



# THE SCRIBLERIAN

Fall 2010 Edition

Sponsored by the English Department and the Braithwaite Writing Center, the *Scriblerian* is a publication for students by students. Revived during Fall Semester 2004 after a two-year hiatus, this on-line journal is the result of an essay competition organized by Writing Center tutors for ENGL 1010 and 2010 students.

## Contents

Argumentative- English 1010.....	2
1st Place Winner: Natalie Harr, “A Refreshingly Positive Angle on Islam” .....	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: E.J. Leavitt, “Better Learning: The Benefits of More Classroom Testing” .....	5
Honorable Mention: Marc A. Forrester, “The Retail Market and You” .....	10
Honorable Mention: Nathan Vest, “The Unseen One” .....	13
Expressive- English 1010 .....	16
1 <sup>st</sup> Place Winner: Ashley Herd, “Telling His Story” .....	16
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: Marleen Park, “First Kiss” .....	19
Honorable Mention: Madison Purser, “Girl Bullies” .....	21
Honorable Mention: Robert Durborow, “At the Feet of the Master” .....	25
Argumentative- English 2010.....	29
1 <sup>st</sup> Place Winner: Kori Cox, “Consumerism: The Future of Parenting” .....	29
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: Jared Vanhille, “The Torch of Kennedy” .....	35
Honorable Mention: Wes Van de Water .....	38
Expressive- English 2010 .....	41
1 <sup>st</sup> Place Winner: Kori Cox, “If You Wish Up a Stair” .....	41
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: Kaitlin Pollock, “My New Eyes” .....	44
Honorable Mention: Keven A. Ray, “Twisted But Not Stirred” .....	47

## Argumentative- English 1010

1st Place Winner: Natalie Harr, "A Refreshingly Positive Angle on Islam"

For Dr. Kyle Bishop

In 2004, a Muslim by the name of Pete Seda published a pamphlet entitled *Islam Is*. Covering the basic beliefs of Islam, Seda was no doubt hoping to vanquish some of the understandably rising fears involving Muslims of late. He stated, "It often seems that all governments need enemies to fuel the military and to bring about national unity. During the Cold War, our enemy was 'Communism.' Today, Muslims are finding themselves in the crosshairs" (24). Seda truly illustrates the abounding prejudice against Islam and subtly points out the common factor amid blind prejudice: fear. America was indeed attacked on September 11th by a group who call themselves Muslims, but it is wrong to allow fear to lead to isolation, discrimination, and animosity towards the innocent followers of Islam. The bigotry and ignorance that occurred during the cold war, as Seda points out, must not be repeated. To prevent the same mistake from happening again, questions can be asked, such as: Is there really prejudice associated with the name of Islam? What are the main causes of this discrimination? What do the Muslim people really believe?

How much prejudice is being placed on Muslims is difficult to say exactly, but cases of bigotry and injustice certainly are occurring both locally and nationally. One such case involved a nineteen-year-old American woman whose parents were Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh, and who is a Muslim herself. This woman filed a complaint against McDonald's who, according to her, told her she probably would not be able to wear her hijab (head scarf) if they hired her (Warikoo). Although offensive and discriminatory, this is only a small local example. Terry Jones, a pastor from Gainesville, Florida, took his prejudice to a more national level when he advertised his plan to burn over 200 copies of the Koran on September 11. His reasoning was to mark the anniversary of the destruction of the Twin Towers. In response, many protests sprang up all over the world, including Afghanistan, during which one man was even shot to death (Jones). These are just a few cases to be sure, but they wrongfully target and affect all Muslims who are now being adversely dragged into this cage of isolation and intolerance.

What has caused so many to fall into narrow-mindedness and discrimination in a country where individual freedom is usually so proudly offered? The unifying fear after September 11th was simply waiting to be sparked in the minds of America's people. Within the past month alone articles have appeared in prestigious newspapers with phrases like, "[President Bush] continually telling us that Islam was a religion of peace has set us back years in the war against Islam" (Logan), and "The Pakistani immigrant who tried to detonate a car bomb . . . warned that Americans can expect more bloodshed at the hands of Muslims" (Hays, Neumeister). Now a powder keg of negativity, the twisted reports of the media are still continuing today.

Without a broader view, many Americans are being lead to subconsciously believe that Islam must be a violent sect. As Pete Seda states, "Within true Islamic Fundamentalism one would never see crimes against humanity, heinous acts of hatred, political killing, terrorism, oppression, religious extremism, or zealotry...All of these acts are clearly forbidden in Islam" (23). Islam is not a religion of violence and oppression. According to Seda, anyone who acts violently is not "within true Islamic Fundamentalism"

(23). Therefore, rationalizing abhorrent murders or acts of violence in the name of Islam is a gross falsehood.

Perhaps another fear lies not in what Muslims believe, but in the threat their rising numbers pose. In the year 2009, Muslims made up 1.66 billion of the world's population ("Muslim Population Worldwide"). According to Dr. Kholoud Al-Qubbaj a Muslim and professor at Southern Utah University, Islam is the fastest growing religion in Europe and the United States (Qubbaj). Power in numbers is an unnecessary fear, for Muslims do not have an authoritative throng of people heading the religion. Qubbaj also wrote,

There is no ecclesiastic leadership in Islam. The holy Quran, and the Hadith (prophet practices) are the main source of [sic] any Muslim to refer to. There is no group leaders to lead the religion...Because in Islam the Quran, is the final god [sic] words to humans in all life matters, it will be applicable for all times. [emphasis added] (Qubbaj).

According to Dr. Qubbaj, the only source for leadership in Islam is God, who according to Muslim belief has given a guide to his people in the Koran. Practices that teach Islam's people to be self-sufficient and humble followers of God will benefit America today by producing respectable citizens. America will stamp out this opportunity if Muslims are not allowed the freedom to worship as they choose without hostility and prejudice. American freedoms so proudly defended with war when America was attacked on September 11th are being denied some of its people. Now an unnecessary war is waging, and on America's own soil, a war of bigotry, discrimination, and injustice against fellow countrymen to punish them for crimes with which they were so unjustly associated with.

This warped understanding of Muslims can be vanquished if light is shed on more than one side of Islam. Who are the Muslim people and what do they believe? Referring to Islam, the Harper Collins encyclopedia says, "The ethos of Islam is in its attitude toward Allah: to His will Muslims submit; Him they praise and glorify; and in Him alone they hope... at the individual level, [Jihad] denotes the personal struggle to be righteous and follow the path ordained by God." ("Islam"). According to this simple text alone, Muslims are submissive followers of God. Rather non-threatening so far. In fact, that is what a good Christian is, a humble follower of God. Many parallels exist between Islam and Christianity that are so conveniently overlooked or misconstrued.

Stephan Bates, who was once a Christian himself, converted to Islam and later founded a web site entitled Islam for Today. Bates teaches that Muslims believe in the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ, claiming him as God's prophet rather than his son. However, the principles of humility, service, and peace remain the same in both Christianity and Islam. Muslims also believe the Bible to have originated from God. Believing it to have since been tainted by men, it is not used as the basis of the religion. All the same, it is indeed recognized in Islam as mostly true (Bates). Because of the belief in the Bible's impurity, Islam teaches that a prophet named Muhammad was given a pure form of scripture directly from God, which is known as the Koran (Bates). Perhaps ignorance to what the Koran actually teaches is another frightening aspect of Islam. However, the Koran's teachings, which are very similar to those of the Bible, are readily available for anyone to read and need not be feared (Bates). True believers of Islam found their lives on the teachings of the Koran and deserve respect for living good morals with such devotion.

Fear leads many people to isolate, discriminate against, and hate Muslims, the majority of which are admirable and exemplary people. Most Muslims are devout and worthy people whose beliefs, which are

very similar to Christianity, center on submissive humility to God and adherence to the teachings of the Koran. Despite these similarities, Muslims worldwide are facing discrimination and narrow-minded prejudice. Because ignorance will cause many to follow a well-paved path that doesn't require change or innovation, Muslims are not the only people facing intolerance. The answer to solving all misunderstanding lies in the opening of the mind to welcome more knowledge and truth to replace ignorance and deception.

---

#### Works Cited

Al-Qubbaj, Kholoud. E-mail interview. 23 Oct. 2010.

Bates, Stephan. "The Beliefs and Laws of Islam." Islam For Today. N.p., 17 June 2002. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

Hays, Tom and Larry Neumeister. "Times Square Bomber Sentenced, Warns of More Attacks." The San Francisco Examiner. The San Francisco Examiner, 5 Oct. 2010. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

"Islam." Reference.com. Harper Collins, 2010. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

Logan, Christopher. "The Bitter Truth: 'Moderate' Muslims are not Coming to the Rescue." Right Side News. Right Side Publications, 5 Oct. 2010. Web. 15 Oct. 2010.

"Muslim Population Worldwide." Islamicpopulation.com. N.p., 27 August 2009. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

Seda, Pete. "Islam Is...." Ashland: Al Haramain Foundation, 2002. Print. 23 Oct. 2010.

"Terry Jones (Pastor)." The New York Times. New York Times Company, 10 Sept. 2010: 1. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

Warikoo, Niraj. "Muslim Woman Denied Job at McDonald's Files Complaint." Weblog of Dawud Walid. N.p., 13 Oct. 2010. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: E.J. Leavitt, "Better Learning: The Benefits of More Classroom Testing"  
For Dr. Carole Schuyler

Imagine leaping out of a plane to experience an exhilarating skydive. As you freefall through the sky, crisp, cool air rushes past while you enjoy the view below. Then, upon dropping to the appropriate elevation, it is time to deploy the parachute. When you do, the parachute opens too quickly and snaps several cords; a whole new shot of adrenaline screams through your body from the sight. Now, the reserve parachute is the only link between life and death. However, it flies out in a terrifying tangle. As you scramble to repair the problem, the number of feet on the altimeter plummets: 800...525...200...100...25...thud! You are dead.

This experience can be compared to enrolling in a course where there are only a midterm and a final. If a student fails or does poorly on the midterm, then an outstanding performance on the final exam is his or her only chance of passing (or surviving) the class. There is little or no ability to check and improve studying habits or to check if expectations are met or not. Instead, anxiety, distress, procrastination, and a lot of cramming takes place. This is why students need more classroom tests. While limiting tests to only a midterm and final in a course may reduce professors' workloads, careful, frequent testing will produce better study habits, encourage better performance on final exams, and reduce anxiety while developing skills that will be beneficial throughout students' lives.

In his essay, "More Testing, More Learning," Patrick O'Malley argues that infrequent, high-stakes testing works against students psychologically and intellectually, and that more classroom testing will reduce anxiety and increase studying and learning as opposed to only a midterm and final exam. He wrote his well-published essay as a freshman attending a California state university.

Mark McDaniel and Mary H. Derbish (Washington University), Janis L. Anderson (Harvard Medical School), and Nova Morrisette (University of New Mexico) support Patrick O'Malley's empirical argument that frequent testing will bring more learning. In their essay, "Testing the Testing Effect in the Classroom," they performed a study of the benefits of regular classroom testing. They found that when frequent quizzes and tests are given to students throughout a course, learning and retention of the course material is enhanced and the students do better on their final exam.

Patrick J. Wolf, Endowed Chair and Professor of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas, also delves further into support of testing in his essay, "Academic Improvement Through Regular Assessment." He reasons that regular assessment can provide students and teachers with feedback that identifies areas where motivational and learning problems need to be corrected. He notes that skills obtained from test-taking experience will serve students well throughout their lives.

On the opposing side is Cindy Wright, a 30-year professor of nutrition at Southern Utah University. She argues that more tests would consume valuable lecture time that could be used for helping students learn and understand new material. Also, she adds that fewer tests allow more time for grading, which increases the ability to give comprehensive tests with essay questions instead of plain fill-in-the-bubble Scantron tests. The absence of extra tests would be balanced by better assessments of knowledge that allow students to write down ideas about what they have learned.

While Wright uses convincing authoritative arguments in favor of less testing, O'Malley, McDaniel et al., and Wolf use empirical and authoritative evidence strongly in favor of more classroom testing. They find that having more tests helps improve learning by decreasing anxiety and increasing studying, retention, and feedback.

