filing between buildings, ants
ground-glued by sidewalk gum. We want to tell him
Madonna is from Bay City, want to point at least
to the spaces where the shipyards once stood. We wonder
what chords this would strike and how they'd resonate
in the empty, hollow spaces within him.

But we stay mute, and he looks past us
into sugar beet silos, into closed factories,
into new parking lots where the seagulls wait for food.
He drops a fry and watches the scuffle,
then drops another. He is uncomfortable
with knowing the seagull two ways. He is
not sure how to look us in the eyes after
he's seen it.

Often he watches the birds fly up and vanish
into the sun. He thinks of pennies and metaphors
about beauty, and he'd like to say something
important. We would love his simplicity. We would love
just to smack into the bug zapper
and rise like the smoke in front of him.

American Stigmata

I don't get out much;
life's lived between buttons on my TV remote.
I watch the Travel Channel and I tell everyone
I've been around the world,
pressed continents between my fingers for the juice
of their exotic berry and watched it run
in the lines of my fingerprints.

A girl comes onscreen—
I've missed half the program
Her eyes are bleeding and she blinks in the light
of the camera angled under her.
Remember when the statue of Mary
cried in the sun after a tragedy and people called it a miracle?
I wonder who noticed
the first tear
on her white face

The girl is Indian.
Sometimes she cries blood instead of tears,

her eyes are testing the berry
her eyes are not sure
Doctors accuse her of seeking free health care.
They see this every day—
one old clot placed in each tear duct and
made to play false prophet,
the story is old but not Bible old
The program breaks to commercial.

I look down at my hands. I've waited too long
to wash them, begin to feel
berry stains sink deeper than bruises.
Hell is murky, I say.
Out, damned spot.
What's done cannot be undone.

I wonder how much more the girl can take
how much longer she'll bleed
before we realize our hand over the berry again
before we call her a miracle too

Advice for the Apocalypse That Comes Every Few Years

Pay attention to nuance—
each headline fodder to be spooled
by the fork of the brain so we may
eat our words.
In our turning stomachs, bible verse paranoia
is wed to a keen eye, and both love the family
found in newspapers and TV screens.
Digest the news and ask yourself:
Do fish throw themselves ashore to resist the tragedy of dying alone?
Does God's hand dredge them inland to demand a funeral?
In our hearts, body meets message meets maker meets beaches of
afterthought. Fears are canned and lose their edges;
fears soften to slow-cooker mush.

How we measure damnation varies—
empty church pews, gaping wounds that fester.
We poultice with Revelation. Our stomachs lurch and our eyes follow
masses of fish in prophetic oil slicks.
If you must, drop a coin in the collection. Buy your seat
in the belly of the whale, where
man meets God and knows regret.

A Guide to Being Hamlet

Zoey Cohen
Recipient of the 2017-18 Seitz Creative Writing Scholarship

Zoey Cohen is from Bay City, Michigan, and a third-year student of psychology and creative writing at Saginaw Valley State University. Zoey's poetry and fiction draw influence from canonical authors like Ernest Hemingway and breakout poets like Natalie Wee. By drawing from vastly different sources, Zoey hopes to create work that is both complex and accessible. When not writing, Zoey runs a blog dedicated to analysis of popular culture classics like *Star Trek,* and she runs a wicked game of *Dungeons & Dragons.* She hope to become a clinical psychologist.

Step one: Attend your father's funeral.
Become acquainted with misery.
Become acquainted with grief.
You'll experience loss either way, so
you might as well get comfortable.

Step two: Cloak yourself in black.
Don the trappings of unmanly grief, and
wear the memory of his smile on your sleeve.
These are the stitches holding you together, so—
revel in it.

Step three: Lay your head in your best friend's lap
and as ice creeps down her throat,
take a deep breath.
Do not
exhale.

Step four: Cradle the head in velvet hands.
Swear an oath.
This will put a fire in your chest.
Let it burn you.

Five: Grief kills like any poison.

Spotlight on...
The National Day on Writing

The National Day on Writing has been celebrated for years—across America and at SVSU—as a way to recognize writing across the disciplines. Organized by the University Writing Committee, which was co-chaired in 2016-2017 by English faculty Sherrin Frances and Kim Lacey, and by Modern Foreign Languages faculty member Monika Dix, SVSU's celebration recognizes the writing that occurs at SVSU and in the surrounding community.

As in years past, the National Day on Writing activities at SVSU included an online Wall of Writing and an open-mic competition. Winners of the open-mic included Kathryn Karoly and Kellie Rankey for poetry, and Eddie Veenstra for song. Kellie's piece is included in the pages that follow. Also, on the following pages are KayLee Davis's poem "Tornado" and Tim Kenyon's short story "The Short Happy Life of a Boston Terrier"; their pieces were featured on the National Day on Writing's online Wall of Writing, where members of the community share their writing in various genres.

This year's events also included a panel presentation from alumni authors, who shared their experiences as writers with the campus community at large. Alumni who participated in these events were as follows:

- Jill Bellestri (B.A., Class of 1994) contributed to the collection *The Thinking Mom's Revolution: Autism beyond the Spectrum.* Edited by Helen Conroy and Lisa Joyce Goes, the book was published by Skyhorse. While at SVSU, Jill studied in the criminal justice program.
- Dennis Hensley (B.A., Class of 1969) is the author of various fiction and nonfiction texts. He has written the novel *Pseudonym*; books about writing, as well as American author Jack London; and several Christian texts, including *The Jesus Effect.* A professor at Taylor University, Dennis was a literature major and met his wife while at SVSU.
- Joe Hickey (B.A., Class of 2008) publishes under the name J.L. Hickey and is the author of the children's series The Secret Seekers Society. Also author of the novel *The Deity Chronicles: Origins,* Joe studied creative writing during his time at SVSU.
- Roberta Morey (M.A.T., Class of 1981) is the author of several books about Saginaw, including *Saginaw: Labor and Leisure* and *Saginaw in Vintage Postcards.* An educator, Roberta received her M.A.T. in classroom teaching from SVSU.

Helping Professors Dix, Frances, and Lacey coordinate these events were University Writing Committee members Jennifer Chaytor, Mark Giesler, Chris Giroux, Ellen Herlache-Pretzer, Amy Hlavacek, Julie Lynch, Chatt Pongpatipat, Helen Raica-Klotz, and Deb Smith.

To learn more about the National Day on Writing at SVSU, visit www.svsu.edu/writingprogram/universitywritingcommittee/nationaldayonwriting/.

Stalker

Kellie Rankey
National Day on Writing, Open-Mic Winner for Poetry

A creative writing major, Kellie Rankey is from Bay City, Michigan, and is in her second year at SVSU. She works on the staff of the campus literary magazine, *Cardinal Sins,* and is a member of the Honors Program. In the past, she has been recognized by the Michigan Youth Arts Festival as well as the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition, from which she won a national gold medal, as well as other regional awards, in 2015. Kellie identifies as a poet, but also dabbles in flash fiction and creative nonfiction.

A sickness coils into me, snared snake,
movie cobra that stacks unease with orchestral protest.
I, lone unassuming actor-in-the-scene,
feel it, greased stealth slick with night and the room is
taut rope, old elastic. Waits for one action to
strum. To snap.

I know you're there.

Yes, I got your letter. It had me
finding myself in the first half of true crime specials:
as the evidence gums together, a loved one
spoils like milk. I never loved you,
never thought much of you. But I read
what you said about me for months
in a night. Realized I'd seen you in nature museums.
You think yourself a hawk.

I know you're there.

You waxen statue, taxidermic bird.
Nothing about you says predator,
but you hang there above me with your
eyes that follow, your words meant to tangle and trip.
You said you'd wait for my response and
slicked your words into a coif.

Then wait.

I know you're there.

Tornado

KayLee Davis
National Day on Writing, Wall of Writing Student Winner for Poetry

KayLee Davis is from Charlevoix, Michigan, and joined the Writing Center staff in Fall 2014. Pursuing a double major in creative writing and psychology, she has had poems published in *Bear River Review, Common Ground, Old Northwest,* and *The Mochila Review*. She was a member of Active Minds and has served as the poetry editor of SVSU's student-run publication *Cardinals Sins*. A May 2017 graduate, KayLee hopes to become a college counselor and librarian.

Before you dream tonight, you must know
I fold my blankets
the exact same way
every single night. Each corner tucked,
pillow righted against
worn blue sheets.
I am now from a place where
tucked
doesn't mean "contained,"
but cocooned,
my wings are growing, purple soon.
Press my sweaty hands together,
rain hits
the windowpane,
a sucking noise, wind
wraps against
my chest, containing,
cocooning. My wings beat
against the sound.
Before you come for me tonight, you must know
I held my hands the same way
once before, nails chewed,
rain cold on my neck.
We saw you coming—
spirals,
gray as wet cement,
police siren circling towards
our door.
Bags packed, ripped,
thrown down uneven stairs.
Even down below,
you whistled.
House shook,
I thought it would topple over,
rain splinters of wood,
crush the fear.
I had thrown up twice, already.
Before you destroy us, tonight, you must know:
I am watching,

wanting to slap my hands together
fervent, through all weather,
but they pause—
back then, it worked, you slid
across the sky, across the field,
like an old paintbrush,
drawing far away.
I wonder
if prayer still works the same way.

The Short, Happy Life of a Boston Terrier

Tim Kenyon

National Day on Writing, Wall of Writing Faculty Winner for Short Fiction

Tim Kenyon has been teaching as a lecturer in the English Department at SVSU since 2006. In addition to first-year writing classes, he teaches creative writing and courses focusing on comics, film, and apocalypse culture. Tim has written several novels, short stories, and comics. Most recently, Source Point Press began publishing his five-issue comic series, *Paradise Prison*. His other work includes *Endtime*, *In the House of the Blind*, and an upcoming graphic novel, *imago*. Tim holds an MFA from Goddard College.

Our problem has always been her love for other people's possessions. But the day my grandmother stepped into Jimmy Ryczek's restaurant and slid that crystal urn into her bag when she thought the waitstaff wasn't looking, well, that was the day she handed Jimmy our lives on a brown fiberglass serving tray. Hers, mine, and that of her prize terrier, Bobo.

That's not to say my grandmother didn't know she was stealing. She just didn't know *what* she was stealing. I mean, it's not as if the man had taken any care to notify his employees that it was the ashes of his dead grandfather inside the urn. From the day he hired me, I just assumed it was cheap carnival sand art gone horribly wrong.

So as two of Jimmy's mammoth, gun-toting shadows took out my gag and untied my hands, I just had the burning desire to ask, who the hell stores the remains of their relatives in public places beside cheap plastic plants, commercial-strength coffeemakers, and wicker baskets of clean flatware wrapped in burgundy cloth napkins? It just isn't normal.

The reaction I got from the three-piece suits with muscles galore made me shrink back into my chair. They both glared at me and bore their teeth, not needing English lessons to recognize sarcasm.

Nevertheless, they stepped aside as ordered and let me leave with my limbs intact. The only reason they freed me was to straighten the mess my grandmother had made, with me praying her precious dog would be returned with its insides still inside.

The terrier was really the only bargaining chip they had. They couldn't bring themselves to tie up and drag off an eighty-seven-year-old woman who can't take three steps without a walker. I guess even mob bosses with a grudge have a sense of decency.

So there I stood on the corner of Washington Street and Genesee panting from my three-block sprint while I waited for a cab to pass. Jimmy's last words rolled through me over and over until they stuck like a bad song. *Back in two hours with the urn and the dog's free to go*. If the stopwatch on his wrist ticked off to two-oh-one, he'd be making a trip to the post office with the first of seven boxes, one each day until my grandmother had all the pieces of her dog back.

I looked down at my wrist realizing my own stopwatch was frozen at three minutes twenty seconds. I frantically pressed the buttons getting the countdown going again, figuring it should read at least fifteen minutes. I replaced the skipping record of Jimmy's words with my own: add twelve minutes, add twelve minutes.

Two empty cabs rolled toward me, one behind the other. I waved and they both stopped. After leaping into the back seat of the one closest to me, the driver of the other rolled down his window and exchanged a few obscenities with my driver before speeding away.

"Today must be my lucky day," I said looking down at my watch again and doing the necessary math.

The cabby just stared over his shoulder and twirled his hand around, waiting for me to blurt out my destination as if it's all he had time for. I gave him the address and he drove, taking roads I didn't even know existed. The man was a genius because he actually shaved three minutes off any route I'd ever taken.

When he stopped in front of my grandmother's house, I surveyed the surroundings keeping my head low. Along the way I hadn't noticed any vehicles following us, but these people were professionals. If they didn't want me to see them, I wouldn't. Suddenly every car parked on the street was a tail. They'd watch me until I came out with the urn, they'd jump me, they'd take it back and keep the dog and sell it for all its worth. All in a day's work.

Before I could open the door and step out onto the curb, I had to convince myself that Jimmy still thought the dog's value to my grandmother was only sentimental. He had no idea it was a four-time best in show. He didn't know how much he'd rake in by breeding a bitch like that. And better kept that way.

I paid the cabby enough to keep him there for at least ten minutes while I worked through my grandmother's cryptic Polish and tried to figure out where she put the damn thing. I sprinted up the front stairs and dug the key from under the mat while I berated myself for running and hiding all those years my mother hounded me to learn my grandmother's native tongue. I kept arguing, why the hell should I, everyone else I know talks English? When my mother took off for Arizona three months earlier, leaving me to take care of my grandmother, I realized I should've taken her advice.

I turned the key and pushed hard on the front door, clearing the mess that was still piled up behind it. The kitchen hadn't been touched since Jimmy's men went through it that morning. I stepped over the tipped stack of Polish-language magazines she'd been collecting for the last fifty-some-odd years and piling in the corner by the fridge. Broken dishes and glass covered the floor all the way into the dining room. That's where I found her sweeping up what was left of the china cabinet, a worn straw broom in one hand and her walker in the other.

I told her to put the broom down and leave it for me to clean up. She started with the foreign exclamations and incessant praying, easy enough to decipher from the relieved look on her face and tone in her voice. She hugged me and kissed my face. I sympathized with her worry and I really appreciated all that affection, but we needed to save it for later.

Taking her by the shoulders, I made a gesture that she needed to stop her chattering. I pointed to my eyes and made her listen, thinking I was about to break our thirty-year language barrier with a few seconds of intense concentration. Once I had her attention, I repeated over and over again, *where is the urn, babcia, where is the urn?* I made an hourglass gesture with my hands.

She shooed my hands away and ranted on about Bobo, motioning to the spots on the floor where the dog would sleep and occasionally take a dump. For a split second, like countless split seconds before, I considered taking the thing partly to protect my only inheritance and partly to let it go to the bathroom in the backyard like every other normal dog. But she never let the damn thing out of her sight. Right after she retired Bobo, my uncle even tried to swipe it, but he didn't make it to the driveway before she threatened to drop him from her will. An effective convincer since the house was worth more than the dog, not to mention he loathed pets to begin with.

I repeated the same question three times until she started on with a word that I actually recognized. Closet. Jimmy's bulky boys had torn the place apart before they made off with Bobo, but there was one place they'd obviously missed.

I raced over the mess in the living room to the back bedroom, which had been returned to a pristine condition. Stopping in front of the bed, I tried to imagine how she'd righted the thing. Her closet door was locked. I fished for the key in the ceramic replica of Bobo on the dresser, the same place she got it from when one of the thugs demanded the door be opened. Once I got the lock undone, I flung the door open remembering the cabby at the curb. My watch said fifty-seven minutes. I guessed I still had four of my ten minutes left, positive that at ten-oh-one he'd throw it into D and take off.

I reached though the rows of hanging clothes and worked my way to the back wall of the closet feeling for the hidden panel. With my face buried in a house coat that reeked of old age and Clorox, I found the seam in the wall and pushed. The magnetic latch gave, and the door popped ajar. I shoved the clothes to one side as far as they'd go and swung the panel as far as it'd go.

My great-grandfather had finished the room behind the closet, barely big enough inside to stand up or lie down in. He used to hide fugitives and marked men during the logging strikes. That was a time when showing your face would've got you killed, all in the name of making a living for the family. But times changed, the trees thinned and the loggers moved on. The room, empty for decades, eventually became my secret playland until I discovered girls and recreational drugs.

When I got the door open, the first time in years, I saw my grandmother had made it her own, a treasure chamber of sorts. A final resting place for all the things, other people's things, she couldn't live without.

The little room still had no light inside. There was just enough from the bedroom to give shadows to all the stuff she'd been taking since before I was born. She'd amassed herself quite a collection. Dolls, books, jewelry, purses, teacups, pens, stuffed animals, clothes, eyeglasses, silverware. Her own private rummage sale. Much of it with tags still attached, having come right off the store shelves.

I was tempted to browse, take it all in, items and designs and labels I'd never seen before, but my curiosity waned when I saw her collection of wristwatches. I looked at my own and calculated how little time I had left on both meters, the cab's and Jimmy's. I kept my eyes alert for that particular hourglass shape. When the urn wasn't obvious in the dimly lighted areas, I started feeling around in the dark spots, careful not to knock anything over.

Down in the corner I felt something hard, glass. It was tall, with a cover. I reached with my other hand and lifted it into the light. It was unusually heavy, and I remembered Jimmy going on about genuine blah blah crystal. As I white-knuckled it and worked my way out of the closet, all I could wonder is how my grandmother got this dead weight into her bag so carefully, so furtively, without dropping and smashing it into a million pieces right in front of a busy lunch crowd.

I carried it like a time bomb through the living room and into the kitchen. With my elbow, I cleared a space on the counter and put it down. She was right on my heels still going on and on about Bobo and pointing to the urn accusingly, as if she felt ripped off by the exchange, dog for urn.

I rode to the peak of anger and blame as she talked. Then with a raised hand, I hushed her and barked one of the ten Polish words I could half pronounce, *quiet*. I'd had enough. What'd been part of my grandmother's quirky personality got me dragged out of work and gagged with a gun in my face just an hour before. I no longer wanted this responsibility of watching out for her. Her rightful place was under my mother's roof, in Arizona, regardless of how fed up my mother had become with her need to steal something every time she left the house.

Digging through the wicker basket on the window sill, one of the few things in the entire house not tipped over and emptied, I pulled out two rubber bands and secured the cover to the urn by wrapping the bands over it and twisting them around the handles. I stared through the glass at the dark remains of Jimmy's grandfather feeling relieved that I'd found him. The man was now safe in my care.

Without another word to my grandmother, I stepped out onto the front stoop with the urn coddled in my arms like a newborn. What I didn't find waiting for me at the curb made my stomach go sour. By my watch I should've still had a minute and a half on the cab meter, and now less than an hour on Jimmy's. Add twelve minutes, I remembered. Dammit. I was down to as little as forty before Bobo got divided into sevens.

Just inside the porch door was the old dry sink. I opened the top drawer and fished for the keys to the Buick hoping my uncle left them behind before he went away. If not, they were doing five to seven for burglary along with him, sealed up inside some padded envelope

marked *personal possessions*. I began to chastise my grandmother's *modus operandi,* wishing she'd hoard what mattered. Like keys to her own damn car.

But there they were, way in the back. And behind the house was the car half-covered by a tattered blue vinyl tarp, the 1978 Buick trash can. The wet weather had refinished it a rust color. The holes in the body looked like bed sores. At this point though I didn't care if it had bull's-eyes painted all over it, so long as the engine would turn over.

I opened the passenger door and threw the junk from the seat into the back, which was already chockfull of old *Playboy*s, spare car parts, and fast food wrappers. With the urn snug against the damp fabric of the passenger seat, I wrapped the seatbelt around it and buckled it in. I climbed in the other side, closed my eyes, and turned the key. The engine gave a few slow grunts then turned, and me so grateful that three months without my uncle hadn't completely killed it. I threw it into gear and tore up the lawn until I hit dry pavement. I waved to my grandmother who was standing on the threshold of the door yelling in Polish as if reminding me not to forget to buy eggs.

I wasn't even going to try to backtrack the cabby's route, sure that I'd get lost. I still had time, so I took M-13 the whole way right into downtown. At the first light, I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw the sign for Washington and Genesee. Bobo was three blocks away. I pressed down on the brake, eyes fixed on the yellow light as it changed to red. My foot went down, and down, right to the floor. The car kept going, and the rear of the Mercedes stopped at the light got closer and closer.

I turned the wheel to the right just missing the rear corner of the Mercedes. A quick, proud smile overtook me just before I went up over the curb and slammed into the metal light pole. I felt my left thumb jam into the dashboard and bend back to my wrist. My teeth cut the inside of my cheek as my face caught the steering wheel. Smoke began to cloud my view of the light pole, which was now part of the hood. The pole broke and fell on top of the car, sending the long, green Genesee St. sign right through the roof over the back seat.

I swallowed a mouthful of blood and winced as I tried to move my thumb. Broken, but otherwise I was in one piece. With my good hand, I reached down and pressed the seatbelt button, realizing only then that I'd never put it on.

I turned to the passenger seat—empty. The seatbelt was still attached, but the urn was now on the floor, lid hanging off by one busted rubber band. The knocking that started on my window didn't break my stare. I was focused on the fine gray powder that used to be Jimmy's grandfather now in a fairly neat pile on the mud-caked floor mat.

The knocker outside my car window was now jiggling the handle trying to get in, but at some point I had locked the door. All I could do was raise up my broken hand and give him a wave. He must have noticed my twisted thumb because I heard him say he'd call the paramedics.

I finally caught my breath, stolen less by my collision with the steering wheel than seeing the spilled urn. I dove into the passenger seat, grabbed the urn with my good hand and started scooping up Jimmy's grandfather with the bad one.

But there was something in it. The ash wasn't just ash. It wasn't mud or dirt or rocks. This was something different, something round. I lifted the pile with both hands and let the ashes sift through my fingers until all that remained was a small black cylinder. Rolling back onto the seat, I held it up. A plastic 35mm film canister. I popped the cover off and dumped the contents. A key, one of those with a round orange head made to open a locker. I turned it around and inspected it. The only markings on it was the number 40 and below that an impression of a greyhound in full stride. The bus station.

At first I shook my head at the added absurdity of hiding a key inside the ashes of a relative stored on a restaurant shelf, but I had to stop and consider the necessity. No one in their right mind would disturb a container of ashes. So if Jimmy was hiding a key in there, it had to be for something important, something he didn't want anyone to find. Absolutely never find. So what do mobsters hide? My first guess: dead bodies. No, not in a bus station locker. But my second, yes, that was it. Money. And lots of it.

I sat up and looked out the window for the first time at the man still working at the handle. He motioned to the lock, and I reached over with my good hand and pulled it up. The door swung wide, and he began grilling me about my welfare and saying the police and ambulance were on the way. In the distance I could hear the approaching sirens.

At most, I had thirty seconds to decide. I glanced back at the urn still lying on its side on the passenger floor then looked down at the key. The closer the sirens got, the less Bobo was worth to me. I'd never been sold on inheriting the dog anyway, regardless of its value. Jimmy, he could keep it. With what had to be stuffed inside the bus station locker, I'd buy my grandmother ten prize dogs, after I got her down to Arizona.

I slid out of the car and walked toward the rear of the Mercedes, the same one I'd nearly hit, now parked and running just ten feet away. Its driver was still asking me mundane questions of name, date, year of birth, anything to reveal the level of damage, or lack thereof, to my brain. I circled around his car and hopped inside. Confusion kept him from making any attempt to stop me as I threw it into gear and tore through a red light back to M-13.

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There were at least fifteen people in line for tickets. I looked down at my watch, added twelve, and figured I was nearly sixteen minutes overdue. A quick survey of the otherwise empty bus station did little to ease my edgy nerves. But I told myself we were safe for now. We had to be. At this point, Jimmy's men wouldn't be watching me; they'd be charging me, dragging me off, shooting me in the knees. Whatever it took to get that key back.

My grandmother was still going on in a kind of Polish I'd never heard before. She was most likely contesting the way I'd hurried her out of the house and stuck her into a car I'd never be able to afford in three lifetimes. She also was surely trying to get the full story out of me about her dog and my mother. The only explaining I had patience for was I needed to get her down to Arizona and that her dog was fine, although it did little good between my meager Polish vocabulary and her inability to shut up and listen to anything I was attempting to say.

I helped her to the chairs near the coffee station, poured her a cup of decaf with my one good hand. My damaged hand had stiffened into a claw by now. She kept pointing at that too while she asked her questions. I just motioned for her to stay put. I'd given up using words, so I followed up by pointing to the row of lockers on the far wall where I had to get the money to pay for the tickets. She swore at me—that much I was sure of—as I took off across the station lobby.

I looked at my watch again, now out of nervous habit. Late is late, I kept saying, and all I could focus on was getting us on the bus before the bullets started flying. But as I got closer to the row of lockers, the anticipation started to go to work on me, shortening my breaths and quickening my steps until I broke into an uncomfortable and obvious trot across the tile floor.

The loud clap-clap-clap of my shoes in the otherwise quiet station made me realize that smart men don't make scenes in public. The least obvious way for Jimmy to take me out would be with a high-powered rifle and scope, from a distance where the shooter would never be found.

I had the key out of my pocket now and raised it up, my hand shaking. The numbers attached to the top row of lockers went by twos. As I passed twenty-eight, I started counting out loud in Polish. Funny how stress can compel the brain to remember things you thought you never learned. I got to forty and braced myself for the crack of glass and immense pressure on the back of my head from a bullet. Any second now.

I gathered my scrambled thoughts, but not before experiencing a two-second loss of bladder control. I put the key in and turned. The tumblers fell into place and the door unlocked. I took as deep a breath as I could and pulled on the handle. An infantile whine escaped my throat as I anticipated the splatter of blood painting the beige wall of lockers. It

was coming at any moment. I took a quick glance over my shoulder at my grandmother, some wordless final farewell, but my promise of bullets turned up empty.

The locker—that turned out to be full, but not with a bag of money. I started rummaging through the jewelry, stacks of credit cards, tarnished silver trinkets, picture frames, all part of an assortment of things my uncle had been stealing. He was keeping a smaller version of my grandmother's treasure chamber while he waited for the house and the room behind the closet to become his own. And he hid the key in the last place he thought anyone would look—inside a film case on the floor of his trash-filled car.

I fished through the locker noticing some of what he'd taken even belonged to my grandmother, including a framed photograph of them with my mother when she about my age. One happy family all leaning on the hood of a brand-new Buick. My mother was the only one not smiling.

I found a blue checkbook near the back, the leather one I'd given my grandmother for her birthday with her initials inscribed on it. I hurried back, helped her to her feet, and tried to explain without much luck that we needed to get in line.

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Spotlight on... Students

No matter in which college they find themselves, SVSU students write regularly in their courses. As members of a university that, per its mission statement, "creates opportunities for individuals to achieve intellectual and personal development," SVSU students write in different genres, learn different documentation styles, and find themselves weighing the various options they carry in their rhetorical toolkits. No matter their major, they must consider issues of medium, message, and audience.

Because their majors do vary, students find different venues in and avenues through which to grow as writers. No publication can capture all those stories. In the following pages however, you'll find stories about five students, representing SVSU's five colleges, who have found success in their studies through writing.

In this section, you'll also find profiles of the editors of SVSU's two student-run publications, *Cardinal Sins* and *The Valley Vanguard.* Founded in 1967, *The Vanguard* is SVSU's official student-run news source and has been the recipient of numerous awards. Its online presence can be found at www.valleyvanguardonline.com/. *Cardinals Sins* is SVSU's fine arts and literary magazine. Produced by the school's faculty, staff, and students, *Cardinal Sins* has been honored by the American Scholastic Press Association (ASPA); it features work by members of the SVSU campus and by artists from around the nation. More information about *Cardinal Sins,* including back issues and submission deadlines, can be found at www.cardinalsinsjournal.com/.

Spotlight on…
The College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences

Kathryn Karoly

Creative Writing Major and English Minor

Kathryn Karoly—a Summer 2017 graduate in creative writing from Bay City, Michigan—has always loved writing, but never imagined her passion would fuel adventures around the world. Karoly initially chose SVSU because she wanted to stay close to home while pursuing her interests in literature and writing. She declared herself a creative writing major and English minor in 2012, quickly moved into her creative writing courses, and became known on campus for her passion for and skill in writing. By the end of 2014, Karoly had won the Tyner Award in poetry and first place in the National Day on Writing Open-Mic Prize for poetry. Karoly went on to receive the Theodore Roethke Student Writing Award in 2015, first place in the Writing on the Wall competitions in both fall of 2015 and winter of 2016, and another first place for the 2016 National Day on Writing Open-Mic contest.

The prizes are impressive, but for Karoly, writing is about opening doors for her as a student, traveler, and poet. Karoly states that one of her most significant experiences was an internship abroad with Éireann Lorsung. Karoly was introduced to Lorsung by Dr. Arra Ross during a "Voices in the Valley" program in April 2015. With Dr. Ross's recommendation, Lorsung hired Karoly as an intern shortly thereafter. After months of planning, Karoly traveled to the Dickenson House in Belgium, the bed and breakfast where Lorsung's writing residency is held each year. While there, Karoly aided with gardening, cleaning, and, more notably, the grunt work of publishing chapbooks for MIEL micropress. (Founded by Lorsung, MIEL focuses on the works of women, especially women of color.) Additionally, Karoly shared meals with the residents of the writing programs, most of whom were professors and scholars in creative writing from around the world, and developed engaging prompts and activities for them. Amidst all these endeavors, Karoly still found time to develop her own writing, spending her free time working on a research-based long-form poem, with Lorsung as her advisor. "The first few weeks I wrote about thirty pages of poetry, and the next two weeks I spent editing those pages," Karoly remembers of her work during the summer. The time also involved much reading: "I would ask Éireann a question and she would give me a book as an answer." Karoly finished her month-long internship and then went on a two-week traveling tour before returning home to finish her studies and to continue working on her poetry.

Upon returning home, Karoly became more heavily involved in writing at SVSU. She joined *Cardinal Sins* at the suggestion of Maria Franz, an associate editor for the publication. Soon after, Karoly was chosen as a poetry editor for the publication and has served in that role for the past year. Karoly also became involved in the Creative Writing Prison Project sponsored by the SVSU Writing Center, where she collaborated with Joshua Atkins, a fellow creative writing major who is a tutor at the center. Together, Karoly and Atkins taught prisoners at the Saginaw Correctional Facility the basics of creative writing over ten weeks. Karoly found that these writing workshops gave the prisoners a choice in their lives and a space in which they were accepted.

If there is one thing Karoly has learned from these diverse experiences, it is the importance of environment, in terms of people and place, when writing. Whether in gardens or at a meal with professional writers in Belgium, in her coursework and involvement with

Cardinal Sins, or in the Saginaw Correctional Facility, Karoly has found that the aesthetic of the physical environment and the people you surround yourself with have a profound impact on the quality of your work and on your growth as a writer: "What is really fascinating is seeing how you either allow or don't allow others to be a part of your work. If you want to get the most out of it, that means letting in other opinions, processing them, and thinking about them in regards to your work—and also being a part of that for others."

Karoly is keeping this in mind as she looks forward to her future travels and to graduate school. She plans to take a year off to return to the Dickenson House as an intern, further develop her writing portfolio, and apply to graduate schools. She currently has her sights set on Arizona State University—where she hopes she'll find, literally and figuratively, a warm environment that will help her grow as a writer.

Spotlight on… The College of Business and Management

Jenni Putz
Applied Math and Economics Major

Jenni Putz will be the first to admit it—when people think of the work done by those in STEM fields, writing may not be the first thing to come to mind. What Putz has found, however, is that her writing ability has been key in unlocking a staggering number of opportunities presented to her during her time at SVSU.

When the Lapeer, Michigan, native recounts her first year at SVSU, she says she would "never describe [herself] as a writer." Indeed, coming out of high school, Putz signed on to become a mathematics major in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology. She describes her first years at SVSU, however, as exploratory. During that time, she enrolled in Mathematical Foundations of Actuarial Science (MATH 281), a class meant to introduce her to the kind of work she might do with the degree. Putz quickly realized that this wasn't what she wanted. Putz then dabbled in different jobs across campus; she worked at SVSU's Writing Center as a peer tutor for several semesters before joining the Center for Academic Achievement as an economics tutor. It was around this time that Putz decided on her current major—applied math and economics—in the College of Business and Management.

Putz describes several professors as being instrumental in her decision to change her course of study; she cites, for example, associate professor of economics Dr. Kaustav Misra and Dr. Kylie Jaber (an associate professor of economics who is also Putz's Honors Thesis advisor) as truly exemplary in their roles as teachers and mentors. In 2015, Putz engaged in a study abroad trip to India led by Dr. Misra that was revelatory in a myriad of ways. Having been familiar with the data behind global income inequality from her coursework, Putz was struck with "seeing the statistics firsthand," particularly upon visiting the town of Dharavi, India, which houses the third largest slum in the world. Upon returning to SVSU, Putz enrolled in Research Methodology (ECON 490) with Dr. Misra. Putz states that "it was in this class that I started working on the very beginnings of my Honors thesis, and I think that throughout the course, I learned what an academic paper in economics was supposed to look like and how to effectively write one."