The first reason that frequent testing is beneficial for learning is that it drives students to study and learn more. A course with only a midterm and final exam will lead students to procrastinate studying until the last week or night before the exam. Testing at regular intervals, however, will lead students to adapt to a fine schedule of studying well before a test. Apiwan D. Born, assistant professor of Management Information Systems at the University of Illinois, suggests that while frequent testing motivates students to study more and stay on top of materials, it also can prevent illicit behaviors of plagiarism and cheating, as students' sources of help (e.g., friends who previously took the same course) will likely refuse to do someone else's work regularly with no reward or credit (224).

By studying more often instead of cramming at the last minute, learning is also slowed down. This allows a deeper and sharper understanding of the material "...when a concept, idea, or image settles into a student's psyche and ceases to be simply words on [a] page" (Randall 189). While slow learning deepens the understanding of learned material, it also improves the recall of the information. Jill Wilks, Master of Education, explains this concept by comparing the brain's long term memory to a forest: if the deer (information) are allowed to run "helter-skelter" into a forest, it is nearly impossible to recall them on demand from the shallow paths they made. Otherwise, if they are allowed to dig deep into the brain, they can easily be recalled (113). Frequent, slower learning that is brought on by frequent assessment serves students better than lone midterms and finals that encourage cramming

A second reason is that students will perform better on big exams and projects when frequent assessment is implemented. A collaborative study performed by Mark A. McDaniel, Janis L. Anderson, Mary H. Derbish, and Nova Morrisette showed that frequent quizzing without extra reading (studying) increases students' performance on final exams (494). Also, students themselves prefer frequent quizzes and tests in the classroom. A study from Harvard showed students' "strong preference for frequent evaluation in a course" and their feeling that less is learned when given "only a midterm and a final exam, with no other personal evaluation" (O'Malley 312). Testing, sometimes conceived by teachers as a diagnostic tool only, can also act as a direct tool to help students learn.

A third reason for frequent testing is that it helps reduce anxiety and increase achievement in students. Researchers from the University of Vermont found strong relationships between procrastination, anxiety, and achievement with the finding that regular procrastinators had higher anxiety and lower grades than those who procrastinated less. In addition, the researchers saw that the "low" procrastinators also did not use regular study, and recommended that professors give frequent assignments and exams to boost good study habits (O'Malley 313). Frequent testing keeps anxiety low by detecting weaknesses before stakes are raised high, such as a final exam or entering into the "real world." Patrick J. Wolf compared this to breast cancer: when detected early, the cancer is easily removed, but if it is given the time to metastasize, the cancer disfigures and often kills (697).

Wolf also notes that skills obtained from frequent test-taking will serve students well throughout their lives. For example, feedback from frequent testing allows students to evaluate the areas in a course in which they could improve. In the business world, this action of judging against a standard to improve is known as "benchmarking." As students enter the work force, they can analyze their performance from

past projects and actions of other firms, and then adjust their own actions to become more effective and efficient workers. This continuous process of improvement shows why top performers are the best and why others struggle (Kumar and Bagali). This ability to frequently analyze and improve will help students reach their highest potential during and after their education.

The underlying values of all these points are important to teachers and students seeking better ways to teach and learn. Frequent testing will enhance learning and studying habits, while increasing recall and the depth of the knowledge learned. Also, performance on midterm and final exams will rise as students receive regular evaluation throughout the course from testing. Students' academic experience will improve as they experience less anxiety, while learning essential skills that can be applied throughout life.

Regardless of the empirical and authoritative evidence pointing out the benefits of more testing, opponents support the use of less testing in the learning environment. One reason in favor of less testing, stated by Wright, is that tests consume valuable lecture time that could be used to help students learn. Teachers are often burdened with little time in class to teach large amounts of information to their students. However, if smaller, timed tests were given frequently, students would be able to review material that would bring their minds up to speed with past material. These tests allow them to benchmark their knowledge, which would influence them to increase their study habits after class. In a 50-minute class meeting, twenty minutes or less could be devoted to a test, leaving over half an hour for the teacher's lecture. The usual long lecture can be quite ineffective when used towards the average sleep-deprived college student. In fact, researchers found that a student's attention typically wavers out in twenty minutes or less (Middendorf and Kalish 3). By having a stimulating short test at the beginning of class, students can get ready for the lecture and be fully attentive towards the teacher throughout the remainder of class.

Wright also gives a second objection by arguing that if fewer tests were given, then teachers could use more comprehensive tests, such as essay tests, that require students to recall information instead of merely recognizing it (which is usually the case with multiple-choice tests). This is quite true: written tests would challenge students significantly more than multiple-choice tests would. However, by using only a few written tests, instead of several multiple-choice tests throughout a course, students' abilities to benchmark their studying habits and learning are hindered. Also, as the number of tests decreases, the stakes on the existing tests increase. For example, if there are only three tests in a course, then those tests are likely to be treated similarly to if there were only a midterm and a final. O'Malley portrays the feelings in this distressful atmosphere by saying:

It's late at night. The final's tomorrow. You got a C on the midterm, so this one will make or break you. Will it be like the midterm? Did you study enough? Did you study the right things? It's too late to drop the course. So what happens if you fail? No time to worry about that now – you've got a ton of notes to go over. (311)

By being tested more frequently, students can avoid the fear and anxiety of high-stakes assessment, regularly evaluating their performance in the class while obtaining better study habits.

Furthermore, some feel that testing can sometimes fail to achieve its purpose. After performing a study seeking teachers' and teacher education students' opinions about testing in schools, Kathy E. Green, Professor of Quantitative Research Methods at the University of Denver, introduces concerns that some

teachers are incompetent in the writing and interpreting of tests. She observes that students feel that tests are unfair assessments of knowledge and that alternatives are sometimes needed (41).

There is some truth to this – sometimes teachers fail to write tests well. However, teachers typically are not unresponsive machines that are powered off after class ends. Students can voice their concerns to their teacher, and he or she can work to solve the problem. For example, after the first test in my Business in Society class, many students complained to the professor that many of the test's questions were confusing because of how they were written. He then told the class that he would try to write the questions on the next test in a simpler manner, but with the same level of difficulty. When the second test was issued a couple of weeks later, the students felt much better about the test's material and were more satisfied with the results (the class had about the same scores with the first test). After seeing their scores, they knew whether changes in their studying were needed or not.

Hopefully, students in the future will not have to deal with classes that offer only midterm and final exams, which give them a false sense of security as they freefall through a semester. Without frequent testing, these students are led to procrastinate until a night or two prior to a big exam, when they will cram until the sun rises or until their tired eyeballs jump out of their sockets, seeking sleep themselves— whichever comes first. Sadly, the usage of infrequent testing is likely to continue, as professors offer as few tests as possible to save themselves time or (albeit a misled belief) to reduce students' anxiety. Giving only a midterm and final may reduce students' anxiety for a while, but it will also send them through a crash course of distress when an examination is near. Plato once said, "Knowledge which is acquired under compulsion obtains no hold on the mind." Frequent testing discourages the compulsive learning associated with high-stakes cramming and ultimately helps students gain true knowledge and learning.

---

#### Works Cited

- Born, Apiwan D. "Teaching Tip: How To Reduce Plagiarism." *Journal of Information Systems Education* 14.3 (2003): 223-24. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.
- Durst, Russel K., ed. *You Are Here: Readings on Higher Education for College Writers*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2003. Print.
- Green, Kathy E. "Differing Opinions On Testing Between Preservice and Inservice Teachers." *Journal of Educational Research* 86.1 (1992): 37. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 21 Sep. 2010.
- Kumar, Sachin, and M.M. Bagali. "Employee Benchmarking." *Articlesbase*. Articlesbase, 2009. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.
- McDaniel, Mark A., et al. "Testing the Testing Effect in the Classroom." *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology* 19.4/5 (2007): 494-513. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 21 Sep. 2010.
- Middendorf, Joan, and Alan Kalish. "The Change-Up in Lectures." *The National Teaching and Learning Forum* 5.2 (1996): 1-4. Web. 4 Nov. 2010.
- O'Malley, Patrick. "More Testing, More Learning." *Durst* 311-15. Print.
- Plato. "Plato Quotes." *BrainyQuote*. BrainyQuote, 18 Nov 2010. Web. 19 Nov 2010.

Randall, Michael. "A Guide to Good Teaching: Be Slow and Inefficient." *Durst* 188-91. Print.

Wilks, Jill. *Your Expanding Intelligence*. Plymouth, MI: Hayden-McNeil, 2011. Print.

Wolf, Patrick J. "Academic Improvement Through Regular Assessment." *Peabody Journal of Education* 82.4 (2007): 690-702. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 21 Sep. 2010.

Wright, Cindy. Personal Interview. 27 Sep. 2010.

Honorable Mention: Marc A. Forrester, "The Retail Market and You"  
For Professor Charla Strosser

In the modern day it has become much easier for people to make purchase from big companies or, more frequently, online. People are purchasing items from these places in hopes of getting a better price. However, the benefits of purchasing from a small retailer largely outweigh the slight price increase, and these include service, customization, and helping support the local economy. Working with people in person can help one get discounts on repair work needed in the future. On the whole, it is much better to purchase from a local retailer rather than a big box store or web retailer.

Luke Heaton is a luthier in Cedar City, Utah. He owns and operates Whittlesticks, a musical instrument shop. While speaking to Luke about the difference of purchasing from a local store versus the internet, he says the only reason local stores are still open is because of service. When a person purchases an instrument over the web or in a big store, if something is wrong with it, they have to send it away to get it fixed. In a small store, it can be fixed that very day (Heaton). This provides a clear advantage over the large retailers and internet sellers. A major problem with the large stores is the method of presentation they decide to use. Almost all large guitar stores let anyone off the street walk in and start playing a guitar. Some of these people may not have been playing very long and can damage the instrument. These stores don't have a repair shop on site, and the instrument would have to be sent away to be fixed. Web stores don't face the problem of people off the streets, but their instruments sometimes fall victim to the forces of the United States Postal Service. Without proper packing, the instrument can arrive broken. While most websites offer free replacement service, it can take weeks to get a new instrument back. The small store clearly is superior in this aspect.

A person can also haggle with the small store owner, whereas large retailers have moved away from this, and one can forget about haggling over the internet. Stores are always purchasing more items and strive to rotate as frequently as possible. Music stores in particular like to have the newest items on the wall. Musical instrument companies, much like car companies, come out with new models every year, some with many new advances in hardware, pickups, and electronics, and some simply in a new color. The longer an item sits, the less likely it will sell at standard markup. A local retailer who has merchandise in the store for a long period of time will be more likely to haggle about the price. This can lead to a fantastic find for the purchaser, and it helps the owner of the small store get new stock in.

The personal interaction a person has with the owner of a local store also keeps people coming back, whereas the multitude of salespeople at the big stores and the complete lack of them online are not as inviting. A friendly person who knows about his or her line of work is a big plus. Small business owners are passionate about what they do. They strive for quality, value, and a good purchase. Big store employees are not always as enthusiastic. Though there may be a few who are knowledgeable, most of them are high school students looking for a job. They aren't nearly as knowledgeable as the small business owners, and their information on the instruments is usually wrong. A passionate person who knows what he or she is talking about is the one I'd go for.

Though it is true that a small store has a multitude of positives, there is one thing the large stores and web retailers have over it. Large stores order in large quantities, and in turn get a larger discount from the manufacturer. They have a smaller overhead to pay for, and can move merchandise more quickly.

Web stores have even less overhead because they typically operate out of one factory and get the same corporate discounts as the large stores. This leads them to offer prices that can be much lower than a small store. This may seem like an incredible advantage, but the money isn't all going into the small store owner's pocket. A small store has a larger overhead to pay comparatively. It has to pay for use of the building, pay all the employees, utility bills, and also keep merchandise on the walls. This leads to a higher price, but the service offered at the local store beats its competition.

The higher price paid offers something in addition to service. The money that is spent locally stays local. All profits earned in a small store goes to the owner and employees. They, in turn, will go spend money at other businesses, some local, and in turn help the economy. Money spent in a big store will go to the employees, but a large amount goes back to the corporate offices. On the web, none of it will go to the local economy, unless the web store happens to be based in that city. The stimulus of the economy will eventually help everyone living in that city. This leads to a better quality of living for everyone, and increases the chances of more businesses opening.