Since then, Putz has devoted her research to analyzing the income disparity catalyzed by industrial development in counties across the state; more specifically, her work involved developing an index to measure the economic impact that industries have on surrounding populations. The reception to her written work has been outstanding; in 2016, she traveled to Florida, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington, D.C., to present different aspects of her research at various conferences. She has also been published in the *International Journal of Education Management*; these are no small feats for someone who was once hesitant to lay claim to strong writing skills.

The May 2017 graduate is looking forward to pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of Oregon, where she hopes her work will continue to align with her personal interests in the global economy. The end goal of this winner of an SVSU Braun Award for Writing Excellence is to become a professor at an undergraduate university, a position that will afford the opportunity to offer others the same kind of significant, life-changing experiences that she has had during her time here. With that objective in mind, she says, "I have no doubt that my experience with writing as an undergrad will serve me well in the future."

Spotlight on…
The College of Education

Christie Sinicki
Mathematics and Spanish Secondary Education Major

Christie Sinicki, a May 2017 secondary education major from Romeo, Michigan, knew she wanted to be a teacher from an early age. "I think it is something that I've always wanted to do. We all have the stories where we played teacher. I have siblings, and we would always play teacher or play school. I've also had lots of experiences tutoring, so I feel like just being able to help people is always something that's called to me," she says of her choice to go into the field of education despite the scarcity of teaching positions available in Michigan. She chose Saginaw Valley because of the strong programs the College of Education offered to support her as she worked toward this goal.

Given her two majors, mathematics and Spanish, some may take for granted the amount of writing she does in the College of Education: "Reading and writing are both overlooked in those subjects at times…but [these subjects] definitely rely heavily on language in terms of writing." She goes on to argue that although many think of solving equations when doing mathematics, "writing in math is actually quite important, especially in upper-level courses. Much of the writing consists of writing proofs or making sure that the steps of the computations are organized, are clear, and follow a logical progression." Knowledge of how to write within this content area, and even incorporate research and presentations of mathematics concepts into instruction, will serve Sinicki well in her future career.

In addition to her unique writing experiences in the mathematics program, Sinicki has also been shaped into an effective educator by her writing within the College of Education. Although many people assume that writing in the college is focused solely on lesson development, the emphasis on writing, according to Sinicki, actually concerns the reflection that occurs after teaching a lesson or developing a plan. "Within the College of Education, a lot of the writing we do is reflective writing. We're looking at whether we're implementing the best practices: am I doing everything I can to be a good teacher? What went well with my lessons? What didn't go well?" says Sinicki of the many essays she has written since completing her introductory course in the college, Exploring Education: K-12 (TE 100). Beyond this reflection, Sinicki claims one other type of writing she has done at the College of Education has changed her as an educator and a writer: lesson implementation papers. The premise of these papers is that one must consider the entire community when designing and implementing a lesson. Sinicki claims that these papers are particularly helpful to developing teachers: "I think that is very important as teachers, to make sure you're using all of the skills you can to best fit the community that you are in."

In the summer of 2016, Sinicki put these aspects of writing into practice when she worked alongside Dr. Debra Lively and Lauren Rabine, another College of Education student, to develop a behavior/classroom management course, a teaching social studies methods course, and a cultures of thinking course, which they then implemented at Taiyuan University of Technology in the Shanxi Province of China over the course of a month. To engage in this opportunity, Sinicki had to complete the interview process and then demonstrate the ability to not only write lessons and develop course materials, but to do so with the culture and community of the students in mind. While in China, Sinicki learned about the Chinese primary and secondary education system at a few different host schools, in addition to visiting the cultural and historic landmarks throughout the Shanxi Province. She gained a great deal from this experience, but her biggest take-away was that she will always be aware of the

diversity within her classrooms and the individual perspectives that each student brings to the table. Based on this study abroad experience, she plans to dedicate future summers to teaching abroad, particularly in Spain and in South or Central America, where she can work to improve her Spanish skills.

Upon returning from Taiyuan University, Sinicki finished up her remaining teacher education methods courses and began student teaching at Bay City Western High School in Auburn, Michigan. While there, she taught geometry and Spanish II, and now that student teaching is over, Sinicki hopes to stay in Michigan to find a position where she can teach mathematics and Spanish—incorporating writing into both, of course. Whatever and wherever she ends up teaching, she is excited for what the future holds. "The opportunities," she says, "are endless; there are so many doors open for what comes next." Writing will, undoubtedly, be key to opening those doors.

Spotlight on... The College of Health and Human Services

Susie Balcom

Social Work Major

Susie Balcom has dedicated her life to service. In May 2017, Balcom, who was born in Flint, Michigan, and grew up in nearby Millington, earned a bachelor of social work degree from SVSU. In her pursuit of a profession so focused on serving others, she realized she needed to be able to write well to effectively perform in this field.

"They have us do a lot of writing in the [Social Work] program, and at first we don't really understand why. We're social workers, we're going to go into therapy, or something along those lines," she says. "Then, when you get into your field placement, you realize every single progress note and every single case note that you write is reviewed by someone at a higher level, so writing, to me, has come down to professionalism and representing my profession correctly."

Balcom, who pursued a minor in gender studies, plans to work as a macro-level social worker, an area of the field in which writing is of even more significance.

"It's a lot of research, policy, development, and evaluation, and that's all writing, or all talking, which is associated with writing," she said. "Writing for me has really developed into how to represent my profession correctly."

Writing didn't always come easy to this Roberts Fellow, who has also been active in Alternative Breaks. In her English 111 course, she claims she was at a loss—until she was given the opportunity to write on a topic about which she was passionate: American sex education in public schools and households. Ultimately, Balcom won the third-place First-Year Writing Award in 2014 for her essay on this topic. Prior to that final draft, she struggled. "I was getting C's on little every pre-paper you write before you hand in the actual paper," she said. "I became so frustrated with the professor, and she sent me to the Writing Center. I thought I was a good writer; in high school, I got all A's, but when I came to college, I did not have college-level writing skills. I went to the Writing Center, and I take every paper there now."

That paper marked a turning point for her in other ways: "It was the most extensive research paper I'd ever written, and it sparked my interest in gender studies. The topic touched on a lot of feminist issues, like positive sex education and contraception. That's what made me interested in my minor."

Balcom is also proud of other research she has conducted and papers she has written since her freshman year. In March 2016, she presented research on an adolescent drug prevention program's validity at the Annual Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Conference. In April 2016, she won Top Poster Presentation at the SVSU Undergraduate Student Showcase for her work on adolescent drug prevention programs. Most recently, in March 2017, Balcom again presented at the Annual Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Conference on her auto-ethnography research on the effects that studying abroad has on social work values.

Balcom credits the Social Work Department, which named her its outstanding graduate for the Winter 2017 semester, with her development as a writer. In the program, she says, "You reflect on everything. I've kept constant journals." This journaling, which evolved from a course requirement to a personal hobby, helped Balcom "develop [her] voice as a

writer and [her organizational skills], too. It's helped [her] learn to get away from following a rubric and begin writing for [her]self, not to fulfill a grade." This realization has come to fruition for Balcom in her field placement at Hurley Medical Center in Flint. There she has seen firsthand the importance of good writing, noting that doctors expect excellence in writing on all documents, even those as "small" as progress notes.

Balcom's focus on writing in her profession has served her well: she's already been accepted into AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps and will work for the next year in Vicksburg, Mississippi, as the program development and training leader for the southern region. Then, in August 2018, she will begin her master of social work degree at the University of Pittsburgh, focusing on community, organization, and social action (COSA).

Such diversity of experience has likewise defined her time at SVSU. A social science tutor at the Center for Academic Achievement, she has also served as president of the Phi Alpha National Honor Society for Social Work, as vice president of SVSU's Student Social Work Organization, and as a residential advocate at Underground Railroad. Service has indeed defined Balcom's time at SVSU, and as a social work major, so has writing.

Spotlight on…
The College of Science, Engineering and Technology

Alec Ward

Mathematics Major

Alec Ward became a better mathematician when he became a better writer.

Ward graduated from SVSU in May 2017 with a bachelor of science degree in mathematics, a minor in economics, and 4.0 cumulative grade point average. The Almont, Michigan, native was also named the outstanding graduate for the Department of Mathematics and, in August 2016, earned the Hamza Ahmad Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded to mathematics students with a demonstrated potential for success in the field. This potential to succeed in the discipline of mathematics was easily observed during Ward's time at SVSU. For nearly two years, he conducted research with Dr. Hasan Al-Halees, professor of mathematics, on the topic of difference equations associated with quadratic equations.

Ward eventually presented on this work at the 2017 Mathematics Association of America Michigan Section Annual Meeting at Ferris State University and at SVSU's Winter 2017 Colloquium Series put on by the College of SE&T. He plans to publish an article about his findings in an undergraduate mathematics journal. "I've got a bunch of results, and I've written a draft, but Dr. Al-Halees and I are still going over it," Ward said. "[Writing the draft] was actually really hard, especially the abstract. There's a certain way to write abstracts in mathematics, and I did it so badly the first time that it had to be completely rewritten."

Ward finds that part of the difficulty lies in the differences between writing done in the fields of mathematics and science and the writing done in other disciplines: "In mathematics and science, you have to write in [the document preparation system] LaTeX. You can't even write in [Microsoft] Word. Everything has to be formatted correctly in LaTeX, and even learning how to do that is a huge barrier to writing in these fields."

A member of the SVSU Math Club, Alec has since proceeded to jump that hurdle. He has also come to excel as a writer. He earned the 2017 Braun Award for Writing Excellence in the College of SE&T for his paper "Knot Theory: Principles and Applications," co-authored with student Dylan McKnight for Abstract Geometry (MATH 471).

With that specific piece, Ward observed similarities between various types of writing he has done at SVSU: "In a lot of ways, writing that paper for my Abstract Geometry course was the same as writing for my general education or English classes. We had to explain why a certain topic mattered—why we study something called knot invariance. You have to list your arguments and reasoning in both types of writing."

With that paper on knot theory, which can be found elsewhere in this issue of *Writing@SVSU,* Ward also saw other commonalities between writing successful mathematical proofs, a common exercise in his coursework, and writing in other fields: "Proof-writing, which you do in a lot of upper-level mathematics classes, is very logical, with 'if-then' statements. There's a particular way of thinking that you need to have if you actually want to write a mathematical proof. You have to clearly state your thoughts. The only thing that makes a proof valid is whether someone else can understand it, so you have to be clear in your writing. *You* can know it, but it's not valid if only you know it."

Ward found that this style of writing in his mathematics classes has influenced his overall writing style. It's also influenced his way of thinking. Writing his ideas down and trying to convey them to others on the page forces him to engage in self-critique and helps

him see things from various perspectives. These are skills, he realizes, that don't come easily for many. "That's why there's so few people in science and mathematics like Bill Nye, for example, who can explain things really well, because it's such a hard thing to do," he explained. "There's so few people who can do it, but their work is so important."

With the variety of experiences and successes he's had at SVSU as a writer and student of math, this former reporter for *The Valley Vanguard* and tutor in the Math and Physics Resource Center is well on his way to becoming one of those people. Ward will begin pursuing his Ph.D. in mathematics at Indiana University, Bloomington, in Fall 2017.

Spotlight on…
The Valley Vanguard
Connor Doyle
Editor

Connor Doyle is, he maintains, "a sporty type of person." Looking back on his childhood, he describes himself as athletic, surrounded by jocks, and especially interested in football, baseball, and wrestling.

Despite this love of athletics, the Midland, Michigan, native can also recall skipping an all-star baseball tournament to attend a writing camp hosted by author Johnathan Rand. He remembers writing short stories and dreaming of becoming an author in elementary and middle school, and in high school he served as sports editor of the newspaper at Midland's Dow High. In fact, while he attended high school, Doyle's dream career changed from author to sports journalist, as his passion for sports writing flourished.

The finance and economics double major now plans to turn his passion for business, and not writing, into a career. Still, he has learned that his love for writing does not have to be sacrificed. After all, it was this passion that led him, in 2015, to the position of staff writer at *The Valley Vanguard,* where he found many opportunities to write about sports, which in turn led him commit to the position of editor-in-chief in 2016.

Doyle names one of the most interesting aspects of the job as needing to think on his feet. Although he formulates an initial plan for the layout of each issue (along with his design editor, Kyle Will), Doyle knows that the plan will almost certainly need to be adjusted. This aspect of the job, Doyle contends, is ultimately a positive because the constant need to make quick decisions has helped him think creatively. As someone who considers himself to be very "by the book," his position at *The Vanguard* led to personal growth.

Doyle's work at the newspaper provides another benefit—writing and editing enable him to make connections with others, like students from other majors he might not get to know otherwise, newspaper advisor Andy Hoag, and *The Vanguard'*s staff. Besides his design/photo editor and his section editors, Doyle gets to work with reporters, photographers, and advertising representatives: in total, about 50 students. This ability to connect with others also inspired him to join campus organizations like Forever Red, Cardinal Business Edge, the Foundation Scholars program, and the Finance Club. Doyle's people skills also guide his future plans. Doyle hopes to become a financial advisor to combine his love for helping people with his love for finance. Rest assured that while Doyle will have a lot on his plate, he knows he'll never lose his passion for writing.

One of Doyle's favorite pieces published in *The Vanguard* in the 2016-17 academic year is Gabe Kasper's "Assistant Director Helps Student Progress." This piece highlights how Doyle's editorial position enabled him to connect with people. Doyle appreciates that the article sheds "light on one of the many fantastic people who work at the institution." He notes too that the article, written by someone who is not pursuing a writing career, further highlights the opportunities *The Vanguard* provides students who would not traditionally have an outlet to write professionally.

Assistant Director Helps Student Progress

Janna Kern helps incoming freshmen schedule their first classes at Saginaw Valley, understand their degree audit and figure out what major suits them the best.

However, most people have no idea what she actually means to the students and

University in general. In addition to excelling at her job as the assistant director of the Academic Advising Center, she has led the Foundation Scholars program for 15 years and played the piano for nearly 20 theater productions.

"Janna Kern in one word would be selfless," Resident Assistant Haley Lake said. "She is someone that goes out of her way to say hello. I have made multiple appointments with her, and every one has been a positive experience. I believe some people just have a knack for making you feel cared for. That is one of Janna's super powers for sure."

Kern began her SVSU experience as an undergraduate. During that time, she worked in the Human Resources department of the university. After earning her bachelor's degree, she worked for an engineering firm for four years.

"During my time outside of the university, I always wanted to come back," Kern says. "I loved the atmosphere and the life. A friend mentioned an opening in the Advising Center, and I jumped at the opportunity."

Kern is also a mentor and positive influence to all of the students she meets in her daily activities. In 2001, the Foundation Scholars program was created, and she was chosen to lead it. As the foundation's head, she became a mentor and advisor to students and helped them with their graduation progress.

"She is the literal definition of amazing," first-year Foundation Scholar student Milah Montle said. "She is so supportive and helpful all the time. Being a freshman, I always have plenty of questions to ask, and she always answers them right away. She is a genuine, kind and funny person. She is always there if you need her, and she has helped me out so much already this year."

The Foundation Scholars program consists of roughly 60 first-year students who receive special funding to study abroad or conduct a community based service learning project within their second semester. The goal of the program is to produce SVSU's next set of campus and community leaders.

This year, Kern is passing the reigns of the Foundation Scholar program to fellow Academic Advisor Eric Davis.

"I love the Foundations Scholars," Kern said. "But after 15 years, I felt like I needed to move on and bring a new perspective into the program. I was offered more of a leadership role within the advising office, and I knew it was the right time to move on. Eric is a great person to take over the program, and I know it is in good hands with him."

In her free time, Janna enjoys painting and photography, and her artwork can often be seen at the yearly faculty exhibits.

Kern has also contributed to the theater department. There, she met professor Richard Roberts, the current theater department chair, during her first year as an employee.

"Ric mentioned that he was looking for a piano player for the upcoming musical that the department was putting on," Kern said. "I mentioned that I played and since have worked on nearly 20 musicals for the department.

"Janna Kern exemplifies everything great about SVSU," Roberts said. "Her willingness to not only support our theatre department productions by volunteering hundreds of hours over the years, but also being our go-to advisor for our theatre majors."

Reprinted by permission of *The Valley Vanguard.* Gabe Kasper wrote "Assistant Director Helps Student Progress," which first appeared in *The Valley Vanguard* on January 22, 2017.

Spotlight on…
Cardinal Sins
Victoria Phelps
Editor

Victoria Phelps has displayed an interest in and ambition for writing from a young age. Phelps sat down and wrote her first "novel" in the summer of her fifth-grade year; the fourteen-page handwritten piece featured the last tree on Earth, and the character's initials spelled out S-A-D. "It was written for environmental activism purposes," Phelps explains.

It is no surprise that the Rochester Hills, Michigan, native, who is pursuing a bachelor of arts in English literature and minors in history and creative writing, displayed this same earnest ambition when applying to *Cardinal Sins*. "I emailed the current editor-in-chief, Nathan Phillips at the time, over the summer, before I even got into SVSU for sure," Phelps recalls. She had to wait until the end of her freshman year to officially join the editorial staff, but just one year later, in the fall of 2015, she was asked to become editor-in-chief.

Phelps's experience in *Cardinal Sins* began with a focus in creative writing. "I thought that that's what I wanted to spend all my energy and time on, and one of the great things about *Cardinal Sins* is that I was able to submit some of my pieces there and get some blind criticism," Phelps explains. However, she was never published. This led Phelps to transition from a creative interest to a focus on analysis. "I started realizing that I could apply the same creativity that I had in creative writing to the way that I looked at other pieces of work," Phelps reflects. "It's not so much me writing and getting feedback; it's more about me being able to give feedback to other people and developing my critical lens."

Like her transition from creative to analytical writing, Phelps, a tutor at the Writing Center and a staff writer for *The Valley Vanguard*, has pivoted in her career goals. "When I became editor of *Cardinal Sins*, I realized it was a lot more than just reading fun stories," Phelps remembers. After playing around with different opportunities, Phelps realized that she enjoys working with people as well as writing. She has considered a path in marketing and later shifted her focus to becoming a professor. Now, this past winner of the Braun and Tyner Awards plans to receive her master of arts in library and information science and possibly work towards a Ph.D. in literature. After listing her possible career paths, she pauses: "I'm trying to keep it flexible—which is usually not me."

Phelps's ambition has led her to develop her writing, form strong aspirations, and become more open in considering future opportunities. However, the Honors student has maintained a consistent vision of what *Cardinal Sins*, now in its thirty-fifth year, is trying to accomplish. "Personally, I tend to appreciate short pieces with strong, concise, concrete language," Phelps explains. "I like pieces that give us new perspectives and allow us to have the opportunity to see something in a different light, through different language and images. When I'm reading through packets for *Sins*, that's what I personally look for."

Samantha Geffert's piece "Feed" appeared in the Fall 2016 issue of *Sins* and contains the qualities Phelps is most excited to see published. She finds Geffert's use of form fascinating and praises her innovative approach to the concept of health.

Feed

You will remember that mandatory junior high health video, those brief chapters in outdated textbooks. They will not prepare you for this moment. Those images of sunken eyes and bones that tear through fabric, the girl with the 80's sweatshirt and her bloated double in a mirror. They cannot help you.

No block of text will ever prepare you to eat a three-layered ulcer.

Is she okay? Why is she crying?

A rounded, chronic, open crater will be smeared across bone-white china. You will sit on your bed, because the kitchen chair will bruise your skin without a cushion of blood and fat. You will hold your fork as a surgical instrument, but your hands will not be doctor's hands. They will shake, with cloudy fingernails and knuckles swollen like doorknobs. Your fork will hang suspended, quivering. Your mother's voice will be lost in your ears.

I don't understand. It's just chicken parmesan; she used to like it.

You will probe the first layer with the prongs of your fork. It will feel as though you are picking away at a scab softened by bathwater. The texture will penetrate your fingertips through the metal, and you will remove your fork. An opaque sheen will gloss over the puncture wounds, your four identical pinpricks, and the steam will ghost into your pores and nostrils. You will be overcome with fear, imagining that the steam will condense, become solid, and create reservoirs of fat under your skin. Your father's voice will melt into your mother's.

I called the therapist; they can't take her in 'til Monday.

The next layer will be congealed blood, warmed in the microwave and suspended in a state between solid and liquid. The hue will not be the same deep crimson that trickles through your starved veins. It will be bright, artificial, secretive. You will be afraid to ingest something that you cannot pick apart, categorize, count. It will mix with the yellowed pus that still clings to your fork.

We know it's hard, sweetie.

Below that, you will expose the inflamed skin, the fat beneath the ulcer, the muscle. It will be white, moist, panting. It will release clouds of hot breath that will enter your mouth, your eyes, your skin. It will condense in the back of your throat, and you will swallow watery, animal sounds.

You have to eat.

You will wish you could bite off the insides of your cheeks instead.

Please, you have to eat.

Two pieces of chicken breast, 270 calories each. Round to 300. Sauce, 70 calories each cup. Round to 100. Cheese, at least half a cup. 250 calories. Round to 300. Total 1,000 calories. Doubled, rounded, cratered.

Figure 5.7: Even when they are so thin they risk starving to death, anorexic girls see themselves as "too fat."

You will gather each layer onto your fork and wish you were at a table, wish you were younger, wish you were functional. You will part your cracked lips, lock your knees, and fill your hollowed cheeks.

You will feel your resolve die on your tongue. It will mix with the taste of metal, with the rancid meat, with the oil. You will gag into your napkin and crumple into your bedsheets.

Figure 5.9: Eating disorders are highest in cultures that prize thinness as attractive in females.

You will not be prepared for this moment. They will not warn you that your instincts will be entirely backward. They will not tell you that you will be humiliated, incapable of primal functions. You will learn that you are wild, skeletal, fear.

Reprinted by permission of the author, Samantha Geffert, and *Cardinal Sins.* "Feed" appeared in the Fall 2016 issue of *Cardinal Sins.*

Spotlight on...
The SVSU Writing Center

SVSU's Diane Boehm Writing Center is perhaps best known for its staff of tutors who help SVSU students at all stages in the writing process, in all majors, and throughout their academic careers. As such, these tutors, who are predominantly undergraduate students, may help a student in a first-year writing class brainstorm ideas for a paper, they may work with a student drafting a lab report, or they may help a student nearing graduation with a personal statement. Some tutors offer more specialized services, working with developmental writers, working with those for whom English is a second (or third or fourth) language, or working with students in an online environment. The Writing Center typically completes approximately 4,000 individual tutoring sessions each academic year.

Writing Center tutors also present original research at state, regional, and national conferences, and they often provide orientation sessions for students who are new to SVSU. Some tutors have additionally worked with faculty members to develop workshops on various topics as part of the Center's Writing Across Campus (WAC) seminars.

Although the Writing Center provides help with more traditional papers, the Center also strives to create opportunities to generate and celebrate writing. To meet this goal, the Writing Center sponsors the art contest "Write Space" and the poetry contest "Writing on the Wall" in the fall and winter terms for all SVSU students.

The Writing Center is also involved with the larger community. For example, it often conducts workshops for area high school students. With funding provided by the SVSU Foundation, two tutors attended a week-long conference at Interlochen in June 2016 and then designed a one-day workshop for students from rural high schools. Students came from the Merrill and Bad Axe school districts. In 2016-17, with support from the Michigan Campus Compact and Professor Vince Samarco of the English Department, the Writing Center also created and led a series of semester-long creative writing seminars for inmates housed at the Saginaw Regional Correctional Facility in Freeland, Michigan.

Through grant funding provided by the Saginaw Community Foundation, the Writing Center continued to operate the Saginaw Community Writing Center (SCWC) in 2016-17. Housed in the city's Butman-Fish Library, the SCWC offers specialized workshops on a given topic (like résumés, cover letters, or short fiction) as well as tutoring on any piece of writing a community member chooses. It also sponsored writing contests and established a creative writing studio.

On the following pages, we share some of the writing generated at the Writing Center through its contests, workshops, and various initiatives. More information about the SVSU Writing Center's services and programs can be found at www.svsu.edu/writingcenter, and more pieces of writing

generated at the SCWC can be found on its blog, *Byline: Saginaw,* at saginawcwc.weebly.com/blog.

In Determining the Cause of Death

Victoria Phelps
SVSU Writing Center's 2016 Interlochen Conference Participant

From Rochester Hills, Michigan, Victoria Phelps is pursuing a bachelor of arts in English literature with minors in history and creative writing. She writes for *The Valley Vanguard*; tutors at the Writing Center; and serves as editor-in-chief of *Cardinal Sins*, SVSU's literary arts journal featuring creative pieces from around the world. For her Honors thesis, she examined nineteenth-century fairy tales through a disability criticism lens. After graduation, she plans to pursue a master's degree in library and information science.

Through financial support from the SVSU Foundation, Victoria attended a weeklong seminar at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in June 2016. At the conference, she primarily worked with nonfiction writer and memoirist Mardi Jo Link. After attending Interlochen, she returned to SVSU and helped to create and lead a creative workshop for students from Bad Axe and Merrill high schools. Victoria began the following poem at Interlochen; the piece was inspired by a craft talk given by Michigan poet Michael Delp.

When the doctors slice me open,
they'll see scars buried deep
under my skin, latched like lampreys
to my organs. They'll touch the places
where new tissue feigns original,
places haunted by phantom pains.

They'll examine the latticework shrouding my lungs
and say *here she fought a ferret of deception*,
point to my rototilled guts and say *here she tried*
to bury nuts and sprout a sturdy stem—
they've since decayed.

But when they crack into my skull,
the knotted ropes of my brain
wholly unfurled,
they'll tsk, click tongues and write:

> Cause of death:
> She undid
> all they disliked.

Reiteration: after,

Brianna Rivet
SVSU Writing Center's 2016 Interlochen Conference Participant

Brianna Rivet is a creative writing and literature major who is also pursuing a psychology minor. She has written for *The Valley Vanguard* as a reporter and bi-weekly columnist; she also works at the Writing Center where she is able to share her passion for writing with other students through one-on-one tutorial sessions. A recipient of the Tyner Award for Poetry and the Seitz Creative Writing Scholarship, this Bay City native considers writing, both as a skill and a process, one of the most influential ways to connect and communicate with others. Although she enjoys writing in various genres, lately she has been working extensively within the realm of poetry. After she completes her studies at SVSU, she plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career in the humanities.

Brianna represented the Writing Center at a 2016 Interlochen Center for the Arts writing workshop, studying primarily with writer John Mauk. After the Interlochen experience, which was funded by a grant provided by the SVSU Foundation, Brianna worked with another Writing Center tutor to create a day-long writing workshop for high school students from rural schools. Brianna wrote this particular piece after attending a craft talk at Interlochen led by Mardi Jo Link. Link's focus was on the 2016 shooting in Orlando, Florida, and the need for poets to write about current events.

The stop signs start bleeding
and no one brakes. We are glazed
in shades of red that only come from husks
and cavities. Inequity is sticky.

Apart from the dirty clothes,
your scent is smothered out like light.
The back of your neck was honeyed autumn.
We have started sleeping in the laundry room.

In the winter, we leave the doors open;
we want our tragedy bone ivory and wet.
The carpet will mold in the spring, we are told,
but for now we walk on water.

Your bedroom smells like radio static,
an accidental tuning. The world should have
tasted your skin alive. Not metallic, rusted.
You should have been charted.

An Excerpt from "The Trip"

Stephanie Bechler
Participant, Creative Writing Workshop

A member of the class of 2017, Stephanie Bechler participated in a short fiction workshop funded by an SVSU Foundation grant and led by tutors at the SVSU Writing Center. Stephanie attends Bad Axe High School, where she is involved in firefighting, tennis, and yearbook. She plans to attend Kirtland Community College and study criminal justice.

"You need to hide now if you want to get out of here. There's someone in the airport, someone bad who shouldn't be here, and the only way to get out is to run. I'm not sure why they let you off the plane, but you should have stayed on. He has a gun." *This is what we came back to?,* I kept thinking. The flight crew must not have known that there was an active shooter in the airport.

"What do we do now?" I asked my mom as I was looking for some place to leave so we wouldn't get hurt. They already closed off the gate, so the people from the flight could not get back on the plane.

"All we can do is hide," she whispered with tears streaming down her face. "We can hope that we don't get hurt and hide as good as we can, but that's all we can do. There's no weapons to defend ourselves with here."

The gunshots were getting closer, and in the panic, the crowd of people from the airplane ran. All that I could hear was ringing from the shots. I felt like all this was happening in slow motion. The screams rang in the back of my head along with the gunshots. I tried to stay calm as I realized I was alone. My parents ran off with the crowd while we were trying to figure out what to do. *I lost them? What am I supposed to do? I thought they would help me?,* I thought as I tried to hold back the tears. I looked around, but they were nowhere in sight. Actually, there was no one in sight, except a little boy. He didn't know what was happening. It looked as if he had been dragged by his shirt before he was let go. The material around his neck was stretched as if someone tried to help him but decided to leave him. He started shrieking because he was alone; his family had left him. I ran over and asked him if he was okay, but I knew of course he wasn't—now he had to go through this alone. He didn't respond to me. By this time he stood motionless, and his wails for help had stopped, and he was all I could think about. The ringing, the whole time I was trying to talk to this boy, and the gunshots were getting closer and closer. Finally, he snapped out of his trance.

"What's your name?" I asked him.

"Isaac," he mumbled with tears running down his face.

An Excerpt from "Death Forest"

Savana Doerr
Participant, Creative Writing Workshop

Savana Doerr started writing the following piece while attending a short fiction workshop sponsored by the SVSU Writing Center in Fall 2016 and supported by the SVSU Foundation. Savana was invited to come to campus by her teacher, Stephanie Anderson. Savana attends Bad Axe High School and will graduate in 2017; at Bad Axe High, she is involved in tennis and band. She hopes to study psychology in college.

"Brent, you have the map, right?'" Norah asked as she finally thought of it.

He casually checked his back pocket and slowly brought his hand forward, *empty*.

"It better be the darkness playing tricks on my mind," Norah growled.

"I am so sorry! I swear I thought I grabbed it off the nightstand," he stammered.

Norah put a hand to her temple and massaged it.

"It's okay," she finally spoke. "I looked at it many times. I should have it mostly memorized."

Brent couldn't see her very well in the dark, but he had hoped she wasn't mad at him. Brent couldn't help it; he was terrified, and he was forgetful when he got scared. The owls, the darkness, and the hollowed-out dead trees made it worse. He had been scared ever since they had accepted the invitation. He knew he had to do it, but that didn't stop the nightmares. He only did it for his family and Norah, the girl he had always loved. Norah had always lived next door with her grandma until one day her grandma was simply gone. Norah had to move in with Brent's family then. Brent knew she felt like a burden to the family, even though she was a miracle to them. Norah got a job to help out with expenses and helped Brent's mom whenever she could. This made Brent love her even more.

"Brent!" Norah said in a low voice, hitting his arm. "Look over there." She pointed to a glowing light in the middle of the forest.

"What is that?"

"I think it's the Sapphire Sphere; it means something bad will happen soon. It only shows itself to those who are worthy."

An Excerpt from “The Honeymoon”

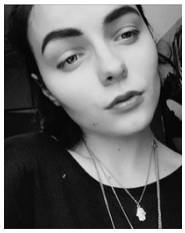
Claudia Fitzpatrick
Participant, Creative Writing Workshop

Claudia Fitzpatrick will graduate from Bad Axe High School in 2018. She is undecided about what her major will be in college. She is involved in soccer and hockey. “The Honeymoon” was started at a day-long fiction writing workshop held on SVSU’s campus in Fall 2016. The SVSU Foundation provided support for this workshop.

As time progressed, the wind picked up, slowly. The clouds turned a dark purple, and the bright sun was no longer visible. The beach soon became deserted of other inhabitants, and we decided it would be best to go back to our rented cottage on the other end of the beach, which was about a twenty-minute walk. We gathered our belongings and started our trek, the wind still blowing faster and rain starting to pour like tears from the clouds above us. The wind lifted up the sand, causing it to lash at our eyes and bare skin, leaving small welts in the process. The waves grew to several feet tall, and that was when we knew something was seriously wrong. Our casual stroll turned into a sprint to any shelter we could find. Neither my wife nor I knew what this was, but we would soon find out. I could taste the salt in the air mixed with sand and dirt from the shore. We were getting closer to our cottage, but I looked to the right, and I knew it was too late. A tsunami was approaching us, the giant wave well over eighty feet. It was getting closer by the second, and all we could do was run. The wave hit the trees closest to the shore, pulling the roots out of the ground, and then the wave barreled our way. I grabbed my wife’s shaking hand and told her I loved her. Then everything went black.