It seems logical that a big name store would have a wider instrument selection than a small store. They would have a larger sales floor and could rotate their stock with relative ease. Today, however, most big stores make most of their money selling cheaply made import guitars. They are typically made in a factory in Indonesia or China. What many consumers don't realize when choosing a brand of import guitar is that it was probably made in the Samick Guitar Factory. The Samick Factory has been building guitars in Indonesia for a while, and since has been contracted by many companies to build import guitars for them. Luke carries the Samick guitar line, an affordable alternative to the big name companies. These guitars are the same quality as their brand name counterparts, and they are, as Luke said, "A lot of guitar for a little money" (Heaton).

Luke also offers something no big retailer and very few web retailers can offer: a custom shop. If one likes something on the wall but wants different pickups, hardware, color, neck shape or electronics it can be done in very little time. If one sees something he or she likes, but wants it in different woods, it can be done. It is definitely more expensive than purchasing a stock instrument, but much more worth it in terms of quality and value. A local luthier can make an instrument for \$2000 that would match the quality of a \$4000 big brand instrument. Instruments made from such builders are very highly prized for their quality and value. It may seem strange to say that \$2000 is an excellent value, but when compared to the competition selling guitars of upwards of \$20,000 it is an excellent value. The reason they can sell quality instruments for a significantly lower price is simple: their name doesn't have as much clout as a big brand. Gibson Guitars is an example of a company selling instruments for a much higher price than its competition selling a comparable instrument. Smaller builders operate custom shops that not only offer quality, but a better protection plan and guarantee. This is because they build a smaller volume of instruments than the big names and can take better care of the customer.

Luke builds custom electrics: solid, hollow, and jazz. He also crafts acoustics of all sizes. In addition, Luke builds and sells handmade instruments from the violin family, the mandolin family, and the ukulele family. Because of this, Luke has a big corner on the instrument market in Cedar City and has managed to stay open for a few years now. He offers a variety of stock instruments with many custom upgrades available. He credits this to service and feels this is the only reason small businesses remain open. In addition to helping the local economy, buying from local stores gives one many advantages over the big box stores. It is clearly the best option.

---

Work Cited

Heaton, Luke. Personal Interview. 20 Oct. 2010.

Honorable Mention: Nathan Vest, "The Unseen One"  
For Professor Rosalyn Eves

The remnants of the ancient Greeks can be found everywhere, both in the form of the physical artifacts and in the cultural influences on government, science, math, and philosophy. Even their myths and legends have been handed down. Thousands of years later, these stories are still being retold. Even today they have found a way into our culture in print and even film. They have not, however, made it through untainted. Changes have been made and details have been forgotten or excluded, some lost simply due to the passage of time. Others, however, have been skewed by the beliefs and views of the preceding generations. One of the most predominate gaps between modern and classical versions of the myths is the depiction of Hades, god of the underworld. As one of the three sons who rose to overthrow their father, the titan Cronos, Hades was one of the central powers in the Greek pantheon; despite this, the Greeks of the ancient world rarely prayed to him. As god of the underworld he was feared by the Greeks, and was usually considered unswayable no matter what pleas or sacrifices were made, much as their eventual descent into the underworld was unavoidable. In the few myths in which he makes an appearance, Hades is depicted as a harsh unyielding god, but not cruel. Although his actions may be seen as extreme, they are rarely unprovoked. In truth, in comparison to some of the other gods he was unusually fair. In his current depictions, however, he comes across quite differently. The films *Clash of the Titans*, *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*, and Disney's *Hercules*, show him as being an evil, cruel, god abusing those around him and plotting to overthrow his fellow gods.

In all three of our modern examples, Hades is depicted as being unhappy with his lot in life, the lot in this case being literal, or at least as literal as can be when dealing with mythic beings. The three brothers, Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades, drew lots after the overthrow of their father to determine who should rule what portion of the world. Zeus was assigned the sky, Poseidon the seas, and Hades, drawing the short lot, was given to rule over the underworld which later came to be known by the name of it lord, Hades. In *Hercules*, Hades is cast as the main villain, engaging in a plot to overthrow his brother Zeus and the other gods of Olympus by enlisting the aid of the Titans. *Clash of the Titans* has him in a similar role of attempting to pull Zeus off the throne, this time by tricking the sky god into abusing his followers to the point that they turn to worshipping Hades instead. In *Percy Jackson*, Hades is shown in a slightly kinder light; his intention to takeover being more a matter of opportunity than the result of brooding hatred as in the first two examples. However, given even the slightest chance, he is eager to take his brother's power for himself.

In his classic representation, Hades shows little to no ambition to rule the world. Much like his brothers, he is omnipotent within his own domain, and reacts harshly to unwanted encroachment upon it; however, in comparison to Zeus or Poseidon he seems to lack their desire to try and extend his power beyond his borders. Nonetheless, he is very protective of what is his. More so than any other deity with in the pantheon, his realm is clearly defined and occupies a physical, if mythical, location. Although he is feared by mortals and shunned by the other gods due to his association with death, he seems to have taken this isolation in stride, choosing to have as little to do with the world outside his realm as it chooses to have with him.

In his modern aspect Hades is often shown to be exceptionally cruel. Clash shows him killing innocents, the main character's family, simply because he can. Percy shows him offhandedly attempting to destroy the main character once he has gotten what he desired from him. Even the version of him in the children's cartoon, Hercules takes out his anger on his underlings and punishes the dead simply for being around.

However, the classical version is quite different. Despite his fearful reputation, he very rarely is shown to harm anyone with the important exception of those who disrespect his domain. While the other gods are shown to be fickle and chaotic, he shown as constant and almost fair, admittedly harsh, but fair. One example of this is the myth of Orpheus, which shows him being moved by the pleas of Orpheus to release the soul of his dead wife and even agreeing to do so, but on the condition that he must not look back to make sure that her soul followed him. When Orpheus broke his word, Hades kept his, and reclaimed the soul of Orpheus's wife. In some versions of the labors of Hercules, Hades is said to have consented to allow the hero to complete his task by capturing the three headed hound Cerberus as long as the dog was not harmed. When the hero Theseus came down to the underworld to attempt to steal away Hades's wife, the hero was imprisoned in a throne of forgetfulness, an unusually merciful act for a god. Even in the story of his capture of Persephone he is depicted as treating her kindly after her capture.

The realm of Hades is also often misrepresented. In two of the three modern examples used so far, we are given a look into the underworld: Clash brings us to the edge, but never really goes into the underworld proper; however, both Percy and Hercules show it to be a place whose description is very close to that of the Christian Hell: a dark foreboding place filled with fire and horrible creatures. In truth this depiction can be a somewhat accurate view of parts of the classical underworld, but fails to include that fact that in the myths the underworld encompasses not only their version of Hell but also Heaven. The Greek underworld covers all aspects of the afterlife in one place by handing out reward to the deserving and punishment to the wicked.

As the lord of the underworld, the ancient Greek views of Hades defined their relationship with death. It was cold, uncaring and unstoppable; however, this impersonal view also stripped it of the ability to be cruel or vindictive. As times change and things that were once considered the wrath of the gods have come to be accepted as explainable natural events like lightning and hurricanes, death has not lost its mystery. If anything it has gained more. No matter the modern science, death cannot be stopped, delayed perhaps, but never stopped. While the modern world has lost its fear of the thunder the fear of death is still present, perhaps even stronger than in our ancient counter parts. The reasons for the gap in the modern and classical views of the god Hades are many, but the modern versions of Hades do the god of the underworld an injustice when compared to their classical counterparts. By giving him the aspects of evil and cruelty, these misconceptions change the meaning of the myths, and warp his role with the classical Greek world. They also reinforce the thought that death is something to be feared as opposed to simply being an unavoidable fact of life.

---

#### Works Cited

Hercules. Screenplay by Ron Clements, Don McEnery. Dir. John Musker, Ron Clements. Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2000. DVD. Ron Clements.

Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief. Dir. Chris Columbus. 21st century Fox, 2010. DVD.

The Clash of The Titans. Screenplay by Lawrence Kasdan, Travis Beacham, Phil Hay, Matt Manfredi. Dir. Louis Leterrier. Warner Brothers, 2010. DVD.

Mythology Guide. Web. Nov 1, 2010. <[http://www.online-mythology.com/orpheus\\_eurydice/](http://www.online-mythology.com/orpheus_eurydice/)>.

## Expressive- English 1010

1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner: Ashley Herd, "Telling His Story"

For Dr. Danielle Dubrasky

Roger Rosenblatt wrote, "We exist by storytelling." I have heard countless stories from friends, family, and even strangers. Some I have passed on, some I have kept to myself, some I have forgotten, but one I wanted to honor. I had a desire for people to know what this person had gone through, the changes he made, and the struggles he was still facing. Telling an amazing story is no easy job, but I wanted to get it right. I pondered ways I could tell this story. What was the right way? I realized the best and only way to tell this touching story was on the stage.

The stage at Riverton High School was my home away from home. The heavy black wings hid the other dancers and me while we waited to go on. When I danced on the rough, uneven wood of the stage, paint would rub off on my feet and leave them black as the night. My favorite time on the stage was during April, when we would cover it in marley. Marley is a black rubbery floor that my dance company would tape down on top of the stage. Dancing on the marley was perfect. It did not grab at our feet like the uneven wood, and it caught us gently when we were on the floor. The auditorium in front of the stage holds 1,500 people. Before I would go on, I was always nervous. It did not matter if it was friends, family, or half the school there to watch; I would get butterflies. Once I was on stage the bright, colored lights would blind me. At first it was disorienting, and the catcalls coming from all directions would leave me feeling more lost. When the first note of the music started, everything changed. The music would fill my ears and work its way through my body. In those moments, nobody was there. It was only me, the music, and the story I had to tell. I told a lot of stories through my dancing on that stage, but one changed how I felt about dance forever.

I was lying on my stomach in the dance room staring at a paper. It listed the criteria that needed to be met for our new assignment. I looked up at my good friend, Jordan, whose hair was sticking straight up in the black braided headband she always wore. I elbowed her leg and tried discretely to mouth, "this is perfect." I did not want to interrupt my dance instructor, who was explaining the assignment, but I was so excited. We had to submit three ideas for dances to go in our fall concert. The theme this year was Retrospection, and I had the perfect idea. I scribbled down my idea to choreograph a dance about my grandpa's struggles and the changes he made in his life. Underneath that I wrote, "I want to choreograph this piece," and underlined my untidy scrawl.

A year ago my stubborn grumpy grandpa had been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. The family knew he smoked, but he kept telling himself that we were oblivious. He had managed to convince himself that we could not see the smoke billowing out of the old red barn. The barn was ancient: the red paint was chipping off, two doors hung unevenly on their hinges, the windows were covered in dirt, and under the roof sat hay that had been there since my great grandfather's time. Also, the barn was a safety hazard; it was practically begging to burn down. Obviously, we noted when smoke was coming from there but my grandpa stuck to his story of quitting years ago, and we let him continue on with his stories, knowing there would be no way to change his mind.

The changes he proceeded to make in his life after being diagnosed were astounding. His relationship with my grandma had always been rocky. They never showed affection. Likewise, my grandfather's relationship with his children and grandchildren was similar to the one with his wife. Did he love us? Yes, of course, and he always made sure we were comfortable, but besides that he did not show a lot of interest in our lives. When the doctors told him he had about a year to live, his outlook on life changed, and it changed fast. He showed love towards my grandma. I watched in shock as he teased her, held her hand, and kissed her cheek. He bought her a new wedding ring and a new car. I could tell he was making sure she would be taken care of when he passed. He also fixed his relationships with his children, and for the first time he told me he would come to watch me dance.

Thankfully, my dance instructor liked my idea for a dance and she let me choreograph it. The movement came easily to me and ideas sprang up in my head so often I could barely focus on anything else. I knew exactly how to tell this story. In my dance, Sierra, a member of our dance company, represented my grandpa at this point in time. She started the dance in her purple shirt, then stood on the side of the stage and watched as groups of people crossed. The groups crossing the stage were reruns of my grandpa's life, and one girl from each group, also dressed in a purple shirt, represented my grandpa in earlier times of his life. Sierra went in to fix the hurtful things she had done to the people she loved. Every person started on stage left and worked her way to stage right. This depicted moving through life.

Finding music was a difficult task. I could not find a song that fit exactly with my grandpa's story. I easily looked through 200 songs. I would listen to twenty seconds, then move to the next. I started to feel discouraged. One day, as I was watching the girls run the dance, an idea popped into my head. I called up my friend, Trey, and asked him for a favor. Trey is a talented musician and I knew he would be willing to write a song for me. He dragged his friend, Riley, into helping, and together they wrote a song for my dance.