An Excerpt from “Winnie”

Emma Neve
Participant, Creative Writing Workshop



A member of the graduating class of 2019, Emma Neve is a student at Merrill High School. Along with her teacher Allison Jordan and several of her classmates, she participated in a daylong workshop on fiction writing put on by tutors at the SVSU Writing Center in Fall 2016, an event funded by the SVSU Foundation. “Winnie” was started at the workshop. Emma hopes to become a high school English teacher or college professor. She enjoys art, reading, and writing; she is involved in Art Club, the competitive writing team, and quiz bowl.

“If you’re going to panic, at least do it quietly,” I whisper-yelled at my sister Winnie. I always knew I was the brave twin, but our yin-yang personalities were mildly hindering in stressful situations. She nodded quickly, trying to hide her shaking gasps for air.

How were we going to get out this time?

When my stepfather locked us in the closet, it usually didn’t bother us. Much. Our entire childhood seemed to stay in the confines of these walls, but it felt different this time.

It had been two days, and the air definitely did not smell like flowers. Winnie had passed out an hour before, and I was so hungry that I could practically taste a candy bar in my mouth. But I was the strong twin. I kicked at the door, which accomplished absolutely nothing, except frightening Winnie even more and pissing me off. I kicked again, channeling all of my strong twin strength.

I nearly passed out when the door made a loud, cracking noise.

I kicked again.

Crackkkkkk.

I kicked one last time, and Winnie cried invisible, dehydrated tears when the door finally gave in.

The relief was short-lived, as we were met with the disgusting scarlet shade of blood; the stench of copper pennies and rust filled our noses and turned our empty stomachs.

“Run While You Can” was written in the dried blood, smeared onto the wall by shaking hands.

In the two days we had been inside the closet, three things had changed. My stepfather went crazy; my mother, drunk and sleeping as always, was killed; and my cat ran away.

I was going to miss my cat.

Spotlight on... The Saginaw Community Writing Center

Through grant funding provided by the Saginaw Community Foundation, the SVSU Writing Center continued to operate the Saginaw Community Writing Center (SCWC) in 2016-17. The first community writing center in the state of Michigan, the SCWC is housed in Saginaw's Butman-Fish Library and is open two afternoons a month. On those days, the SCWC tutors offer specialized workshops on a given topic (like résumés, cover letters, or short fiction) as well as tutoring on any piece of writing a community member chooses. The SCWC also sponsors writing contests and has established a creative writing studio.

In 2016-17, with support from the Michigan Campus Compact and Professor Vince Samarco of the English Department, staff from the SVSU Writing Center and the SCWC also created and conducted semester-long creative writing seminars for inmates housed at the Saginaw Regional Correctional Facility in Freeland, Michigan. These materials and workshops were led by Writing Center director Helen Raica-Klotz, tutor Joshua Atkins, and creative writing major Kathryn Karoly.

On the following pages, we share some of the writing generated through the SCWC's programs. More information about the SCWC's services can be found at www.svsu.edu/writingcenter. Pieces of writing generated at the SCWC can also be found on its blog, *Byline: Saginaw,* at saginawcwc.weebly.com/blog.

Andromeda

Serena M. Pittman
Saginaw Community Writing Center Participant

An active member of the Saginaw Community Writing Center's creative writing group, Serena M. Pittman resides in Hemlock, Michigan, and has worked as a grantwriter. She says she wrote a lot of bad poetry when she was younger but now writes mostly personal essays. "Andromeda" was started at the Community Writing Center and was inspired by the following quote by Dr. Martin Luther King: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

In my twenties, I spent three years working as a pizza delivery driver in the city of Saginaw. From what I understand, I was the first woman the company had allowed to work a closing shift. My colleagues, including myself, were mostly white working-class youths. What I mean by "mostly" is that a few of my white colleagues were from middle-class families. One day while working alone with my manager, a stocky red-headed man lightly dusted with freckles, I asked him to repeat a comment he had made under his breath after a customer had left.

"Forget it," he said. "You wouldn't get it."

"Why wouldn't I get it?" I asked.

"You wouldn't get it because you're weird."

"Is that what everyone thinks of me?" I sputtered. "Everyone thinks I'm weird?"

"It's ok; everyone thinks you're weird because you're country." I commuted to my job from rural Fremont Township, twenty miles away.

"It's ok to be country," he assured me. "But," he paused before continuing, "people also think you're weird because you like black people. You do like black people, don't you?"

I responded, "Well yes, I have a general respect for all of humanity, in fact all living creatures… some might even call this feeling love." I was shocked by his reply.

"Well, I think that any white person who likes a black person should be shot."

I can tell you it is more than a little disconcerting to have your life threated by your boss.

It was the first time I had been confronted with overt racism alone. I was unprepared, but I was a lucky girl. I grew up watching Mister Rogers. The people who raised me, my mother and my grandmother, considered Andromeda, Earth's nearest galaxy, a neighbor. Mom and Grandma O'Leary had been supporters of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his message that people should not be treated differently because of the color of their skin. As a child, I attended our evangelical multicultural church five days a week and twice on Sundays. Members there believed that Dr. King had been called and his words came directly from God. Both my mom and grandmother had prayed for Dr. King and his family. I was taught that we had all been descended from Adam and Eve, and, as such, every human being is a relative, even racists. I had also spent the last year sharpening my wit by working with hardscrabble teenagers, the bulk of whom had loose ties to local gangs.

Honestly, I hadn't noticed the ethnicity of the customer in question. But I understood my manager's comment was accusing me of somehow betraying my roots and also mocking me for being a Pollyanna. My mettle was being tested. The point I wanted to make was that sometimes people are jerks, and African Americans are not under any more or less obligation to be nice than anyone else. Sometimes people are just having a bad day, and yes, sometimes they are bona fide jerks, just like everyone else.

What came out was, "I would be lying to you if I told you that I like every black person I meet. I don't. I don't like every white person I meet. But I do like some black

people, and some white people, and I like some people very much. As a matter of fact, I even like you… now that's a reason to get shot!"

We both laughed and the tension lifted. A few weeks later, my manager hired an African American, the first of two he hired during his tenure. I served under five managers at this place of business, but no one else hired an African American. Go figure. I'll never know if our conversation had anything to do with it, but words from an old Christian spiritual come to mind: "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. / Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine." Amen.

Another Man's Treasure

Ben Champagne

Winner of the Saginaw Community Writing Center's "Saginaw, Write Now. Saginaw, Right Now" Contest, Fiction Category

A Saginaw native, Ben Champagne attended Arthur Hill High School and Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy. He has taken several classes at SVSU and has written for NewPages.com. "Another Man's Treasure" showcases Ben's work as a fiction writer, but he also engages in poetry, art, and music. Active in various aspects of the community, he is the owner and director of Counter Culture, an arts collective in Old Town. More information about Counter Culture can be found at www.counterculturearts.org or www.facebook.com/counterculturearts.

Trash

I am your knight in shining garbage. It is a thankless job. You bring your waste to the corner and arrange it. I come in and take it away. You sleep. I stink. Perhaps you are on your way to work.

There are infinite odds and ends in the garbage. Most often, garbage is pictured as a contained object. A can. A black bag. The wastebasket by your bathroom sink. But that isn't true. Garbage takes many forms. We as a people like to compartmentalize garbage and waste. But it cannot be contained, not truly. It is ever present. Think of all the wasted time, all the wasted money, all the wasted love. I take your waste. I am one with waste.

Waves

"What do you think you're going to find in Ann Arbor?" I asked her.

"It's a bigger city. I'll fit in. Make friends. There's just nothing for me here."

"What about me? You like me."

"I do, but that isn't what this is about. I have to go find myself. I have to give it a shot," she rubbed my knee with compassion. I pulled it away.

"I'm going to come visit you as often as I can."

"I don't think they'll let boys sleep in the dorm, but of course. We can stay in one of my friends' houses on Catherine."

I thought about it and said one of the smartest things a future garbage man would ever say, "You know, you can ride the wave there, but if you stayed here, you could make the wave."

Dispose

It's easy to throw something away. Once it's been used up or has no value left to you, toss it to the side. We all do it. I can envision a world where we didn't do that. I once thought of a paradise where everything was used up in its entirety. Every material was entirely used, the way Native Americans treated buffalo. Even bodily waste. I ask God, why create us as shit factories? Why can't every little bit be used for energy?

The Neighborhood

You just don't know your neighbors' lives. You think you do, but you don't. I live in one of the neighborhoods I serve. I actually pick up my own refuse. I set it out to the curb and

pick it up. It just makes the most sense for me. Where the South Side begins, there's a group of kids that call themselves the Wenzell Gang. I live on Jackson, right off Gratiot. They've tagged the area. One night they yelled some crazy stuff in my direction while riding on bicycles. My eyes locked with the one kid who did not yell.

On my way to work, early in the morning, I saw him. He was jogging in his Lumberjacks sweats. He ran in the street because the sidewalk was too kittywampus. He stopped at a vacant overgrown yard. I heard the clink of a bowl. Something distributed in it. When he resumed running, a few cats came out of hiding and into the street light. I couldn't see them in the dark cover near the bowl.

Trucks

I don't drive the truck anymore. It's a luxury. Sometimes you don't even have to get out. A lot of people have family businesses. Mine was in waste management. Back in the heyday of this city, my grandfather was the go-to guy for garbage. And it was lucrative! The plants had huge contracts. Rubbish was at a high. They started a junk and scrap yard on the side. They got rich in the world of garbage.

Drugs

It's hard not to be centric. Ethno, socio, any of the o's. As I drive through the East Side, I can see the ravages of poverty. The industry fell right out. We feel it only happened here because it was so bad. But it happened everywhere. The whole of I-75 felt it. The economy boomed in the '60s in Detroit. It boomed here. Crack hit hard in the '80s. It hit hard here. If you've been to Detroit lately, it looks a whole lot different. I expect it will start looking different here.

Poverty

The houses are small. The yards are smaller. I moved to a place with no yard because I don't like to mow the lawn. It seems frivolous and useless to me. I don't have the time. Maybe all my years in the scrap heap taught me how to regard space. It is to be used.

But the kids need a yard. On my route yesterday, a young boy dragged a can to the end of the road.

"Is that your mom?" I gestured to the woman in the window.

"Yeah," the boy looked in the direction of the house.

"Do you always take the garbage out?"

"It's the rules. If I want to go play with my friends at Hoyt today, I have to take the garbage out."

Hoyt isn't much of a park. It has a pavilion, some swings. But it's just an expansive field of grass. It's more of a sporting place. I could see a tough boy arranging a football game there. Perhaps I didn't care for it because of all that grass.

In the back end of it, there were some bushes. Across the street from the hospital. It was full—night and day—of family members who had to take a break from their family. Most of them smoked cigarettes. Some just paced.

There were some years when I felt this city was pacing.

Broken Glass in the Streets

Garbage is routine. This one house always leaves recyclables out on the wrong day. A green box full of perfectly cleaned, vegetarian baked beans cans.

I saw a dog in a garbage can once. There were flies all over its carcass.

My coworkers who work the night runs carry guns. You think, who would rob a garbage man? But there are far more petty reasons than theft.

Silence.

You can't tell anyone what you've seen.

The route I started on as a kid, in the garbage empire, went through a golf course. It was a township route. I saw perfectly good bicycles thrown away. And they were never fined for inappropriate rubbish collection. I kept my mouth shut because I assumed I would be the director one day. I didn't want to cause trouble while I was young.

A couple decades back, the mayor got in trouble for taking bribes. It was pretty scandalous I guess. My father lost his contracts and then his position.

Family

Some of them are on drugs.

Food Desert

There are very few banks or ATMs on one side of town. The largest grocer closed due to losses. Poor people tend to eat the same things over and over. There isn't a diverse diet. I see the same things in everyone's trash. In jail they eat "Burritos." These "Burritos" aren't real burritos. They "blow up" ramen noodles in an empty potato chip bag. This means they pour hot water on them and wait for the noodles to soak up all the water. Then they add crushed potato chips, preferably of a spicy variety and maybe some Cheez Whiz, aerosol cheese, or packaged pickles. People eat this outside of jail too.

University

Most of them aren't from the city. They aren't even from around the county. They come from "up north" in Michigan. They think they're moving to "the big city." While they live in dorms, they stay in the shopping district around Tittabawassee and Bay. Once they turn twenty-one and move into the townhomes, they figure out where the bars are and they call it "Downtown." It's "Old Town," but they are the only ones at the bar, so there's nobody to correct them.

Downtown is an old growth forest being culled for its lumber.

They have planned to extend other universities into the area. It's one of the few hopes we have left. I'd love to have that route. See the hopeful faces of college students right in the heart of the city. It's the energy injection that this city needs. Their garbage would be full all of the time.

Kids don't know how to utilize time. What a luxury.

The River

It seems crazy now. I had this friend who would drive a Z28 down the boulevard in the winter. He would get going pretty fast and then slam the emergency brake on. This would cause him to skid and do a perfect U-turn right around the grass island in the center of the street. Crazy thing is, he'd do it for well over an hour! Using the boulevard like a race track. No one ever seemed to care.

One day he and I took a crappy fishing boat up the river. We rode it right to this German tourist-trap of a town. Docked it and drank all their beers. A police officer on a horse told me to get out of the street when I stumbled into his path.

"Or you'll take me to Das Jailhausen? Where they'll make me wear lederhosen?" I cackled.

We got out of there before the sun went down. When we came under the Court Street bridge, he said, "Let's jump."

"Out of the boat?"

"No, off the bridge."

"Do you want to die?" I asked.

"I've done it before. It's crazy. C'mon."

So we docked the boat right there on the side of the river. We had to run up two blocks to get to the start of the bridge. He told me we had to run full tilt and never to hesitate. And that we could catch our breath as we climbed over the railing. At the top it looked higher than it did when I was under it.

He let go. So I let go. Both of us just sort of jack-knifed into the water, except I let my left arm out a little bit. It hurt like hell. I smacked the water so hard. Even my feet hurt. I had to swim with mostly my right arm. And the current was strong. You could never guess how strong that current is.

On the surface it doesn't look like much, but it will whisk you away.

I came to shore much farther down than my friend. He came running to me laughing.

"I've never done that before. I was fucking with you."

The Return

She didn't stay in Ann Arbor after school. I heard that she lived at the American Embassy in Moscow for a while. When she came back, she wore pencil skirts.

"I'm pretty open-minded now," she said.

She was gorgeous.

"Is the Savoy still open?"

I told her it was. That I would buy her a drink. I told her about all the new places that had opened. All the ones that had a good run but just couldn't make the distance. I told her that I met my wife on my route. That picking up garbage was the best thing that ever happened to me because of it. I told her that crime went up while she was gone. But that it was again lower than ever. I told her that last winter it snowed so hard that everything closed for three straight days and it was almost magical. I told her that someone planned to revitalize the theater on Court Street. I told her that I found a rare vinyl record with an unopened sleeve once and when I cashed it in, it was worth almost two thousand dollars. I told her that they had to open a new dump at the farthest edge of the city.

Birds

Futures.

The Daughters-in-Law of Saginaw County

Emily S. Deibel

Winner of the Saginaw Community Writing Center's "Saginaw, Write Now. Saginaw, Right Now" Contest, Nonfiction Category

Emily S. Deibel lives in Saginaw, Michigan, and squeezes in time to write when she's not busy managing a household of four busy kids, a husband, and one fat cat. She graduated with a B.A. in English from Brigham Young University and is a loyal Cougar volleyball and basketball fan. She is also a current member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and she loves to chat about books with both writers and readers. Her first novel, *Cecilly in Cinderland*, was published in October 2016 by Melange Books. The full text of her essay below, complete with photographs and postcard images, can be found at saginawcwc.weebly.com/blog.

My husband's aunt recently sold the home in which she'd raised her children, which required the usual amount of sifting through the detritus of the decades and tossing the majority of it in the dumpster. And as the story usually goes, up in the attic, a treasure box came to light. Inside this painted wooden box, hundreds of photos lay stacked on top of each other. The faces in some are so clear and bright it's as if they came home from the printer yesterday. Others are yellowed and the faces disfigured with splotches and cracks. In a corner of the chest is tucked a stationery box filled with more wonders, including wedding announcements, sympathy cards, at least a hundred old postcards, an autograph album, a school program—it goes on and on. There is two hundred years of history waiting to be sorted.