Teaching the girls on the company was my biggest struggle. I felt so passionate about my grandpa's story that I needed them to feel it too. I wanted it to look perfect, so I pushed and pushed them during practices. Every time I watched the girls do it I could spot something wrong, and I always felt as if they were lacking emotion. I wanted them to feel the same way I felt about what my grandpa had done in his life, but how could I expect them to? He was my grandpa, not theirs.

After three months of hard practice, concert time arrived. My whole family came to watch, including my grandpa. I could not help but wonder, what if he did not like my dance or what if he did not understand what I was trying to say about him? My dance was the closure in our concert, and when the time came to perform I was so nervous I thought I might throw up. My heart was racing. I was pretty sure if I looked down I could see it thumping through my shirt. It was making an attempt to leap out of my chest and hide in a dark corner. I stood in the wings with the other girls on Dance Company, and forced myself to take a deep breath. I looked around at the girls. They were all completely silent and focused. They knew my grandpa was here and that this dance meant a lot to me. Sierra stepped on stage and a single beam of yellow light lit up her body. She looked over her shoulder and started to dance. Trey and Riley came in with the music right on time. Like magic, I was suddenly calm. I stopped worrying about everyone else and danced for my grandpa with the girls that I loved, on the stage that felt like home.

The dance ended with us standing in a circle and one of our hands was placed on the shoulder of the girl next to us. I could feel all of us breathing in unison, like one giant living organism. I looked at Jordan, who was standing next to me, and saw tears trickling down her face. After the curtains closed I looked at

all the girls. Most, like Jordan, had been or were crying. The air was thick with emotion. I did not need to push them, or tell them to show more emotion. They felt it, and they understood. They knew what my grandpa had done and what he was still experiencing. We had made a connection on that stage that could never have happened with strangers. We loved each other, and we were a family. What I did not realize before was that us being a family made my grandpa their family too.

The girls on Dance Company gave each other hugs before heading off to find their family members who had come to watch. I thanked Riley and Trey for writing a song for me, and playing it live. I then slipped off to go find my grandpa. My whole family was standing in my high school's common area playing with the kids. My grandpa was sitting alone, on a stone wall outside the auditorium. He had on blue sweat pants, a white polo shirt, and brown slippers that he always wore because of how swollen his feet could become. He was hugging his oxygen tank and the tubes that went up his nose were slightly crooked. He looked tired. I walked over to him and sat down, but I was not sure what to say. He looked at me, put his hands on my shoulder, and told me how proud he was of me. He began to say something else, but stopped in the middle of the sentence. He started to tear up. This stubborn old man who had shown hardly any emotions for the first seventeen years of my life was crying.

My mom, grandma, and dad came over and they all had tears in their eyes, too. It was a bittersweet moment. We were connected with a bond of love so deep it could never be broken, but it was there because my grandpa was dying. I knew I had accomplished my goal. My grandpa understood how much I respected the changes he had made in his life, and my family got to watch me show that to him. Through my dancing I had told his story, and I told it right.

I was on Dance Company for three years, and I danced on the stage at Riverton High more times than I can count, but that moment, that dance will stay with me forever. The night we performed it, I formed a strong link with every girl on the stage. We truly made my grandpa's story come to life. We were there solely to pass on his story and allow it to resonate in the hearts of others. That was our only purpose.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: Marleen Park, "First Kiss"

For Dr. Julia Combs

I know what this hesitation on the doorstep is for. The moment I have been dreaming of is finally here! He is actually going to do it! He thanks me for a wonderful evening, hugs me, and then begins to lean closer and closer. I gently close my eyes and wait for the magic. Warm lips on mine, I feel butterflies in my stomach. This is how it is supposed to happen, right? A long-awaited first kiss. For many, a first kiss is a rite of passage, a build-up of emotions that by a simple touch are released with a fiery passion. For me, however, it was not.

A typical first kiss should consist of a young girl and a young boy who like each other. And not a "we're just friends" kind of like, either. They must have feelings for that other person. It does not necessarily have to be a deep, powerful pull to the other. A curiosity and an attraction must be present. A typical first kiss should be special and leave the kissers wanting more. Kisses are a way of showing love, adoration, or even lust. Sometimes they are given, and sometimes they are taken. But no matter how it happens, one is supposed to feel a longing for it. A personal connection must be had.

The setting was always very important to me as well. Maybe on a lake with the glow of the moon cascading my lover and me in dim light. Or perhaps, in a sudden rainstorm after a long walk in the park. Even on my porch after a simple date would be ideal. A Harmons parking lot, however, is not so ideal.

At a very young age I decided that I would not kiss anyone until I was at least sixteen. Boys had cooties anyway. What I did not realize is that those cooties go away around the age of thirteen. Still, I was not going to hand out my kisses like candy on Halloween. They were sacred to me. A boy had to earn them. However, I needed some direction just in case. I needed to know exactly how a kiss happened. I went to my sister. After all, she had A LOT of experience. The talk I had with her was quite educational. I learned things that I still find repulsive. We won't go into that.

My sister told me that one should never over-prepare for a first kiss, but it was still necessary to acquire some knowledge on the subject. I was told that kissing is instinct and should come naturally. If not, well, go get that checked out. Easy for her to say. I was not to pucker my lips too much. Lips needed to be firm, but not sloppy. Moist, but not wet. And my breath needed to be fresh, minty fresh. That was vital to my kissing future. I always listened, but I knew that the only way to figure it out was to actually kiss someone.

A week before my eighteenth birthday, I decided that this first kiss was going to happen, whether I liked it or not. I called up my friend, and we began to plan. No, we began to plot. We went through her phone and discussed the pros and cons of each boy. I chose my victim and crossed my fingers that he would want to kiss me. Who wouldn't? Right?

I was at my wit's end as the day grew closer. I awoke the morning of "the kiss" with a stomachache. I could think of nothing except the evening ahead of me. But I kept giving myself pep talks. I had to be ready. I drove over to Chick-fil-A, as it was the rendezvous point. I sat waiting in the booth until my future kiss finally arrived. I heard a chime, and he entered the classy establishment. He walked over and sat down. We talked. We flirted. We became very thirsty. Harmons it was. We headed straight to the

cold beverage aisle. Over and over I told him that it was my birthday this week. I also mentioned that I had not had my first kiss yet. Now I had his attention.

With our newly-quenched thirsts, we sat on the tailgate in the parking lot of Harmons. We kept talking and talking and talking. I was done talking. I knew that if I did not get this kiss over with soon it would not happen. Finally, I blurted out that he had something over by his car that he "needed." He looked at me kind of funny and walked toward the direction of his car. I didn't move. I took deep breaths to calm my nerves. I tried to rid myself of a pit that had formed in the depths of my stomach. I slowly followed behind him. I stopped in front of him and he reached out for a hug. I quickly looked up at him, closed my eyes, and planted a kiss right on his mouth.

I waited for the fireworks to come. They didn't.

I did nothing wrong! I puckered just right; firm, not sloppy; my lips were moist, and I had minty breath! I couldn't believe that I had just wasted my first kiss! It was hardly a kiss. It was more of a let-me-touch-your-lips-with-mine kind of thing. I didn't get butterflies, and there was definitely not any fiery passion occurring. Still, a kiss is a kiss, and I was relieved that that first awkward one was over.

I have heard that a kiss is a rite of passage, a build-up of emotions that by a simple touch are released with a fiery passion. For me, however, it was not. My first kiss was not typical. It was a learning experience. Good things, such as a first kiss, should never be forced or rushed. Good things come in time. A first kiss should be with someone you like and care for. My first kiss was nothing like I had planned and dreamt about. However, my first kiss was mine, and I will always smile when I pass a certain parking lot.

## Honorable Mention: Madison Purser, "Girl Bullies"

For Dr. Julia Combs

A bully is someone who hurts, belittles, and torments someone else in order to feel better about him or herself. In clinical terms, it is called leveling. They've made movies about it. They've written books about it. They've done studies about it. And now they're launching a national campaign to try to help prevent it. Me... I just lived it. More importantly, I survived it.

For a teenage girl, junior high and high school are equivalent to the CBS hit reality television show Survivor. Originally you're all on the same team; everyone is nice, and everyone wants to get along. But within minutes of Jeff Probst handing out the different color buffs which determine what team you are on, or when the school doors open, things can and will get ugly quickly. Alliances are made, many are voted out, and the only sure way of surviving is to fly in under the radar.

Bullying, what was once thought to be a problem among males, seems to be a growing problem among girls. Mary Phipper, a clinical psychologist and author of *Surviving Ophelia*, brought attention to "relational aggression," a term used to describe a type of bullying primarily used by pre-adolescent and adolescent girls to victimize other girls. Relational aggression is a covert use of relationships as weapons to inflict emotional pain (Skowronski). Personal experience tells me it's very effective.

My Survivor season started my 9th grade year. Life was good, and I was happy. I never considered myself "popular," but I did have a decent group of friends, or so I thought. One day as seventh period was nearing the end, one of my so-called friends, and locker partner, approached me and asked me to participate in a "game" or "trick" on someone else in our circle of friends. She suggested we create a "burn book" about her. The popular movie *Mean Girls* explains what a burn book is. A burn book is like writing a diary, but instead of writing things about yourself, it's acceptable to write mean things about people who are supposed to be your friends. Or it's fine to write lies or share secrets that you know about someone. This cruel book she was suggesting was to be passed around amongst our friends in order to victimize one of them. I was shocked. I refused to participate and suggested we drop the idea and move on. Nothing else was said to me about it, so I assumed she took my suggestion. A few days later, I opened my locker to find the book. It seemed the plan was carried out, but now the book was about me. All my friends had taken turns writing horrible things about me, none of which were true, and they also included pictures that they had cleverly distorted. Naturally, I was crushed, embarrassed and devastated.

This was the beginning of many years of torment for me. Next I was "outed" from the group. No reasons are necessary. This happens quite frequently in junior high school. Survival during these years requires lying low, not being too good, too smart, too happy, too rich, too talented or too popular.

Unfortunately, I was a competitive gymnast. I was strong, happy, had a tight little gymnast's body, and my fair share of trophies and confidence. Like the game of Survivor, if one excels in anything, one becomes a threat; therefore, she must go or be put in her place. Where I once loved school, I now hated going. I ate alone. I walked alone. I was alone. Other students who were not in "our group" seemed to care, but they were also afraid to befriend me for fear of the attacks that would be launched on them.

I was fifteen and by myself. I lived at the gym and hung onto my few friends there. But the reality of "gym-rats" (gymnasts who all work out together five hours a day, five days a week, and travel together on weekends) is that we have our own drama and our own competitiveness. Teammates love you and cheer for you as long as you're not better than they are. These aren't the kind of girls you can really hang on to or trust to be your friends. So although it was an escape for me, it still wasn't a safe place. Thank goodness I loved my parents.

Round three... cyber-bullying. An online encyclopedia describes cyber-bullying like this: "Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to hurt others" (National Crime Prevention Council). E-mails, text messages and voice messages started arriving at alarming rates. An occasional e-mail would carry a vain threat, but mostly they just contained mean words as silent reminders that they were out there and waiting to destroy me whenever they chose. Studies report that kids start being mean to each other online beginning as young as 2nd grade. While boys start bullying younger, by junior high school, girls are more likely to engage in it than boys are (Patchin and Hinuja). The beauty of cyber-bullying is that it allows the kids to be mean to each other without a grown-up ever knowing. Also, kids tend to be meaner, braver and bolder when they're not looking their victim in the face.

At first I didn't tell my parents about the emails and text messages. I just erased them and tried to hold my head high. On one occasion I was with my family on vacation. We walked out of a Broadway play; I checked my phone and noticed I had seventeen voicemails just waiting to bring me back to my real life. I began to listen to them. Due to their content it wouldn't be appropriate to share the messages these presumably sweet fifteen-year-old girls had left for me. As the color drained from my face and tears rolled down my cheeks, my father grabbed the phone from me and listened. Color filled his face, and after he resorted to Wikipedia to find out the meaning of some of the things they'd said, he got involved.

It's a hard call and I didn't know what to do. If I got my parents involved, I'm a baby who can't fight her own battles. If not, I'm alone. Thankfully, my parents gave me no choice. On more than one occasion, I cried myself to sleep in my mother's arms.