This is a tired old story, you're thinking. *I've heard this before. More than half the attics in this town probably have old family photos.*

Yes, you're right. History is only fun for an afternoon when you're wandering through the Castle Museum. Even then it gets old pretty fast. I used to think so anyway, until I walked into my mother-in-law's study one day and discovered the photos of my husband's past.

I stood there horror-struck for a moment, the amateur historian in me cringing. She had taken foam boards, written on the family names she knew, and pinned them to the wall to create a family tree.

Pasting a smile on my face, I say, "What have we here?"

"I couldn't keep all the names straight," she answers with an excited manic gleam in her eye, "so I came up with this. When I figure out which picture goes with which name, I put them up on the wall."

Oh, yes she had. Some of those perfect photos unmarred by time had been stuck through with pins or unmercifully taped to the wallpaper.

I had to rescue them. Thinking quickly, I found myself volunteering to handle the technical side of things and scan everything into digital images and enter all the information onto an internet family tree builder at familysearch.org. Grateful for the help, she sent me home with the first stack of photos.

Thus I became the next custodian of pictures that had been handed down by the women that married into the Deibel line. Maybe that is why I began to connect with these women. We were all daughters-in-law tightly wound up in our husbands' families. I became engrossed in their stories over the next three months, and they taught me that not all that much has changed in two hundred years.

When You Don't Fit In

From what I can tell, Margaretha Barbara Hoernlein began collecting and saving family pictures from both her side and the Deibel line reaching back to the 1860s. I combed online census records and sifted through her family pictures to discover that she only ever had one child: Oscar. There are no records of any other babies dying at birth or in early childhood. In a generation when women in her community were producing large broods of sturdy German children, Margaretha was snapping numerous photos of her only son, Oscar.

The family homestead is at the corner of Shattuck and Hemmeter. For years I passed it twice a day as I carted my children to Hemmeter Elementary, never knowing that their American roots began right there. After looking at property maps and photos of the home, I now recognize the white two-story farmhouse as I drive by. As I catch a glimpse on my daily run to school, I think about Margaretha. While other mothers had daughters to help with the housework, she had no one to help with the washing, the baking, mending, and the other tasks assigned to women. Was she lonely? Did she suffer pangs of inferiority when she went to church and saw other women's large families?

I could certainly relate, although in the opposite way. I am a modern stay-at-home housewife with four children. I often get comments at the elementary school that I am going to be attending functions there forever. When the children were small, we always traversed parking lots with the five of us holding hands, making a line as we hurried to the store. For some reason people liked to point at us as if we were clowns exiting a clown car. Once at Jimmy John's on Bay, where the dining area and tables are small, I had smashed us into a booth and placed the baby in the car seat at our feet because there was no room for him anywhere else. I heard two women in line snidely remark after counting the squirming bodies on the benches that there was another kid under the table!

It is interesting to me that Margaretha and I both came up with the same solution to help us feel like we fit in with our community: we both found ways to become involved. There are a half-dozen newspaper clippings that I suspect were saved by the daughter-in-law that eventually came to live with her in the farmhouse. In them she is supplying food to community gatherings, decorating for functions, and supporting her husband as treasurer of the Grange Society. She did nothing grand like erecting buildings for the town or saving orphans. Margaretha just quietly served.

Along with being a housewife, I am a Mormon. I am an oddity because I don't drink alcohol, smoke, drink tea or coffee, or swear. People in Saginaw don't know much about my religion and what they've heard about it through the Internet is often slightly wrong. I get curious looks and weird questions. I felt out of place, so I decided to get involved. I help at the schools my kids attend, I chop celery at the soup kitchen, and I teach at the Merit Badge College on the Delta campus.

You know what? I discovered Margaretha's secret: service lifts you out of loneliness. Seeing the smiles on the faces you help puts a smile on your own. It makes you feel less different than others. I hope others have come to see that I'm not so different from them either.

People Are People

Meet Katie McGuire, the only Irish woman in the otherwise entirely German family tree. Katie's parents came to America via Canada and had eleven children survive to adulthood. Before marrying Oscar Deibel, she was a teenage girl in Kochville Township. And she loved collecting postcards she received in the mail. Funnily enough, several are from young men—none of them Oscar. After marrying him, she made her home with his family on Shattuck Road. Some of her siblings moved off to Bay City, and another went to Merrill. Because she came from such a large home, Oscar's German-speaking tiny household must

have been a culture shock. Hence, it seems she kept up a steady stream of correspondence with siblings and cousins.

One postcard in her collection that features Saginaw's Tower Block has the following message:

> Bay City, May 8:30 pm, 1911, Mich
> *Dear Kate:*
> *I rec you letter with much joy. I would like to have you come here Sunday don't say no you just come. It is first Communion Sunday in our church and there are about 250 going to receive. Take to car that leaves Sag 7.20 transfer to the Columbus Ave car get off at the church and go in send word when coming.*

Another offers a drawing of "Main Street in Merrill" and has this message:

> Saginaw, Mich, Aug 17, 5:30 pm, 1911
> *Helo K.*
> *Mother wanted me to write to see if you were alive not hearing from you. Why don't you come down.*

Reading them is like looking at today's text messages through a hundred-year-old lens. The language is old-fashioned, but the messages are surprisingly the same:

> *I heard you were sick—are you better?*
> *Can't wait to see you.*
> *Why didn't you come visit me when you were in town?*
> *Let's plan a visit.*
> *Write soon!*

Almost all of them can be condensed into one of two phrases: I miss you. I love you.

Like Katie, I left behind my family when I married. I packed up four large boxes in Utah, put them on a plane, and followed my husband from his med school in Detroit, to his residency in Grand Rapids, and then to his hometown of Saginaw for a real job. When we arrived, he had only one sister living in town. Of his seven siblings, four more have decided to put down roots here—and his parents never left. Amazingly, we have all settled on offshoots of McCarty, our homes like charms dangling off that ribbon of road. Our kids go to the same schools. We all go to the same church. As you can imagine, we have our ups and our downs. All in all, though, it's a good life.

Though Katie didn't travel as far from home, she didn't have the ease of modern time machines like cars, good roads, and planes. As daughters-in-law, we both missed our families. Here I sit one hundred years later, my big thumbs stumbling over messages I send from my phone to my loved ones back home. They are essentially the same as Katie's: I miss you. I love you.

The scenery of this town has changed some in one hundred years. But people haven't really changed all that much. We all live. We all laugh. We all love.

Margaretha and Katie both chose love. I can tell by what they left behind in the box. Margaretha preceded her husband in death, and the letters that poured in from the county and extended family testify that they were partners that loved each other well. My favorite is from a niece in California:

> *Dear Uncle and All:*
> *... This is just an attempt to convey my sympathy and no one knows better than I what it means to lose the one nearest and dearest to you… The world can change for us in a few short minutes and take away happiness and security... I am glad that you are with your family and I know they will be a comfort to you… I know you will miss your life partner, but we have to go on and live our lives, no matter what happens and do the best we can. I know you will find comfort in the memories of the past, as I do too, and I hope your family will make the future easier for you.*
> *—My Sincere Sympathy, Carrie*

The world truly can change in a few short minutes. Sometimes it changes in the blink of an eye. Children grow up. Technology changes at an ever-increasing rate. Friends come

and go. Businesses close, leaving buildings to stare out at you with empty eyes. New ones sneak in and spread tendrils of life back into this old town.

I like Carrie's parting advice: Take comfort in the past; move with hope into the future. And above all, do the best you can. I choose to make good memories with my kids and my husband. Thanks to Margaretha and Katie, I will choose to make better memories with my extended family and in my community. I will file them all away in my own personal treasure box up in the attic of my mind. When I am old and gray, I shall dust them off and review them, taking comfort in the memories of our shared past in Saginaw.

When We Take Our Bikes Instead

Jolyn H. Ohlendorf

Winner of the Saginaw Community Writing Center's "Saginaw, Write Now. Saginaw, Right Now" Contest, Poetry Category

While a student at SVSU, Jolyn H. Ohlendorf was a double major in Visual Arts Education and Secondary English Education. Born and raised in Saginaw, she completed her student teaching in New Zealand and graduated in May 2017. She has worked at Saginaw's Butman-Fish Library and is grateful to their staff for their years of support. Jolyn spends much of her time reading, drawing, and traveling, and she cannot wait to start teaching in her own classroom.

Saginaw, that shy sister,
her shielded secrets peeking from boarded windows
to glint and glow in the syrupy summer light,
opens to us her treasures:

Car wash topiaries and fountains dripping with bass and brass;
bricks that seep up defiantly through asphalt, claiming their right to decay;
love letters buried beneath stone paths;
and multitudinous masterpieces lurking under bridges.
We must scrape our knees against cement to find her smiling.

But once we have, we cannot stop.
We wade through streams of broken glass and weeds
to climb up on islands of song and structures of peace,
peer through dusty windows to wave at vibrant neighbors,
and creep past the warnings of the fearful
to shake hands with her valiant heart,
a small gazebo, willow-shaded and green.

We'll always find the "Do Not Enter" sign a daring invitation,
so we laugh away the fear to pedal against the grain,
knowing our stubborn love for this land of the Sauks
will reflect on open doors and eager handlebars.

Dark Matter

Thomas Dunn

Winner of the Winter 2017 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Creative Writing Contest

A resident of Midland, Michigan, Thomas Dunn attends Delta College and is studying graphic design. He wrote this piece as a reflection of the current political climate in America. He believes that "every voice is valuable and unique" and that "we all can learn something from one another's experiences, and we can grow from one another's words."

It is
something untouched by the sun's radiant glow.

While it forms borders in the dark,
looking for excuses to bring differences to light,
I roam these streets.
Shoes beat toward far corners of this concrete.
Lean with anger, I'm losing my shape.

It leaks out through my pores.
Black fragments of my flesh become the night air,
but your words are the gentle gleam breaking through obsidian skies.

There's something haunting in this,

Beauty in the slight curve of your smile,
love in the far reaches of your cry.

I have a dream of your light shining through clouds
because worlds bloom from its warmth.
I've been thinking
of ways to shorten the distance
from me to the center of your light,
where we can see the world for what it is,
not just through outstretched hands.
Look deep into the soul of another,
and find love in the differences.
Shine hope in the eyes of the broken
and move hate to the far corners of rooms.

Because just as light conquers darkness,
only love overcomes hate.

Hey Sunshine

Janaya Stallworth

Winner of the 2017 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Creative Writing Contest

Janaya Stallworth, of Clinton Township, Michigan, is a student at SVSU, where she is majoring in social work and minoring in sociology. She credits her writing ability to her passion for words and to the fact that she "is always open for learning and growing." Janaya loves being a student and the challenge of working on projects and in groups that focus on multiculturalism and diversity. At SVSU, she is member of the Sociology Club and Uniquely Me.

Dedicated to my little sister and younger cousins
#Blackgirlmagic

Acknowledge your brown skin
You are created with light
It's not a defective trait; it is purpose

Shine

No one can contain light
You are free
Without limits

Shine

You're untouchable
You ever heard anyone getting close enough to the sun to be touched by it?
That was not a mistake; everything about you is intentional

Shine

A glow particularly makes you
With all the melanin and warmth, how did you get so close to light?
You are courageously beautiful

Shine

In times like these you must be mighty on the inside as well
Even when you think you are hidden
We see you

Shine

Carry on, because we need you so that we might see
Without a vision, a people shall perish
We can't live without you

Shine

Love those who cannot understand why you were chosen

And forgive those who try to take it away
You are luminous, made for darkness

Shine

Even if hate can’t see you
You are needed
Love despite it all, sunshine

Spotlight on…
The Saginaw Bay Writing Project

SVSU's work through the Saginaw Bay Writing Project (SBWP) is another way in which the university tries to promote writing in the larger community.

Established in 1993 by Dr. Kay Harley of SVSU's English Department, the SBWP is the local chapter of the National Writing Project (NWP). Based on the "teachers teaching teacher" model, this grant-funded initiative enables area teachers to come together and discuss literacy issues related to the best practices in the classroom. Through year-round programming that includes workshops, graduate courses, summer institutes, and guest lectures, the SBWP creates opportunities for teachers' own personal development, information that they can pass on to their colleagues and students.

In the summer of 2016, the SBWP offered two different summer institutes. The George Haley/SBWP Huron County Summer Writing Institute was a week-long event for teachers working in Michigan's Thumb that was facilitated by Stephanie Anderson of Bad Axe High School and Amber White of North Branch Public Schools; the project received funding from George Haley, an alumnus of Bad Axe High who sits on the NWP's advisory board. The Vada Dow Writer's Institute for Area Teachers, "Writing from the Inside Out," brought together area teachers for a week-long seminar co-taught by poet and memoirist Anne-Marie Oomen and fiction writer and compositionist John Mauk. Funded by the Alden and Vada Dow Creativity Foundation, "Writing for the Inside Out" was based at the Dow House in Midland and sponsored readings by Michigan authors and a lecture by nationally known teacher and author Penny Kittle.

Work by several of area teachers who participated in the SBWP's 2016 summer institutes appears on the following pages. More information about the SBWP, which was led in 2016-17 by SVSU's Writing Center director, Helen Raica-Klotz, and by Merrill High School teacher, Allison Jordan, can be found at www.svsu.edu/sbwp.

Kevlar's Oath to a Police Wife

Stephanie Anderson
Participant, SBWP Vada Dow Writers' Institute

Stephanie Anderson, an alumna of SVSU, has been teaching high school English for twenty-one years in Michigan's Huron Country, nineteen of those at Bad Axe High School. She also teaches creative writing, yoga, and serves as yearbook advisor. In her free time, she has taught community yoga classes and facilitates a community writing group called "Write Now!," utilizing the Natalie Goldberg model. She has been active with the Saginaw Bay Writing Project (SBWP) since 2010, serving on the advisory board, participating in writing institutes, and presenting at conferences and workshops. In 2016, she helped bring the SBWP to Huron County where, with the help of a donation from Bad Axe High School alumnus George Haley, she co-facilitated a summer institute at Bad Axe High School for K-12 teachers.

If I don't watch the evening news, my husband will not become one of the thirty-six law enforcement officers killed in this nation during the past three months, eight of whom were gunned down in this "War on Cops." If I don't watch the news when I get home, we can just go on, both working long hours—as a teacher and as a cop—both dealing with bad behavior and worse politics, both believing that we are offering some service of importance in these callings we feel at our cores, callings as visceral to us as the morning air we share.

I am reminded, though, of the discrepancy in our careers as he stands in the dining room and dresses for work. His base is a cotton t-shirt, two sizes too small. This sheath protects the softness of him from the rest of what he will wear. It squeezes together all the parts of him—the husband, father, chef, animal lover, hunter, and amateur craftsman. It contains who he is as it shields him from the layers of duty that follow.

When the Kevlar vest falls over his shoulder, he reaches to pull the Velcro straps forward attaching them at the bottom of his rib cage. First the right side, then the left, the barrier in place. My eyes always land on the large white tag in the center of his chest—every single time—where etched in black sharpie is O+. It is his blood type. And I know that if his uniform shirt is ripped open because this vest has not done its job, not protected all the parts of him—his arms, his legs, his blue eyes, his graying hair—when the vest has maybe saved his life but not kept him whole, they will rip open his shirt and immediately know who he is—not my husband, not Sergeant 209. He is now O+.

He bends to hook his pant legs to his socks with those elastic clips I keep losing, but he doesn't think about his O+ blood, the universal donor who can give blood to all but only receive it from his type O tribe. I watch him lace the boots he just polished in the laundry room. Sometimes he snaps a lace, pulling the stiff leather so tightly together up over his ankles.

He lifts an eyebrow when he notices I am watching him dress and heads to the laundry room, to his cupboard where he finds his badge, his belt, his gun. I hear the Taser flicker as he checks the charge, and I think of the stories I've heard of Tasings, of him being Tased in training. I wonder what would happen if this got in the wrong hands. Each piece snaps into his belt along with his radio, a magazine of ammunition, mace, and other things I have not been introduced to. When the belt is even heavier than the Kevlar vest, I rise, knowing there are only a few more moments before he walks out the door.

He moves, locked and loaded, from the fridge to the counter, packing leftovers from the rosemary chicken and roasted Brussel sprouts he cooked last night. I step in for a quick hug. The vest presses against my chest, a solid unyielding barrier that both separates

us and holds us together. It is my reminder that our jobs are not the same. I cannot even contemplate what he may face tonight. Nothing in his uniform can contain or cast off all of the evil he meets in his world. He won't talk about it much, and I won't ask much. But I will feel it later, when chest meets chest without the Kevlar vest, AB+ to O+. In that softness, I will know all the parts of him again, both the ones he chooses and those that follow him home.