We changed my phone number, but that only helped for a few weeks. Despite Facebook and MySpace being all the rage, I knew better than to open an account; it would just be another place for them to publicly humiliate and taunt me.

Grown-ups in my world made me promises that, "Things will get better in high school." Although they meant well, they weren't right. At every turn they were there, the texting, emails and voice messages never stopped. In the middle of my sophomore year I tried switching high schools, thinking a fresh start might make it easier. But because of technology, they were still there. No matter how hard I tried I couldn't escape them. I returned to my boundary school. On one particularly hard day, my mother made a trip to the vice principal's office. He listened to our story with a straight face and then replied, "Maybe you should just switch schools. There's nothing we can do and there's nothing the police can do." It was a hard lesson to learn that these so-called adults that are set in place to help you, and to protect you, and to counsel you... don't care. We left his office feeling defeated.

My father ignored the vice principal's advice and contacted the police anyway. Turns out, there is something they can do. They were on my doorstep within five minutes. Pictures were taken of text

messages and voice messages were recorded. Officers made me promise never to delete another message as it served as evidence. Legal charges were filed and the girls were ordered to stop.

Weaker girls would have quit, given up, sold out, or joined a group where they would have been accepted. Me, I just kept swimming... or flipping, actually.

Despite being told not to by an officer, my father contacted one girl's parents. She was the ringleader and seemed to be the most relentless. Her parents immediately believed us, which tells me they knew what she was capable of. By now we'd grown up, well at least chronologically, she was the oldest in the pack and with an early birthday had already turned eighteen. One night she was physically dragged to my house by her parents and forced to apologize. All the right words, yet no meaning, no heart. The bullying didn't stop, it just took a different form. Pointing, giggling, name-calling, eye rolling, gossip and gagging sounds surrounded me as I passed them in the hall. A restraining order was issued, and community service was assigned. The ringleader went so far as to change her phone number and continue to text and voice message me, thinking I wouldn't know it was coming from her.

I learned through a counselor that online high school was available and I quickly took advantage of the program and only went to the actual school for a few hours in the morning. Then I'd go to gym for five hours, come home and do online classes. I graduated early just to try to escape them. I hung on to the words of my parents and older siblings, "They'll grow up." I'm still hanging on to those words.

Funny how easy it is to hang on to the negative, how easy it is for me to hear, "You're so ugly! You'll never date! You're so fat! You're such a loser!" Even at twenty years old, when I'm having a bad day, or I break up with a boyfriend, those words still ring in my ears.

Frank, a character in a 2006 Fox Searchlight movie titled *Little Miss Sunshine*, was speaking to his troubled teenage nephew about Marcel Proust, a French writer, and he said,

Anyway, he uh... he gets down to the end of his life, and he looks back and decides that all those years he suffered, Those were the best years of his life, 'cause they made him who he was. All those years he was happy? You know, total waste. Didn't learn a thing. So, if you sleep until you're 18... Ah, think of the suffering you're gonna miss. I mean high school? High school—those are your prime suffering years. You don't get better suffering than that.

If Frank is in fact right, I'm bound to be the smartest kid around that graduated from high school.

I'm now two years into college. I moved far away from my hometown. Given the chance, these girls would still bully me. These girls stole my entire high school years. They stole my self-esteem. They forever changed who I am and how I view myself. However, I am proud I never gave up on myself. I'm proud I never stooped to their level and attacked back. I consider myself a survivor, a winner in the game. When the jury gathers, and Jeff Probst reads the votes out loud, I'll hold my head high. I lost a lot, but in the end, I survived.

---

### Works Cited

- "Cyber-bullying." National Crime Prevention Council. NCPC, March 2010. Web. 16 Nov 2010.
- Little Miss Sunshine. Dir. Jonathan Dayton and Calerie Faris. Perf. Steve Carell. Fox Searchlight, 2006. DVD.
- Patchin, Justin W. and Sameer Hunuja. *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 2009. Print.
- Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1995. 304. Print.
- Skowronski, Marina. "Parenting Perspectives." *Teachers and Families*. National Association of School Psychologists, 2005. Web. 16 Nov 2010.

Honorable Mention: Robert Durborow, "At the Feet of the Master"  
For Dr. Danielle Dubrasky

Roger Rosenblatt, in his essay "I am Writing Blindly" said, "I sometimes think one writes to find God in every sentence. But God (the ironist) always lives in the next sentence." These words produce a vivid image in my mind that causes me to disagree. I see myself seated at the foot of a Kimball upright piano at which my mother is playing. It is a place of deepest memory and significance, as this is where I learned to imagine, question, and explore the possibilities of the universe. Where writers look for God in every sentence, musicians conduct the same search in every stanza. The best musicians tend to find Him. So it was with my mother. She was a deeply spiritual woman, possessed of an angel's voice and a talent for music to rival the greatest composers of any age. There was no composition, song, tune, or ditty that she could not master. Mom's love of music was manifest in every note, but there was something more that was at once spiritual and mystical. What she saw in the music, I learned to find in words. It has been a lengthy pilgrimage, one that I expect will continue until the day I die, and it all started at the foot of the piano.

Prominently placed in my living room is that Kimball upright piano. It is a position of honor as well as tradition. There are visible signs of wear and use upon its grainy wooden skin. A small scratch here, a spot rubbed smooth over years of use, and middle C resting slightly lower than the remainder of the keys. She has only been mine for a year or so, but we've known each other for many more. My children often sit beneath her sturdy legs, much as I did in my youth. It was there that I learned the most excellent names of Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn, and Schubert. I would sit for hours (days? years?) beneath those smiling keys as my mother worked the most mystical magic. Other, more casual, observers might call this music. To me it was enchantment of the highest form. There, at the feet of the master, I learned to recognize the work of God in everything around me and the possibility of greatness in myself.

Music was my mother's first true love and an affair...no, a relationship, that lasted a lifetime. Though she played several instruments at a virtuoso level, she could most frequently be found seated at the very piano that now gives life to my own home. What she did at those ivory and ebony keys was nothing short of magical to my young and eager ears. Mom was the Sorceress of the Symphony and I her willing thrall. Her fingers, the wands that wove her mesmerizing spells, could move endlessly across that landscape of white and black, creating all the colors of the rainbow and more. The spells themselves sprang from the quills and pens of Handel, Gershwin, Chopin, Bach, and others too numerous to name, as well as her own skilled hand. The places we traveled together, propelled by the music, were many, varied, sacred, and often unexpected.

Seated at the foot of the piano on the tan pile magic carpet that covered the old homestead's living room, I might float down the haunting Blue Danube (Strauss), listening to A Little Night Music (Mozart). It was not unusual for us to dance a Minute Waltz (Chopin), while A Maiden's Prayer (Badarzewska-Baranowska) whispered in our listening ears, followed by a majestic chorus of Hallelujah (Handel), all while visiting A Sunken Cathedral (Debussy). An Invitation to Dance (Weber) under Moonlight (Beethoven) was always welcome, even if the occasional Raindrop (Chopin) intruded on our Moods, Impressions, and Reminiscences (Fibich). The journeys my mother and I shared, all the more wonderful

because we never left the house, sparked my imagination and creativity in ways I would not think possible by any other means.

Though Mom treated all music with a certain reverence, hymns and religious works held a special place in her heart and soul. Many of our musical wanderings illustrated Mom's great spirituality and faith. I learned of that Sweet hour of Prayer (Bradbury), stood on the Rock of Ages (Hastings), and came to the aide of A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief (Montgomery), who told me what would happen When the Saints go Marching In (Purvis). I saw a beautiful Church in the Wildwood (Pitts) and learned of the Little Town of Bethlehem (Redner), where the First Noel (Parks) took place. From there we traveled in the Footprints of Jesus (Everett) to the cross At Calvary (Towner) and returned home on The Day of Resurrection (Smart). Mom loved to Tell Me the Stories of Jesus (Challinor) and we created many Precious Memories (Wright) that will always remain with me.

Our mystical and spiritual travels comprised only one facet of the omnipotent piano. The music that flowed from my mother's talented hands created a university beyond compare. At that fine school I learned of William Tell, the impossible flying abilities of bumble bees, how a crocodile rocks, and that many of the greatest among us are Done Too Soon (Diamond). One of the most important lessons I learned at this institute of musical learning was what might happen if we all Imagine (Lennon), as John Lennon suggested. "Living life in peace..." was a concept that always appealed to Mom, and so appealed to me.

Imagination is one of the most important characteristics that designate us as human. That was, far and away, the most influential bit of knowledge that Mom and her piano ever taught me. The lesson has never left the prominent place in which it lodged itself in my mind. It has become an integral part of who I am, what I do, and how I do it.

Music is all about creativity, and creativity is what happens when one imagines. To appreciate music is to appreciate the creativity that makes life worth the effort. It is The Touch of the Master's Hand (Welch) in all of us. A creative life, to paraphrase Mom, is a productive life, one that is always in motion. No one ever created anything without moving something, whether it was a pencil, the keys of a piano, or a few stray synapses that had nothing better to do at the time.

The direct manifestation of Mom's mental motion was that her pencil never stopped moving. That yellow number two with the pink eraser was in a constant state of motion, scribbling notes on any scrap of paper that could be found at hand. Those scraps of musical brilliance always found their way to the piano keys for testing and revision. Beautiful music was born of those constant transfers from thought, to pencil, to score sheet. It was the motion in Mom's mind that caused everything else to happen.

Even when she was sitting still, I could see the wheels of her mind transporting her to new and exciting places and occasionally spinning donuts just for the hell of it. She believed in having fun, too...as long as she kept moving, creating, and imagining. Frequently, I would arrive home from school to find my mother dancing with our clunky old Hoover vacuum cleaner to some tune that only she could hear. Although she looked foolish, she could hardly have cared less. She believed that life was meant to be lived, and she lived hers with relish. I have never met a more divinely "human" being.

Mom once told me that she always had a song playing in her head. Being young and naïve at the time, I asked her which song. The look she gave me could have curdled new milk. "It's a different song every time," she stated plainly, "who wants to listen to the same tune forever?"

Mom taught me to appreciate music in all its varied forms and to never stop listening to new tunes. In doing so, she showed me that life is a magnificent journey of new discoveries and new songs to play and sing. I wanted to be part of that. I wanted to be like Mom. I wanted to play and sing and create music that made people want to play and sing and create. I yearned to inspire in others what my mother's heavenly music inspired in me. Nothing, of course, is that easy, and so it was in my case. As it turned out, I couldn't play the piano. Oh, Mom taught me to read the notes and play, but I soon discovered that it takes much more than that to make music. I could see the spark of the Divine in the notes, but the angels wouldn't sing for me. The perpetual sunny day in my mind began to darken with clouds of failure.

Longfellow said, "Into each life a little rain must fall." I suddenly felt as if it were pouring in mine. Upon mentioning this feeling to my mother, she gently reminded me that Gene Kelly recommended Singing in the Rain (Freed and Brown). I had to admit; it was a good point.

Thus, as we searched together for the pot of gold Somewhere Over the Rainbow (Arlen), Mom pointed out an obvious fact that I had not considered. The one thing that I loved even more than music was reading, though music had a role in that as well. I loved to read about the lives of composers and how they came to create their incredibly inspired music. Perhaps my answers could be found in books.

My favorite reading spot, as one might presume, was at the foot of the piano. Mom had always encouraged this interest, so it didn't take long for reading to become a permanent habit. A better description might be obsession. I couldn't get enough. What the musical scale was to my mother, the written page was to me. Where she had an intimate, spiritual relationship with music, I had the same with literature.

Enthusiastic is far too weak a word to describe my voracious appetite for books. I became a junkie, addicted to the printed word and, like a junkie, the more I read the more I had to have my fix. As a bolt of lightning suddenly illuminates the details of a darkened forest, I suddenly understood mother's true feeling toward the music. Hints of what I was looking for began to dance fleetingly across the pages I read. Perhaps I was meant for a different kind of music.

Mom told me that music needed words to be complete. Though there are a great many exceptions to that rule, I was not about to disagree. I was eight years old when we discovered that the piano would not be my future, and eight is the age at which I wrote my first poem.

It sucked.