An Excerpt from "Without Quantification"

Allison Jordan
Participant, SBWP Vada Dow Writers' Institute

Allison Jordan is an at-risk interventionist at Merrill's middle/high school, which has been her second home for almost seventeen years. She is also the assistant director of the Saginaw Bay Writing Project and a member of the Michigan Reading Association Board. When she is not spending time with her husband or running her five sons to a practice, she writes.

This excerpt from the larger piece "Without Quantification" was written under the instruction of Great Lakes author John Mauk at the Vada Dow Writer's Institute for Area Teachers in July 2016. Mauk insisted that she "make people suffer" and "make characters do things that they do not want to do because the story is in the trouble." Trouble, Mauk said, is the narrative engine. Allison, being a literal person, took him at his word.

Prologue

I imagine the car turning upside down as it breaks the surface of the water. It is easier to picture the Buick than the faces of my sister and father in that terrible moment.

I visit the scene and measure in my mind the distance of the drop from the bridge to the water, the speed of the other vehicle at impact, the weight of gravity, the rate of the river flow. If this is a physics problem in Mr. Jensen's class where my job is to solve for X, I can replace the chestnut brown of my sister's hair blowing out the window with a formula. I could substitute her scream of fear with velocity so that I believe with mathematical certainty the officer who said both passengers were dead before the car fell into the river below and I know this is an accurate solution to the problem.

I see the car, like innumerable blueberries in the sink washed by my mother each June, floating on the surface, out of place, disconnected, and not my father slumped to one side, bleeding from the force of the steering wheel on impact. I stand on the shoulder of the road as my mother and brothers leave two white wooden crosses on the embankment and I wonder how Sarah would feel if it were me because I want to compartmentalize and sterilize and act as if she and Daddy were numbers not people and they never were real in the first place. But the equations are too hard, and Mom's sobs are too loud and I have to be the sister instead of the mathematician and this problem is not going to be solved in a way that makes sense.

Wait Until Your Father Gets Home

Bob Pawlak
Participant, SBWP Vada Dow Writers' Institute

Robert ("Bob") Pawlak is in his second year of teaching social studies/history at Handy Middle School, in Bay City, Michigan. Prior to that, he taught various grades at Kolb Elementary School for fifteen years. He has been an active member of the Saginaw Bay Writing Project since 2003. During his "non-teaching" time (if, he notes, there is such a thing), he is the elected Portsmouth Township Supervisor and serves on various boards in Bay County, including the Bay County Historical Society and the Bay-Arenac Behavioral Health Board.

"Wait Until Your Father Gets Home" was written at the Vada Dow Writer's Institute for Area Teachers in 2016, which Bob describes as an unforgettable experience. The vignette is a result of a session with fiction writer John Mauk where the idea of "starting with scene" was discussed. Bob calls his story "faction" because it involves snippets of events from his own life from many years ago, embellished with likely dialogue and activities.

It is raining today, so play options are limited to indoor activities. Nothing on TV but soap operas this time of day. Dennis and I play with Matchbox® and Hot Wheels® cars on the dining room floor to pass the time away. The green carpet is lumpy, textured, but still provides a decent driving surface for the little vehicles. The china cabinet on one side and the buffet under the window are both good places for gas stations or tunnels. Sometimes we pull out the chairs from the table in the center of the room for added floor space, but not today.

Through the archway is the kitchen, where Ma is folding clothes on the kitchen table, while cooking dinner—something with hamburger and onions in it, to be sure, based on the aroma that permeates the house.

Rain or no rain. Inside or outside. Whatever we do nearly always escalates into a punching or wrestling match—usually initiated by me. I have a two-year advantage over my brother, so I tend to be the winner in these events. Today is no different.

Ma is humming along to Loretta Lynn while she folds. Then she gets snapped back to reality. Dennis runs, wailing, into the kitchen clasping his arm. I run after him, thinking of a lie to cover myself on the way. If I can get there first, I can make a case in my defense before he gets to speak. Not today.

"What now?" Through tears, Dennis gives her some lame story about me smashing into his cars, then twisting his arm. *Well, it's not really a lame story… it is, in fact, exactly what happened.*

"You little brat! How many times a day do I need to yell at you?" *I didn't know what a rhetorical question was then, but I knew she wasn't giving me a pop quiz either, so I said nothing.* "I'm done yelling… get over here!"

"He's lying… I wasn't even near him." *Obviously, it's me who is lying*. I start to slowly back away.

"He was too! He twisted my arm," wails Dennis. *Okay, so it wasn't always just punching or wrestling. Sometimes you need to be creative.*

"Get over here!" she says again.

Is she nuts? I know she does not want to give me a comforting hug, so I look left, then right, to check out my other options. Fight or flight kicks in, and I bolt into the dining room, not a far distance, but I've learned that the intensity of any spanking increases proportionally to the distance she has to chase me. She is hot on my tail, but I am smaller and quick. We get

into position. We're about to do the dance—me on one side of the dining room table and she on the other side. Circling, eyes locked on each other. I try to stay parallel with her, try to anticipate her next move.

Back and forth we go, eyes on eyes, considering each other's next move. Dennis is behind us, in the living room, sitting on the couch, whimpering, tear-tracks down his face, and tightly holding his left arm. He is now in my direct line of vision, my mother's back to him, so gives a small smile that only I can see—knowing of my impending doom. I do not tell my mother this because I need to stay focused on our dance. I can't afford a misstep, or she will pounce. We do this circling for what seems like hours, but is really only minutes. She has too much work to do before supper, so it looks like today may end in a stand-off. I may get a work-related pardon. It's happened before. She gets busy, then just forgets. Not today. She says the words that change everything. "Wait until your father gets home."

An Excerpt from *Shelter Dog*

Abbie London
Participant, George Haley/SBWP Huron County Summer Writing Institute

Abbie London is a special education teacher at Bad Axe Middle School in Bad Axe, Michigan, where she has taught English language arts (ELA) and science for fifteen years. She is very active in her school and community: she serves as co-advisor for the Middle School Student Council; as an instructor for Tech Club; and as a member of the school's district improvement team, the school's improvement team, the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, and the technology committee. She is also a board member for the Bad Axe girls' softball league. Abbie coached for both school and community organizations for several years, recently retiring her whistle so that she may enjoy watching her twelve-year-old daughter participate in many activities. Abbie enjoys spending her free time with her daughter and practicing photography.

Abbie received her undergraduate degree from Grand Valley State University and her master's degree as a reading specialist from Saginaw Valley State University. This excerpt is from a larger piece created at the Saginaw Bay Writing Project teacher workshop at Bad Axe in Summer 2016. Abbie created a web-based story during the week-long training with the intent to have her sixth- and seventh-grade students create a similar project throughout the next school year. The website from which this excerpt is taken can be found at maxtales.weebly.com.

Preface

We have all seen the commercials for the SPCA. If you watch them long enough, they are sure to make you cry, similar to the Hallmark ads that instantly bring out the tissue box for me. Despite limited TV time, my then six-year-old daughter saw one of the heartbreaking commercials and began the childhood rite of passage of begging for a dog.

I did what most parents do upon hearing this question. You simply give them whatever excuse you can think of at the time of attack and hope that it will last until you can think of a new battle plan. I could only do this for so long, and eventually the idea of having a dog again crept in. I had a dog growing up—so should she.

I watched our local shelters website like a hawk, my trusty partner in crime constantly commenting on how cute that one was or how nice this one looked, hoping I would agree to one of them. I knew I wanted a medium-sized dog, it was what I had growing up, and I didn't want to be afraid to step on a small dog. We sifted through pictures daily. To her chagrin, I could always find something to not like about each dog. Too big, too old, too ugly, or too small. Any reason to hold on to a little more of the sanity of a pet-free household.

Until that fateful day when the shelter had listed a chocolate brown lab and beagle mix. It was approximately six months old, which seemed good at the time—FYI, it's not!—so I made the announcement to my daughter that we could at least go look at the dog. No promises. Famous last words.

Spotlight on... Faculty

In the following pages, we profile the work of SVSU faculty members known for their work inside and outside the classroom. Innovative teachers and scholars, they are also successful writers who strive to help their students find their own success as writers. As recipients of various SVSU faculty awards in 2017, they share on these pages insights into their work as writers and as teachers of writing.

Practical Tips for Writing Practice

Sara Beth Keough
Professor of Geography
Recipient of the 2017 Earl L. Warrick Award for Excellence in Research

Sara Beth Keough, a professor of geography, joined the SVSU faculty in 2007. She earned bachelor's degrees in history and Spanish from Florida's Jacksonville University, a master of science in geography from Virginia Tech, and a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Tennessee. Her research focuses on material culture, human-environment interaction, migration, and music, and she does fieldwork in Canada and Niger (in West Africa). She has published several scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles and has served as the editor of the scholarly journal *Material Culture,* published by the International Society for Landscape, Place, and Material Culture, for the last ten years.

In addition to the Warrick Award, Dr. Keough was also the 2014 recipient of the SVSU Faculty Association's award for outstanding research and the 2015 recipient of the Braun Fellowship. In 2016-2017, she was a Fulbright Scholar in Niger where she spent an academic year teaching at the national university and conducting fieldwork. At SVSU, Dr. Keough teaches classes in cultural geography, urban geography, research methods, world geography, and North American geography, among other courses. She speaks Spanish, French, and Hausa (a language indigenous to Niger), and in her free time, she plays the trumpet with several local musical groups.

People might think that writing is easy for someone who chose to be a university professor. Writing well, however, has never come easily for me. As a high school and college student, I wasn't quite creative enough to be a good creative writer, and I also struggled with the style of prose common in academic writing. It seemed to me that using big words (or sometimes making up words that sounded smart by adding "-iality" or "-itivity" or "-ism" to the end) was what a grad student or professor needed to do to get published. Luckily, the accomplished professors who served as my advisors in grad school and as members of my thesis and dissertation committees believed in writing clarity, writing that was free of academic jargon, and they insisted that I write in intelligent, yet accessible ways. After all, what good is your published research and writing if no one can understand what you mean?

Although I struggled with writing, there are a few things in my life that made the process a little easier, and these are tips that our students can easily adopt. First, I have always been a voracious reader. I strongly believe that people who read a lot also write better because in the act of reading, new words and grammatically correct uses of our language get imprinted in our brains; those imprints then manifest themselves in our speech and our writing. I find that often the students who struggle with writing assignments in my classes are ones for whom reading is not a habit, and my advice to them is to find something to read in which they are interested. Everything from romance novels to science fiction to self-help books is published with correct grammar, so I recommend that my students read something they enjoy, and their writing will benefit. In this country, we really have no excuse not to read regularly. We have thousands of presses that publish books, articles, and newspapers, and we have even more used book stores where we can purchase reading material at affordable rates. Even better, we have public libraries in almost every town where we can choose from among thousands of books and take them home to read on our own.

The accessibility of reading material that we enjoy in the U.S. becomes even more striking when I conduct research in poor, over-exploited countries with low literacy rates. In

Niger, for example, a country in West Africa that often ranks the lowest in the world on the U.N. Human Development Index and where I spent this past year as a Fulbright Scholar, there are no public libraries, and I can count the number of bookstores on one hand. The books sold in those stores are mostly from European countries and the United States (translated into French, the national language in Niger), despite the fact that many West African countries have strong literary traditions, including Niger's neighbor, Nigeria. A few large libraries exist at the national university in the capital city where I taught classes, but students are not allowed to check those books out. They can only use them in the library, which has far fewer work spaces than there are students who need to use those spaces. In short, we enjoy an overwhelmingly accessible literary landscape here in the United States.

The second activity that makes writing a little easier is, simply, writing often. As with playing a sport or a musical instrument, regular practice typically results in improved technique. If you go for a period of time without exercise or practice on your musical instrument, and then try playing again, you usually need to spend significant time getting back into shape. I think the same is true with writing. In my classes, I assign writing assignments throughout the semester, a practice my students don't often appreciate. I do this not to make their lives harder, but so that they are writing regularly, and so, I hope, when it comes time to write the final paper for the class, the act of writing is easier. Writing doesn't have to happen only on school assignments, though. I encourage my students to write anything: journals, letters to friends, directions to a game, etc. I grew up in an era where lots of kids my age had pen pals (I don't know if this happens much anymore). We wrote letters by hand (this was before the day when young people had access to computers), and at the height of my pen pal activity, I had 75 different pen pals. Most were from the U.S., but about 20% were from other countries. This meant that I got mail every day (fun!), but it also meant I needed to respond to these letters regularly. Thus, letter writing became part of my daily activity. In fact, I would set my alarm for 45 minutes earlier than I needed to in the morning, and I would spend those 45 minutes responding to letters. This activity gave me practice turning my thoughts into words and sentences that made sense to someone else. It helped me practice the art of describing events or things in my life that the person I was writing to had never seen. As an adult who works full time and is a parent, I don't write many letters anymore, but I do write regularly as part of my job, especially during school breaks; if I go for some time without writing, I find my skills have gotten rusty and I have a harder time getting my thoughts coherently on paper.

The third activity that helped my writing practice began when I was a graduate student. One significant difference between graduate school and undergraduate school is that in graduate school, the "paper" that you need to write to get your degree (a thesis or dissertation of several hundred pages) doesn't have a deadline. When you finish the thesis or dissertation, and your committee of professors approves it, then you get your degree. It may sound simple, but it requires a person to motivate herself to sit down and read/research/write/revise without someone hounding her to get it done, without a grade attached to the work, and without a date by which it needs to be finished. Some very smart and capable students with whom I went to graduate school never finished their degrees because they could not adjust to these conditions.

Knowing this, I formed a writing group with three of my fellow grad students. We all agreed to arrive on campus every day by 9 a.m., even if we did not have class. If members of our group did not arrive by 9:30, we called them and woke them up, and teasingly harassed them into coming to campus (this was in the day when everyone still had landline phones in their apartments that rarely got turned off). In between classes, we sat together and wrote pages of our theses or dissertations. We agreed that whoever wrote the fewest pages by the end of the week had to buy a round of drinks for the others at the local bar where we hung out on Friday evenings. The camaraderie between us (and the potential reward of free beer at the end of the week) motivated us to stick to the writing schedule, and all four of us finished our theses/dissertations on time and graduated together. I have done this from time to time as a professor as well when I needed to complete a writing project. This is easily something

undergraduates could do with a group of friends (change the reward to something that would motivate everyone in the group, like a trip to Yogurt Yeti or a round of bowling). Even if students don't have a group of friends to join them, they could set reasonable writing goals for themselves each week based on their class assignments, and if they finish them early or on time, a reward is in order. To motivate students in my classes to work ahead of deadlines, I offer to read any assignment students finish before the deadline and make suggestions for improvement so that the students can revise their work and have a better chance of getting a good grade.

In short, writing well means reading regularly, writing often, and rewarding yourself for completing your work on time. This doesn't mean writing will always come easily, and it doesn't mean everything you produce will receive a high grade (quality is a discussion for another essay), but it can mean that you enjoy the activity and perhaps even look forward to it.

"You're Right— This ISN'T an English Class": Convincing Gen Ed Science Students That Reading and Writing Matter

Laurie G. Reed
Lecturer of Physics
Recipient of the 2017 Innovative Writing in Teaching Award

Laurie G. Reed is a lecturer in SVSU's Physics Department. She earned her master's degree in astronomy from Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, and has taught at SVSU since 1992. Winner of the 2004 Teaching with Technology Award, she was also a finalist for the Franc A. Landee Award for Teaching Excellence in 2005. In her time at SVSU, Professor Reed has been active in helping regional teachers upgrade their science skills and has taught courses in astronomy and the history of astronomy through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. She is also a serious nature photographer whose work has been featured in several exhibits held at SVSU's Marshall Fredericks Sculpture Museum. In the following, Professor Reed explains how she uses writing in her general education physics, astronomy, and meteorology courses to demystify science and to help students develop their reading and writing skills.

Trained as an astronomer, I have been teaching physics, astronomy, and meteorology at SVSU for nearly twenty-five years. Writing is a major component in many of the assignments I construct for use in all of my classes. One of my goals as a teacher is to help students realize that honing their reading and writing skills is a critical component of their studies, one that will help them communicate effectively during and after college, no matter what their field of study or desired profession.

I firmly believe one of the best ways to become a better writer is by reading samples of good writing. Unfortunately, we live in an era in which smartphones and tablets are ubiquitous, and social media offers and encourages endless streams of short, badly-written pronouncements. Outside of an English class, many students may not recognize good writing or take the time to read well-written works. I am forever thankful that my parents, neither of whom attended university, considered reading a top priority for my brother and me. We grew up in a house full of books and encyclopedias, some of which my mother acquired by collecting stamps in the local grocery store. It seemed natural to always be reading something. In today's time-starved, technologically-distracted society however, this is probably not true anymore.