I knew what I wanted to say, but the words resisted my manipulations. It reminded me of putting together a jigsaw puzzle. I knew I had all the pieces; all I needed to do was figure out how to put them together correctly. Mom gently encouraged me to try again. I was...shall we say, reluctant? That was when Mom decided that I needed to learn one of the most important songs I would ever learn. The song concerned an ant, a rubber tree plant, a ram, a dam, and apple pies that somehow possessed the power of flight. Thus it was with High Hopes (Leigh) that I tried again, and again, and again, and (if you can believe it) again. Wouldn't you know; that ant and that ram had the right idea.

Like the ant and the ram, I needed to persist. I chose to have faith and do just that. As a result, my writing began to improve.

Mom chose this particular juncture in my education to point out that she had not been born into this world with the innate ability to play Boogie Woogie thirty-two to the bar (twice as fast as Liberace). She recounted the years of practice it took to perfect her art. The key, according to Mom, was to keep moving, keep creating, and never give up. "Nobody ever gets it right the first time," Mom said, "You just have to get a little better every time till you get it right." Believe it or not, she was correct...again!

My writing continues to improve, but is not yet up to the par of Mom's music. My education started, quite literally, at the feet of a master under the very piano at which I am sitting to conclude my story. Somehow, that seems fitting. My writing may never be as good as Mom's musical talents, but one thing is certain: I'll never stop writing until it is. No, that's not true. I won't even stop then. If I did, what would Mom say?

Experience, the greatest of all instructors, teaches us that if we decide not to fail, success is inevitable. I have found this to be true on my continuing journey through life, and I'm reasonably sure I could find a few others to testify to the same. Mom would be one of them. Such is the nature of the Divine in all of us. It is there, we simply have to have faith in our ability to manifest it.

More than one writer has sought to "find God in every sentence." I submit, humbly, that He is already there, for we are the ultimate manifestation of His handiwork. With a little faith and perseverance, we can accomplish anything. Perhaps that is the reason that, as Mom could never stop playing, I cannot still my pen.

## Argumentative- English 2010

1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner: Kori Cox, "Consumerism: The Future of Parenting"

For Dr. Bryce Christensen

In the hospital room the baby cries and the doctor places its tiny body in the new mother's arms. How does one describe this child and the meaning of its birth? Many people would call the beginning this new life a gift of nature, or even of God. However, new advancements in genetics are beginning to change this perception of children. Technologies such as genetic diagnosis and selective implantation techniques are precursors to the expected gene modification of the future (Schmidt 1). Each of these technologies plays a part in a cultural movement that essentially allows parents to choose their children. Although some parents across the United States herald these advancements as the cure for society's ills, others who study bioethics must disagree. The practice of choosing and designing children for various purposes results in an attitude of parenting that is rapidly becoming a form of consumerism that transforms children from natural gifts into products. In truth, new expectations of children, unethical measures of their value, and troubling ideas of their purpose are crippling our culture.

To understand these detrimental changes in parental attitudes, one must first consider the basic difference between a gift and a product. Compare the meaning of two sewing machines. One machine is a gift from a beloved great grandmother, a family heirloom. This valuable machine was the first of its kind with a foot pedal that requires motion to operate the needle. Now consider sewing machine number two. Equipped with the latest technology, researchers designed this highly efficient machine for a specific purpose. This is not a gift, but a product. Thus, the consumer who purchases this machine expects it to operate only as advertised. Obviously, the value of this machine lies in direct correlation to the ability it has to produce the desired results.

People view gifts and products in ways that differ greatly. A wise consumer will compare the strengths and weaknesses of various products and, finally, make a purchase with full faith that the new product will satisfy his or her needs. Unfortunately, genetic advancements tempt many adults to approach parenting in a similar manner. Scientists in this genetic era are developing technologies that may persuade parents to look at their posterity with a view that is alarmingly different from those of previous generations. Parents are beginning to view children as products instead of gifts. In the past, society felt an attitude of appreciation for infants, as is common with any gift. Glenn McGee remembers that the beauty of a child was once a quality beyond measurement and assessment when he describes an infant as, "beautiful and appropriate exactly because it represents the particular union of two particular people" (1). Thus, a child was not only a gift, but a specialized representation of the unique combination of parental characteristics. Such an extraordinary gift deserves appreciation. Parents show true love when they accept children as they are, appreciating the individuality of their strengths and weaknesses. When parents accept only a child with certain characteristics, selfishness replaces gratitude. As genetic advancements race forward, parents with consumer-like expectations fail to grasp the attitude of gratitude symbolized in the appreciation of great-grandmother's precious sewing machine. When society loses the sense of awe associated with birth, it threatens not only compassionate parental attitudes, but also the self-worth of a child.

Technology predicted for the near future would allow parents to choose the intelligence, athletic abilities, and musical talents of their children. Of course, some parents will argue that new genetic technologies will serve as an important tool in caring for a child. These supporters of enhancement suggest that genetically improving children is an essential part of parental love. Some, such as Savulescu, even claim that such enhancement is an ethical responsibility: "Once technology affords us with the power to enhance our and our children's lives, to fail to do so will be to be responsible for the consequences" (3). Statements such as this convince many parents that this alluring idea of better children is a wonderful opportunity. However, problems arise as definitions of "better" begin to conflict with one another. When parents try to define a "good" child, they reveal the evils of a consumer-oriented attitude. Consumers can certainly analyze the price, quality, and performance of a sewing machine and label it a "good" product; however, children display a variety of attitudes, personalities, and other characteristics, which an equation cannot accurately measure. The President's Council on Bioethics, created by President George W. Bush, felt it necessary to inquire, "What, exactly, is a good or better child? ... Is it a child with better character? If so, having which traits or virtues? More obedient or more independent? More sensitive or more enduring? More daring or more measured? Better behaved or more assertive?" (Kass et al 28). As the members of the President's Council imply, more than one definition of a good child exists. This is why parents who try to limit the idea of a good child to one definition inevitably leave out several admirable traits.

Parents searching for a "good product" will overlook the value of diversity. Parents should not compare children to the identical rows of product on a super market shelf, but instead, appreciate their differences. McGee observes, "A scientifically styled 'perfect society,' stratified by genes, makes little sense in a world where genetic variability turns out to be a virtue" (par. 6). McGee voices the opinions of many concerned bioethicists when he speaks about unique traits that some may leave out of a "perfect society." For instance, some careers require a competitive and assertive personality, while others call for a compassionate, patient nature. McGee continues in his argument when he insists, "Genetic diversity has tremendous value because it provides the opportunity for those of many hereditary backgrounds to employ differing approaches towards maximization of the potential of a given environment" (par. 27). McGee points out a truth that encompasses every aspect of daily life. Any team, group, organization, or personal relationship will benefit from the balancing effects of diversity. The loss of this diversity would impact not only the interwoven connections of society, where each diverse person adds his or her unique contribution, but also the self-image of individual children.

Baroness Warnock is one researcher who is concerned about how genetic technology will affect a child's view of himself or herself. She says, "It is difficult to foresee the difference it would make to someone's sense of responsibility and self-image if he had to think that other people, his parents, had decided that this is what he should be" (1). When parents choose genes for their child that are specific to an aptitude or career, they burden him or her with a pre-determined future. Certainly a child in these circumstances would feel an overwhelming pressure to perform. After all, when consumers use a product that does not give desired results, they classify it as worthless and dispose of it. Similarly, children might feel worthless when parents hold consumer-like expectations of them, thus limiting the possibilities of a child's future.

How could parents claim to know what genes their child would need? What would happen if, in their narrow-mindedness, they failed to see all of the possibilities? When parents have the ability to choose the defining traits of their offspring, will their choices of "good" genes reflect a "good" life for their child? One researcher, Maureen Junker-Kenny, contemplated this question and concluded that parents

who use genetic engineering have children who must endure "a forced submission to another person's idea of happiness" (4). Certainly, such a submission would be detrimental to individuals and society. One example comes from the story of a boy named George who was born nearly four hundred years ago. George's father wanted a good life for his infant son and felt a future career in law would certainly satisfy this requirement. Fortunately, in 1865, George Frideric Handel was born with only the genes bestowed by the miracle of nature. Eventually, Handel blossomed into a successful musician, became England's most successful composer, wrote the famed Oratorio Messiah, and left a legacy that extended far beyond his father's law school dreams (Kamien 142). Handel was a child who found success contrary to his parent's predictions. Fortunately, when they saw his aptitude for music and composition they did not expect him to attend law school. While George's father could only plan an educational path for his son, parents in the future may have the ability to choose genes for their child that would point toward a specific career. Parents who use genetic enhancement create rigid plans for their children, crushing natural talents and abilities.

Defenders of bioengineering would be quick to point out that parents are already creating high expectations for their children. One must admit that, even now, parents are taking advantage of resources that promise to increase the success of their children, such as expensive schooling or private lessons in sports, music, or dance (Sandel 51). If parents intend to purchase expensive ballet lessons for a daughter, why not give her an advantage by engineering her body with long slender legs, balance, and grace? If personal tutors and resume builders would get a son into a prestigious university, why deprive him of the benefits that come with a higher level of intelligence? Bioethicists like Michael Sandel see the legitimacy of such questions. He admits,

The defenders of enhancement are right to this extent: Improving children through genetic engineering is similar in spirit to the heavily managed, high-pressure child-rearing practices that have become common these days. But this similarity does not vindicate genetic enhancement. On the contrary, it highlights a problem with the trend toward hyper-parenting. (52)

As Sandel explains, the fact that overbearing parenting practices are already common in today's society does not make them constructive or even acceptable. For example, some parents expect kindergarten children to not only perform in athletic events, but also demonstrate a passionate drive and competitive spirit. Other parents may urge, prod, and press children to become excellent musicians and performers. Unfortunately, this type of oppressive and obsessive parenting provides fertile soil in which a harmful consumerism will grow. While many children already experience intense pressure from expectations of "hyper-parents," new genetic technologies will prove to be a new ultimate in parental control.

Although these horrors of future attitudes are frightening, present actions are already chilling. Parents are now able, through selective implantation, to choose the gender of their children. As Junker-Kenny states, "It is the 'intention,' not the outcome of the gene selection that hurts the sense of self possession" (6). The fact that parents made a decision between male and female proves a troubling point. A conditional love and acceptance has replaced a parent's unending love and appreciation for the gift of a child. It seems implausible that a child could be confident in any his or her defining characteristics when the parents were so particular about gender. These parenting choices would put pressure on a child to fit into the mold that the parents have created. Thus, it is obvious that parental attitudes, affected by consumerism, have changed already, creating a new culture in parenting.

As a bioethicist and a parent, Glenn McGee shares a troubling thought concerning this new culture. He worries because "parents that choose traits as calculative consumers might come to devalue the essential connection of relatedness and sameness in family relationships" (1). Parents who look from a consumer standpoint will lose appreciation for the intrinsic characteristics that are valuable in a gift. A gift leaves no room for action; in contrast, products invite a preference and a choice. An opportunity to choose is an opportunity for control. Some realize that the relationship between parents and children would turn rather asymmetrical as parents gain this greater power (Junker-Kenny 2). Greater parental authority creates additional problems.

As parents obtain the power of a consumer, they also begin to judge as a consumer. These parents begin to define the value of a child as they would a product; they lose sight of intrinsic value and look for traits that they link with specific results and outcomes. One of these seemingly necessary traits is the ability to compete. Essentially, parents have discarded the beauty of intrinsic value for the alluring competitiveness of intelligence and physical ability. One group of concerned parents admitted, "Our society tends to value persons based on performance, knowledge, education, and the ability to earn income" (King 9). Although it is necessary for society to place some value on these characteristics, parents must avoid attitudes that determine the entire value children by their abilities to compete with one another.

People may not realize how placing such a great value on competitiveness can be detrimental to society. Those supporting enhancement would agree with Julian Savulescu, who claims that parents are morally obligated to enhance their children. To prove his point he provides an example that illustrates how the breed of a dog correlates with its survival. He insists, "No matter what the turf, a Doberman would tear a Corgi to pieces" (1). Although Savulescu uses this analogy to support enhancement, the fact that he actually uses a dogfight to represent human existence serves as evidence that competitiveness leads to an abased way of life. Savulescu's idea of achieving enhanced people only applies to those who view life as a "dogfight." This tendency toward competitiveness neglects the deeper meaning and value of children and is a significant factor in the parental turn towards consumerism.