Knowing this, every semester, I ask my Earth & Space Science: Astronomy (PHYS106C) and Earth & Space Science: Meteorology (PHYS106B) students to read, summarize, and answer questions about short articles from recent editions of *The New York Times*. The articles I choose are always directly related to the course material, but often extend the information beyond what we can cover in class to include connections to politics, current affairs, and the social sciences. The questions I pose about the articles do not always have right, wrong, or simple answers. For example, in a recent semester my astronomy students evaluated an op-ed piece by Dr. Lawrence Krauss, the distinguished cosmologist and author. He considered the ethics of sending a manned mission to Mars—and then leaving the astronauts there to work on a variety of projects for the rest of their lives without ever trying

to bring them home to Earth again. Is this a good idea? I don't know. But articles like these always yield a wide variety of responses—and that's the entire point. Most students are completely unfamiliar with *The New York Times,* and I suspect that its use in general education science courses takes them by surprise.

The possibilities for connections abound. In the Winter 2017 semester, my meteorology students analyzed a fragment of President Obama's 2016 State of the Union speech in which he referred to the importance of working together to mitigate climate change. In my astronomy class in Fall 2016, students used transcript archives of the National Public Radio program *StarDate* as "seed topics" for research papers. I occasionally also play music in these classes and ask the students to examine song lyrics across various genres of music from the past fifty years; they've listened to everything from Lena Horne and Frank Sinatra to Joan Baez and David Bowie. It's amusing to see that, on some occasions, they are absolutely aghast at my musical selections.

The larger point, however, is that my astronomy and meteorology students are exposed to different kinds of writing, some rather formal, but all meant to appeal to a general audience. I am attempting to demystify science—to show students that they can confidently read, understand, and express themselves about such items.

My General Physics I and II (PHYS 111 and PHYS112) students, most of whom are biology majors going on to either graduate school or a health-oriented professional program, write for very different reasons. For each laboratory experiment they perform, they must produce a report that effectively describes the equipment used, the procedure followed, and the analysis of their experimental data. Each lab report is about six pages long and must be written according to a very specific structure. I argue that, though I may seem like a stickler for the details, isn't it desirable that a researcher or health-care professional be able to communicate clearly, with both completeness and accuracy? My students seem genuinely puzzled when I strongly recommend that they have a friend or roommate read each report before it is submitted. The logic is that if a friend can't understand the basic written description of the experiment, something needs to be fixed. I tell them that sometimes it is indeed hard to accept comments on a piece of written work you think is perfect, but asking someone else to critique one's writing is ALWAYS a good idea. It makes the work stronger. My husband and I have been doing this for each other for more than thirty years.

I'm sure that my students wonder why I make them read and write so much. Sometimes I feel like I'm dragging them, kicking and screaming, into it. Perhaps they might thank me later (even if subconsciously) for being a bit critical of their work. I wish I had a dollar for every time I returned a marked-up paper and heard the response "But this isn't an English class…." I try to emphasize that the development of good reading and writing skills has no down-side in any profession or aspect of life and that, for the vast majority of people, the only way to become good at anything is to practice it frequently. Scientists and health professionals are no exception—we *all* have to learn these skills and dust them off occasionally. Many of my astronomy and meteorology students are education majors—for them in particular, the importance of solid reading and writing skills cannot be overemphasized. They are charged with inspiring and teaching the children who will become the leaders of tomorrow.

Society cannot help but benefit when its citizens are well-informed and can read, write, and communicate effectively. No matter our discipline, we as educators must continue to make the development of good reading and writing skills one of our highest priorities.

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Spotlight on…
Visiting Writers

As part of its mission to enhance the life of the community in which it resides, SVSU is committed to bringing guest speakers to campus. Sponsored by individual departments and colleges, Student Life, the President's Office, student organizations and student support services, among other groups on campus, these visitors create a richer learning environment at SVSU and speak to a host of interests and issues we face locally and globally.

Some of our visiting writers come as part of Voices in the Valley, a longstanding tradition at SVSU that profiles the work of creative writers. Dr. Arra Ross of the English Department currently directs the program and works to bring established and emerging voices to campus. Past guests of Voices in the Valley include poets Jamaal May, Tracy K. Smith, and Carolyn Forché; short story writer and novelist Peter Ho Davies; and memoirist Anne-Marie Oomen.

Each year a writer also visits SVSU in connection with the Stuart D. and Vernice M. Gross Award for Literature. The Gross Award carries a prize of $1,000 and honors publications, whether historical writing, fiction, or drama, linked to Michigan or the larger region. Mr. Gross was a published author, a historian who focused on the Saginaw area, and a reporter for *The Saginaw News,* as well as a former employee of SVSU.

Several of our visiting authors from the 2016-17 school year have been gracious enough to let us reprint some of their work in *Writing@SVSU* on the following pages.

Incident with Nature, Late

Marcus Wicker
SVSU Visiting Author

Poet Marcus Wicker, who visited SVSU in October 2016 as part of the Voices in the Valley Series, teaches at the University of Memphis and serves as poetry editor of the *Southern Indiana Review*. Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, he is the author of the collections *Maybe the Saddest Thing* (Harper Perennial, 2012) and the forthcoming *Silencer* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017). A winner of the Pushcart Prize, he has also received awards and fellowships from *The Missouri Review,* Cave Canem, the National Poetry Series, and the Poetry Foundation. His work has appeared in numerous literary journals. To read more of his work, visit marcuswicker.com.

CLEAN, THE GUST, prying
me open for the first time
this week—as I—
not exactly wind-
like in the running
thirty & already hunched
over after three stoic
blocks & one big sloppy
knock into the neighbor's
knotty fence decide it's
as good a place as any
to stop, pant
& smell the roses—
except there are no
roses, proverbial
or otherwise, except
a nondescript shrub
quivering
with what I hereby dub
the "piney-ness
of an Indiana March"
& oh my God
it feathering my nose
hairs, stirring in me
a place where finally
I decide to quit
dicking around
& dig my face in it
low bent, hands cupped
over kneecaps,
my eyes adjusting
always for some throbbing:
this sweet bumblebee rushing
through an interstate
of arteries & wishbone
forks in the bush's gut
for a derelict cherry

bloom wearing blush
that hummingbird
in hot pursuit, humming
little drone holy
shit I swivel too late
& she hammers
her needled beak
through my ear drills
hard the run of bone
behind my lobe
& sticks—

All my life, I've been
biblically acquainted
with the donkey-face sting
of avertable night:
usually some small game
slight, some gnat-sized fowl
wedging itself in
where there had always been
light, but just then, momentarily
less—so predictably me
I wave it in, let it pitch a tent
in my living room, bore
heavy-duty stakes through
the Pergo floor, let it crack
walnuts with my violet
mini stapler, split dishes
with the weight
of peat moss–bricked
lasagna, this lazy ache
I let him knock around inside
my record crates, floss
his beak with the grooves
of my favorite 45
until all I am is a busted song
of nerve tentacles swimming
beneath the pink umbrella
of a redbud tree or all
I am is a singing
saw through a bell
of flesh—the point
being not the ear
but maybe the thorn
is god, little-winged
& hovering here, quietly
in me, when I sit real still
to feel my nature opening
its mouth to speak.

Reprinted by permission of the author. "Incident with Nature, Late" first appeared in *Narrative.*

An excerpt from *Making Waves: Michigan's Boat-Building Industry, 1865-2000*

Scott Peters
Winner of SVSU's Gross Prize for Literature

Scott Peters was born and raised in Flint, Michigan, and graduated from the University of Michigan-Flint with a degree in history. He received a master's degree in history and museum studies from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and interned at the Great Lakes Historical Society. He has worked at the Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. Museum in Flint, the International Center for Artificial Organs and Transplantation in Cleveland, and, for the past 30 years, at the Michigan Historical Museum, where he is the curator of collections.

Scott's passion for boating came from many rides in boats as a child on Hubbard Lake, and he became interested in Great Lakes shipping from camping excursions near the Soo Locks and at Algonac State Park. He has written articles on maritime subjects for *Michigan History* and other journals. His hobby is researching small craft manufacturing in Michigan, which led to his recent book, *Making Waves: Michigan's Boat-Building Industry, 1865-2000,* published by the University of Michigan Press.

Aluminum and Magnesium

As a construction material, aluminum as a lightweight metal made excellent sense for boats after World War II production techniques made it readily available. Aluminum did not corrode in the same way as steel, only oxidizing on the surface. When alloyed with other metals such as copper, manganese, magnesium, or zinc, the strength increases substantially over that of the pure metal itself. For fabrication purposes it can be cut and drilled easier and faster than steel and can also be formed, welded, and riveted quickly. Above all else, from a boat owner's perspective, the material is very low maintenance as it does not even require painting unless desired. Spring fit-out usually means a quick cleaning, with no scraping, caulking, or painting. Place the boat in the water and you are good to go.

In Michigan experimental work on lightweight metal boats preceded large-scale postwar production by a decade. Charles W. Stiver, the former president of the Saginaw Shipbuilding Company during World War I, designed and patented a lightweight Dowmetal magnesium alloy canoe, which gained some popularity in the late 1930s. Late in life, he formed a company bearing his name in about 1936 with his office in the Schirmer Building in Saginaw. Stiver advertised his boats as "Dowmetal Water Crafts, Lightest, Strongest, Most Buoyant and Seaworthy." He received a patent for his boat construction technique, U.S. Patent 2,083,410, on June 8, 1937. Stiver's canoe interestingly had a hollow rib design similar in appearance to the wooden canoes of the era. He started a factory at 304 Mackinaw in 1938, and later that year or by 1939 the plant moved to 2100 Holland Avenue, where the firm built approximately one hundred Dowmetal magnesium alloy canoes. In 1940 he employed six people. Stiver never realized the potential success of his invention. He died in December 1941 at age seventy, ending the first small-scale, lightweight metal boat-manufacturing operation in the state and possibly in the nation. Only a short time would pass before lightweight aluminum boats would become immensely popular in the post-World War II era.

Experience gained in the aviation industry during World War II pushed the change to metal boat-building after the war when aircraft companies looked to adapt their technologies to other products. For the manufacturers, the constant pressure during the war to reduce weight and increase structural integrity in aircraft led to innumerable changes in structures and designs. Designers quickly learned new ways to efficiently arrange sheet metal layout and create the necessary tooling for the ever-growing production of the bombers and fighters so desperately needed. Boats, while mostly far simpler than aircraft in design, could be easily fabricated using the same tooling and the skills learned quickly during the war years by the work force.

Even the huge Dow Chemical Company, with all its resources, tried to get into the boat-building business after searching for new ways to market products made of magnesium, its most important wartime product. The company began brainstorming ideas in 1945 to sell more magnesium and decided that portable boats, along with thirty-four other products, made good sense for new small business startups, as Dr. Willard H. Dow stated to the Special Committee of the U.S. Senate to Study Problems of American Small Business. With a potential market estimated at fifty thousand units per year and a relatively low initial capital outlay of fifteen thousand dollars and up, the boats would be a great way to add demand for magnesium while boosting the economy. In a postwar experiment to market its own small magnesium boats and canoes, the company built Dowcraft brand boats and canoes at its Dow Special Products Division in Bay City beginning in mid-1946. The company manufactured 12-foot, 75-pound Deluxe and 73-pound Utility dinghy model boats, as well as a 16-foot canoe. Allen Carr and Delbert Case, paddling a Dowcraft canoe, won the grueling 1947 Au Sable River Canoe Marathon, paddling 120 miles in twenty-one hours. The light weight made a big difference as five Dowcraft canoes placed in the top ten finishers. Despite the successful launch, the products failed to live up to expectations. The company preferred to sell bulk magnesium or its alloys to manufacturers rather than build the boats itself. Despite the substantially lighter weight of magnesium, the disadvantage of its slightly greater cost over cheaper and more abundant aluminum caused the product's demise in the face of broad competition from aircraft manufacturers and other companies marketing aluminum boats. Dow sold the boat line in late 1948 to Star Boat & Tank Company of Goshen, Indiana, and the boats became part of the beginning of the corporate giant Starcraft.

The first high-volume aluminum boat producer in the world, Harwill, Inc., of St. Charles, emerged out of Dow's failure when Dow experimental engineer Lothair Bernard (L.B.) Harkins, along with Douglas Wiltse, became convinced that the boats could be built for far less money. Harkins took a class in aircraft sheet metal work in Detroit and started building aircraft component sections at the Briggs Manufacturing Company early in World War II. In August 1942 he moved to Bay City to join the Dow Special Products Division, again working on aircraft parts. While working for Dow, he wrote a book entitled *Magnesium Fabrication.* Harkins left Dow and joined his brother Leon Harkins and Wiltse to form Harwill, Inc., a startup aluminum-boat-building firm formed in March 1946. The Harkins brothers and Wiltse combined their last names for the corporate name. L.B. Harkins served as president and general manager, Leon Harkins as production manager, and Douglas Wiltse as director of sales. The men leased an old water treatment plant in St. Charles, near Saginaw, as their manufacturing facility. Marketing their boats as Aero-Craft, the company's products became an immediate hit. By January 1947 they were employing forty-three workers and turning out fifty-four boats a week, or over three thousand in their first year of production. The company purchased a new 8-acre site on the outskirts of St. Charles later that year for a new factory location.

Harwill, Inc./Aero-Craft enjoyed great success in the early years of the aluminum boat industry. Soon the company started to offer a wider range of models, including cruisers. The company subcontracted the final assembly and finishing work on the cruisers to the Tittabawassee Manufacturing Company, recently moved to St. Charles, because it did not have enough floor space of its own to complete both the cruisers and its car-top boats at the same time. The Montgomery Ward Company placed orders for 300 of Harwill's 12-foot

rowboats and 150 of the 14-footers in November 1952, to be built to Ward's specifications and shipped throughout the country. Sales for the company topped $655,000 in 1953, and twenty-nine different models appeared in its catalog for 1954.

Like most boat builders, Harwill tried to diversify as advances in other hull materials and manufacturing technologies challenged its business in aluminum boats. Acquisitions served as insurance to be able to shift direction quickly to meet consumer demand if needed. The company purchased the fiberglass boat manufacturer Water Wonderland Boat Company of Grand Rapids in late 1956, later moving the operation to St. Charles and giving it the Aero-Glas brand name. The Water Wonderland Company built seven models of fishing and runabout boats prior to the purchase. The majority of the company's work, however, remained with aluminum boats. By 1960, Harwill's line of Aero-Craft boats had grown to include twenty-eight outboards and ten more models in the budget Aero-Line series, and it continued to slowly increase over the years.

Allen H. Meyers formed the Meyers Aircraft Company of Tecumseh in the late 1930s and built an all-aluminum open-cockpit biplane trainer, the OTW (Out to Win), during the war. Like other aircraft builders, he started to look at boat construction as a way to keep his business going. Meyers started building duckboats and small fishing boats of aluminum in 1955 after the early aluminum boat builders became well established. On its 112 WR model the company offered a forward and center wheel deck, a motor well, and also seats with backs built in, all somewhat unique for their time. Built slightly heavier than contemporary boats, Meyers boats proved to be very durable, and the firm enjoyed good success for decades as a regional builder. The Squires Manufacturing Company of Milan and other southern Michigan builders produced thousands of aluminum rowboats and other craft in the late 1950s. The Milco Tank & Boat Company of White Pigeon, builder of the Milco Aqua-Swan, presented aluminum simulated lapstrake boats with extruded gunwales, welded seams, vinyl flooring and tinted windshields in 1963. The material was not solely conducive to constructing small outboard-powered craft. Ferdinand Eichner, an engineer in General Motors' GMC Truck Division, designed and built a novel aluminum sailboat after the war at his home business in Pontiac, called the Trail-A-Boat Company, applying for a patent as early as July 1944.

Pontoon boats as a style took on new popularity for more leisurely cruising on inland lakes and rivers. Where previously speed, durability, and a smooth ride were the most desirable characteristics, the pontoon boat, in contrast, offered a platform for parties and movement around the craft that was not possible with standard hull forms. The Freeland Sons Company of Sturgis, known for its galvanized steel farm tanks since 1893, started building aluminum rowboats by 1953 and galvanized steel pontoon boats in 1958. The aptly named Aqua-Patio Pontoon Boat Company, formed by the Freeland family in approximately 1966, indicated the design intent as a gathering place for a different kind of cruising experience.

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