Certain cases, such as those when parents use a genetic diagnosis to determine which embryos are free of genetic disorder, may not seem to have any relevance to consumerism or competitiveness. This recent research, which has matched specific genes with certain disabilities, appears to promote only positive outcomes. For instance, genetic technology can now be used to identify diseases such as Down's Syndrome, Tay-Sachs Disease, Cystic Fibrosis and Huntington's Disease (Baird 2). Sarah Stoller asserts the seemingly obvious fact that parents have the obligation to utilize these technologies to choose the better child (1). However, within the word "better," the present ethical argument comes to life. These technologies, though helpful, serve as a gateway to additional consumer-oriented views. For example, parents begin to take the position that children without genetic disorders are "better" or of a greater value. In response, Maureen Junker-Kenny points out, "This stance actually promotes genetic enhancement as the way forward without ever questioning the cultural prioritizing of competitiveness over any other ideal of a shared and sustainable life" (14). It may be obvious that children with disabilities are less competitive. However, as Junker-Kenny clarifies, competitiveness cannot define the worth of a child.

One excellent example of this concept intrinsic value comes from the experiences of a teacher whose pupil had disabilities. This teacher told the parent of the disabled child, "Your son has made my class

easy to teach. When your son walks into the classroom, the competition is gone, the bickering is gone, the fighting is gone. He comes in and he brings love, he brings warmth and acceptance" (qtd. in King 9). Ironically, this child was valued, not for his ability to compete, but for the innocence that allowed him to dissolve that rivalry. People who recognize children as a gift realize that they can possess characteristics that are more important than competitiveness.

Families of genetically disabled children tell us "these children have taught us that there are so many more inherently important values, which have shaped us as a family" (King 9). Intrinsic qualities have the ability to outweigh the perceived importance of competition. One group of researchers proves this point with the results of a careful study of families with disabled children: "Over time, parents may experience changes in ways of seeing their child, themselves and the world. These new perspectives may encompass profound rewards, enrichments, and the appreciation of the positive contributions made by people with disabilities" (King 2). Unfortunately, consumerism obscures society's view of children and encourages parents to abandon these intrinsic ideals in favor of competitive characteristics.

Another special circumstance, which initially appears to have positive effects, involves the creation of a child donor. In cases such as this, in-vitro fertilization and tissue testing give parents the power to choose an embryo that would become a donor for a diseased sibling (Lotz 2). These pre-determined donors have been nicknamed 'saviour siblings' as their sole purpose is to save their disease stricken brother or sister. It would be difficult to accuse these parents of frivolity. Indeed, they have left height and eye color behind for much weightier matters, such as blood types and tissue compatibilities. However, even though parents of savior siblings begin with the best of intentions, another type of consumerism can be found. While one child is benefiting, another has become a product that differs from any previously mentioned. Mianna Lotz uncovers this form of consumerism as she states, "No person ought to be brought into existence solely for the purpose of fulfilling another's needs or interests or bestowing benefits upon them" (2). This statement is applicable to both the 'saviour sibling' and the genetically enhanced child. Though each child experiences differing circumstances, they will share parallel predicaments. Both will question their value and suffer a lack of confidence in parental love. As Lotz points out, neither child should be forced to endure these ill effects of consumerism. Thus, parents must approach even seemingly helpful procedures with caution, taking care to avoid the ever-present traps of consumerism.

As scientists reveal more genetic technology, parents lose sight of the giftedness of a child when they overlook the value of diversity and the wonder of natural talents. Children are no longer born for their own sake but to fulfill a parent's fantasy, live on the cutting edge of competition, or, in some cases, to save the life of another. These new unethical definitions of the purpose, expectation, and worth of children stand as proof that consumerism has expanded beyond the supermarket. The age of genetics introduces parents as customers, genetic engineers as manufacturers, and sadly, children as products. If members of society allow trends within genetic technology to continue in their corrupt patterns, parenting will inevitably become a form of oppressive consumerism.

---

#### Works Cited

Baird, Stephen L. "Designer Babies: Eugenics Repackaged or Consumer Options?" *Technology Teacher* 66.7 (2007): 12-16. Academic Search Premier. Web. 29 Sept. 2010.

- Junker-Kenny, Maureen. "Genetic Enhancement as Care or as Domination? The Ethics of Asymmetrical Relationships in the Upbringing of Children." *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 39.1 (2005): 1-17. Academic Search Premier. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.
- Kamien, Roger. *Music: An Appreciation*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011. Print.
- King, G. A., et al. "A Qualitative Investigation of Changes in the Belief Systems of Families of Children with Autism or Down Syndrome." *Child: Care, Health & Development* 32.3 (2006): 353-369. Academic Search Premier. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.
- Lotz, Mianna. "Procreative Reasons-Relevance: On the Moral Significance of Why We Have Children." *Bioethics* 23.5 (2009): 291-299. Academic Search Premier. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.
- McGee, Glenn. "Parenting In An Era of Genetics." *Hastings Center Report* 27.2 (1997): 16. Academic Search Premier. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.
- Kass, Leon, et al. *Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness, A Report by the President's Council on Bioethics*. Washington D.C.: President's Council on Bioethics, 2003. Print.
- Sandel, Michael J. *The Case Against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2007. Print.
- Savulescu, Julian. "New Breeds of Humans: The Moral Obligation to Enhance." *Reproductive BioMedicine Online* 10 (2005): 36-39. Academic Search Premier. Web. 8 Nov. 2010.
- Schmidt, Eric B. "The Parental Obligation to Expand a Child's Range of Open Futures When Making Genetic Trait Selections for Their Child." *Bioethics* 21.4 (2007): 191-197. Academic Search Premier. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.
- Stoller, Sarah E. "Why We Are Not Morally Required to Select the Best Children: A Response to Savulescu." *Bioethics* 22.7 (2008): 364-369. Academic Search Premier. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.
- Baroness Warnock. "Genetics and Morality." *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. Print.

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: Jared Vanhille, "The Torch of Kennedy"  
For Professor Rosalyn Eves

As the Presidential Election of 1960 came closer, John F. Kennedy, a Democrat, and Richard Nixon, a Republican and Vice President at the time, emerged as the two leading candidates for the Presidency: Kennedy went on to win one of the closest elections in history. With the Cold and Vietnam Wars in full swing and with the Civil Rights movement picking up momentum, John F. Kennedy became the thirty-fifth President of the United States on a cold, chilly Friday, January 20th, 1961. With his breath visible in the air, President Kennedy gave his inaugural address and challenged American and world citizens alike to "struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself" (par. 22). It is crucial in this speech for Kennedy to convince the American people that his win in the election is "not a victory of party, but a celebration of freedom" and that the American people must become invested in their community, nation, world, and ultimately something higher than the individual (par. 1). In John F. Kennedy's speech, one that many Americans remember, he succeeds in persuading his audience by identifying with his audience, utilizing parallel structure and chiasmus, describing the world through metaphors and analogies, and using specific words to evoke an emotional response.

First, President Kennedy identifies with his audience through the use of plural pronouns and by speaking of shared values. "We observe today not a victory of party, but a celebration of freedom" demonstrates the plural pronouns that Kennedy uses throughout his speech (par.1). In a speech that lasted only fourteen minutes, Kennedy uses "we," "our," and "us" over sixty times. By using the plural pronouns, Kennedy identifies himself as an equal member of his audience; but not only that, the audience, as a whole, is united. Kennedy only mentions taking the oath of office at the beginning—this builds his credibility and, therefore, his ethos—and merely mentions "this Administration" once (par.20), thus keeping him equal with his audience. Throughout the speech, Kennedy makes references to "freedom," "peace," "America," and "God." At this time, America was making a push toward peace, love, and freedom for all people, patriotism was high, and America did not cringe and complain at the reference to God. God was still involved in America at that time and Kennedy highlights those key words to identify with his audience.

Second, Kennedy utilizes parallel structure and chiasmus to make his statements more powerful and emphasize the need for Americans to become invested in something bigger than the individual. Parallel structure and chiasmus are used to make included words stand apart from the rest of the sentence. In "let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate" (par. 14), an example of chiasmus, each individual message—never to negotiate out of fear and to never fear to negotiate—is enhanced by the inverted structure of the two together. When parallel structure is used, emphasis is placed on the repeated parts of speech. In the following quote, the repeated structural pattern accentuates the verbs and the succeeding noun, "together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths, and encourage the arts and commerce" (par. 17). The phrases that are most often quoted from Kennedy's speech—and most remembered by those who heard the speech—are written in parallel structure: "ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country...ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man" (par. 25, 26). Parallel structure implants the essence of the message into the mind and lingers with the audience—what can I do for my country?

Next, Kennedy describes some of his key points through metaphors and analogies, which work to accentuate these points. Kennedy refers to colonies who sided with tyrannical countries as foolish, but he doesn't leave it that simple: "remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside" (par. 7). This analogy develops a slightly amusing, and slightly horrific, image in our minds that would not have been there if Kennedy had merely stated that colonies that sided with tyrannical countries often found themselves stuck in cruelty and oppression. The analogy brings clarity to the relationship of the foolish country with the tyrannical one and illuminates the malicious intentions of the tyrannical country. Also, Kennedy states that a "torch has been passed to a new generation of America" (par. 3), which furthers this idea of "[struggling] against the common enemies" (par. 22). The torch evokes an image of a battle standard: this battle standard is the cause that previous Americans have fought for. This torch suggests a duty which Americans must carry on. Kennedy does more than state that Americans need to keep going with the American dream, but he gives them something to hold onto. Metaphors and analogies allow the listener to attach to not just the words, but the essence and actual idea, concept, and feeling.

Finally, President Kennedy uses specific words throughout the speech to get his audience emotionally invested in the message. To further his idea of unity and equality in America, Kennedy uses words that suggest unity, such as "together," "both," "join," "united," "Americans," and even "world citizens." By using these words, Kennedy makes the audience feel as if they are one and allows them to believe more strongly in the feelings and ideas that Kennedy is stressing, namely becoming a part of something greater than themselves. Once united, ideas such as "freedom," "nation," "peace," "rights," "pledge," and "endeavor" mean more to the people; once united the people more readily feel patriotism burn inside, and this patriotism nudges them toward action. The word choice creates a tone of determination, passion, and unconquerable spirit. Kennedy's parallel structure and voice—in the actual speech—aid in getting the audience to feel this tone and to feel the same way. Kennedy also uses a tone shift to his advantage. In the last few minutes, Kennedy turns the people's minds to the many Americans who gave their lives all around the globe in the "struggle against the common enemies of man" (par. 22); however, Kennedy then moves the audience to a call to action as "the trumpet summons [them] again" (par. 22) and "[calls them] to bear the burden" (par. 22). This tonal shift allows the famous call to action of "ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country" (par. 25) to be heard by not only the ears, but also the heart. Kennedy plays the emotions, through tone, perfectly.

Kennedy creates a unity with and throughout the audience with this idea of struggling against the common enemies of man. His message and call to Americans, and the world, is heightened by his analogies and sentence structure, while his words evoke the souls of the Americans, and the world, to action. Kennedy succeeds in convincing his audience to become a part of something greater than themselves, as evidenced by the fact that the Civil Rights movement came to fruition, a missile crisis was defeated, and Americans looked to space as the Space Race gained fierce momentum in America. A "War on Poverty" soon came as well, and man did not merely "[hold] in his mortal hands the power to abolish poverty" (par. 2), but strove to use that power. America chose to carry on the torch, this torch that represented something so much larger than simply a flame, but a pursuit to better the world. It is through studying Kennedy's rhetoric that his desire for America to avoid passivism becomes clear, for once America avoids passivism and becomes active in their world community, that is when the world has possibility for change. Kennedy's message and this "torch [have] been passed to a new generation of

Americans" (par. 3). "Will you join that historic effort?" (par. 23). Whether you join or not, your actions will become history: and what will history speak of you?

---

#### Works Cited

"John F. Kennedy." The White House. Whitehouse.gov, n.d. Web. 20 Sept. 2010.

"John F. Kennedy Inaugural Address." Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States. Bartleby.com, 2001. 19 Sept. 2010. Web.

Honorable Mention: Wes Van de Water  
For Professor Joe Willis

One of the interesting character dynamics in *Batman: The Long Halloween* is the relationship between Batman and District Attorney Harvey Dent. While initially the two men join with police officer Jim Gordon and set out as a team to protect Gotham and take down the mob, Harvey takes a tragic spiral into madness and becomes no better than the criminals that he resented. This is tied in large part to a close-held jealousy that Dent holds for Batman. Dent despises his own inability to take on organized crime without wading through bureaucratic red tape, whereas Batman is free to engage criminality as he sees fit as long as he stays within certain acceptable parameters. This jealousy; coupled with Dent's family history of mental illness, causes Harvey to fail in his attempts to toe the line that Batman does, and ultimately results in his fall from grace.

Early on in the story, the trio makes a pact to bring down a mob lord known as "The Roman." This panel conveys many things in a very subtle way. Even compared to the rest of *The Long Halloween* the colors in this frame are particularly subdued. Everything is a varying shade of gray, which adds to the grim and somber feeling of the situation, but also shows that things are not entirely clear. In a very real sense, the three men are walking a very fine line in a morally gray area. Dent admits that Batman is free to step beyond certain boundaries that Gordon and he are limited by. Batman is able to function beyond the scope of the strict law to do what is necessary. It is important to note the position in which the men are standing. Batman is in the center with Gordon and Dent on either side. The two men help function to keep Batman in line, and to make sure that while he deviates from their method of fighting crime, he must be kept in check. Both Gordon and Dent realize that Batman could be extremely dangerous if given completely free reign. Also, the dark side of Dent's face, the same side that would later become the scarred portion of Two-Face, is facing away from Batman. This indicates that Batman is oblivious to the future danger that Dent will pose, in much the same way that he is unable to see that side of Dent's face.



Gordon, Batman, and Dent Fig. 1  
Pg. 37



Jim and Dent talking Fig.2

Pg. 38

The next page shows a conversation between Dent and Gordon after Batman leaves. Gordon tells Harvey that at one point he thought Harvey to be Batman. The panel of interest is the following panel where Harvey states that he is happy with who he is. The lighting on Harvey's face is very typical of how he is depicted throughout the story; with the left half obscured in darkness. This is a recurring and very poignant aspect of foreshadowing that indicates that Harvey is lying to Gordon. Like the first panel, the colors are very subdued and use only varying degrees of gray. Not only that, but Harvey's eyes are looking to the left, into the darkness. All of these subtle elements points out to the reader that Harvey is not content with who and what he is. He is looking to the shadows, or to Batman's realm, in a longing way. This shows that in all reality, he wishes that he could be more like Batman

The direction of his gaze is also a hint that in his mind he is already taking a direction away from Gordon and deeper into the darkness. However, Dent lacks the same degree of discipline and strength that Batman possesses, which allows him to better straddle the line between chaos and order as well as right and wrong. A balance that, regrettably, Dent is unable to ever truly find.

Dent's envy of Batman begins to gradually turn into resentment towards his masked cohort. This is punctuated later in the story by an encounter that Dent has not with Batman, but with the Joker. At this point, Harvey and his wife Gilda have lost their home in a retaliation bombing by the mob. Harvey purchases a new house as a surprise for Gilda. Upon entering their new home, Gilda goes upstairs and Harvey sees the Joker tampering with their Christmas tree. A brief fistfight ensues and Dent is dropped by the Joker. The comment that Dent is good, but "no Batman" is a backhanded compliment from the Joker which carries with it the notion that Dent is not strong enough to be someone like Batman, and therefore incapable of defeating the Joker.

Along with this, Harvey is taken down by a kick to the groin. While this is a dirty tactic, it is likely something that would not have caught Batman off guard. This leaves Dent with the thought and mocking challenge that he would need to step it up to become more than just a public official fighting organized crime. While the encounter is brief, it is a crucial step in driving Harvey to his fate of becoming Two-Face. He actively seeks a way to do more than just jump through the hoops to remove criminals from his city and the speed of his descent begins to quicken from this point.

Another critical turning point for Harvey comes from a visit to his insane father. The nature of this visit is not fully given to the reader, but Harvey tells Gilda that his father is "still crazy as ever." He is also holding a two-headed coin that used to belong to his father. In this panel, the entire left half of Dent's



The Joker and Dent fighting. Fig. 3

Pg 98

face is concealed in shadow. In Fig. 2, even though his face is in shadow, we are still able to see his left eye, here in Fig. 4 we can see neither of Harvey's eyes and the shadows are creeping across the right side of his face as well. From Harvey's comment we learn that mental illness runs in his family. Because of this, Harvey is more prone to falling victim to mental illness himself.



Dent and his father's coin. Fig 4. Pg 242

The way in which Dent is holding the coin is interesting as well. It is not unlike the way that the creature Gollum in *The Lord of The Rings* fawns over and obsessively stares at The One Ring. The coin becomes an object on which Dent fixates and eventually uses as a supposedly just and impartial means of deciding the fate of others.

His body posture is also slightly unusual for a grown man. On one hand it is similar to a deranged creature obsessed with a small object, but it also not unlike a young child finding comfort in a favorite toy or other object of intrinsic worth. This and the shading in the panel show that Dent is conflicted about where he is and also that he is slowly but surely beginning to lose his grip on his own self identity and even his sanity.

By the end of the story, Harvey has almost completely lost himself in the madness of Two-Face. Gordon and Batman finally catch up with him, but he has already killed Falcone, or The Roman, and his former assistant Vernon, who was paid off by the mob to sabotage Harvey. At this point, we see a panel very similar to Fig. 1, but it is also quite different in many regards. Now, Two-Face, or Harvey, is flanked by Batman and Gordon on either side. In much the same way that Harvey and Gordon tried to keep Batman in line, Batman and Gordon are now seeking to contain Harvey to keep him from inflicting any more harm. He has gone from being a voice of reason to a deranged killer and has completely spiraled out of control.

Even the division of his face is curiously placed. The mangled half faces toward Batman as if that was the part that attempted to go where Batman dwells, but he was unsuccessful. This also indicates that Dent's envy of Batman and desire to become more like him is what resulted in his psychological fall and breakdown. In this panel, the coloring is of particular importance. The colors are clear, well defined, and the details are vivid. Especially when contrasted with Fig. 1, it shows a large degree of clarity. It is only at this point, after it is too late for Harvey and those that he killed, that Batman and Gordon see the truth. Had they been able to discern the true nature of Dent's predicament, perhaps the crisis could have been avoided or, at the very least, diminished. But now that everything is resolved, the gray fog of uncertainty has cleared away, and Batman and Gordon find themselves both in their proper place, seeking to get Harvey under control and restore order to their city.

Because of Dent's jealousy of Batman's freedom and capacity to fight crime in a more literal sense, the good man that Harvey started out as is lost to the shadows of madness and is consumed by a hatred of perceived injustice, criminal tolerance, and his own skewed desires to deal out punishment. Even though he has the best of intentions at the onset, Harvey fails in his quest to emulate Batman and fight fire with fire. This, coupled with his underlying mental instabilities, results in the emergence of the coin-flipping killer that is as much of a threat to the good of Gotham and his friends as the crime lord he set out to destroy.

## Expressive- English 2010

1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner: Kori Cox, "If You Wish Up a Stair"

For Dr. Bryce Christensen

The typical high school student would waste no time in defining science simply as a subject or a class. In this frame of mind, it would seem easy to confine science to a chemistry or biology classroom with a rare appearance in the math or history halls. However, not a single scientific thought would dare to enter into a place such as the music department. To many, it seems clear that science and music have simply no common ground. One seems so rigid and definite, and the other so flexible and free from factual clarity. However, as a student of both disciplines, I must disagree. I believe that science plays a part in all aspects of life, even in something as intangible as music. Certainly, this claim may seem a bit outlandish. Yet, when a little girl who analyzes, organizes, and categorizes suddenly meets the musical world, you cannot expect something ordinary as a result.

My adventure with music began in the fourth grade. I was enjoying school and described myself as a "good student." At this point, I wanted to know the "how" and "why" of everything. My teachers seemed willing and able to oblige me. I was learning how rocks changed form and why plants were green after all. I sat in my chair listening, learning and drinking it all in. If there was something to know, I wanted to know it. I studied and memorized every new piece of information. To me, an excited elementary student, school was all about searching and curiosity.

One morning, as I reviewed my times tables in class, I made a wonderful discovery. Something was very special about the number nine. In fact, I noticed that the digits in each of the first ten multiples of nine also had a sum of nine. For instance, the second multiple of nine is eighteen and the two digits one and eight add up to equal nine. This magnificent pattern continued with twenty-seven, thirty-six, and so forth. This discovery was pure happiness for my fourth grade self. Looking back, I am still surprised at the intense excitement that I felt simply because of the number nine. This is who I was when music found me. I was a responsible, studious, list-making, note-taking student, well on my way to a left-brained existence.

The music program in our elementary school gave us all the opportunity to play in a beginner's orchestra. Seeing it as another opportunity to learn, I jumped at the chance to be involved. Initially, my music class was very informative and educational. I began to play the violin and I loved every new thing I learned. It seemed that music was right down my alley. I memorized notes, their sequence, their appearance in each clef, and the key in which they belonged. I memorized terms and vocabulary. I knew 'allegro' from 'andante.' I understood the difference between a spiccato and a pizzicato, neither of which turned out to be pasta. I learned that "piano" was an instrument, but it was also a notation of volume.

My favorite part was the use of fractions. I was pleased to see that my music was math. I found that the counting of a rhythm was, at times, split up into halves, quarters, eighths, and even thirty-secondths. I imagined how many combinations might evolve out of such a selection. The opportunities were endless, and at times, very interesting. If I played a note for two counts, the measure still had two entire counts remaining. This empty space could be filled with two quarter notes, four eighth notes, or even a two sets

of triplets. I easily memorized which rest symbol represented which note value because I could determine how much of the fraction remained. Everything fit together so perfectly. As I left fourth-grade behind, I was very satisfied with my musical endeavor. It became another answer to my questions, another way to learn, and another reason to write lists. Why would I not love it?

Several years later, however, I began to question my enthusiasm. Suddenly, upon my entrance into middle school, music seemed to slip from a fact to a feeling. When we learned to tune our strings, our teacher told us to "listen until the sound felt right." We were to stop tuning when the two strings "fit together harmoniously." I was obviously quite lost. I was grasping for facts and logical reasons in a sea of vague and abstract definitions. When we learned about harmonics, our teacher defined them as a "sweet spot on the string." All I needed to do was "become one" with my instrument. My class was beginning to sound more like magic and less like music.

What surprised me was the way in which the majority of my classmates nonchalantly accepted these new methods. They nodded their heads in understanding, and soon they were floating above me in the cloud of emotion and sensation that my instructor had created. Yet, there I was, stranded on the solid ground with an armful of terms, scales and note patterns that now seemed useless. The responsible student in me tried to follow, but I could not grasp meaning out of what seemed to be thin air. I needed something of definition and substance.

As you can see, I was beginning to have a very difficult time. This manner of explanation did not seem to fulfill any purpose. This same way of teaching would certainly not survive in any other area of curriculum. Imagine a math teacher saying, "And now class, put the square root wherever you think it will find harmony with the rest of the equation." Next, visualize a chemistry teacher, with his bubbling concoction, as he instructs, "Students, please keep pouring until the mixture of these two unknown substances feels accurate to you. That's right, become one with your beaker." Obviously, no administrator would approve of these methods. Yet somehow, music had seemed to escape the logic and meaning of the real world. It had risen above science, free to float aimlessly. At least, that is what I was afraid had happened.

Fortunately, I did not keep this perspective for long. My sophomore year, a new music teacher arrived. The fact that he had once studied to be an engineer caught my attention. I did not know that someone with a scientific mind could be a successful musician. I had not thought it was possible, but there he was. I braced myself for billowing cloud castles, but he stayed on solid ground. He began with a lesson on tuning. We had all certainly heard the word before. However, he told us about the waves produced by sound. He mentioned a correlation between pitch and the frequency of each wave, and we learned that when strings are in tune, the frequencies perfectly overlap. When two notes are out of tune, they produce dissonance, which the ear hears as beats or pulses. These pulses, grow slower and slower with the change in pitch, until they disappear all together, leaving the strings perfectly in tune. Suddenly, this concept of tuning made sense to me. This instructor knew science, and he was speaking my language.

Soon after this amazing lesson, our teacher taught us about harmonics. He did not try describing them as a "sweet spot on the string," but rather as a wave whose frequency was double that of the correlating note. He mentioned that such a note existed on the exact middle of each string. Why had no one mentioned that before? I cried tears of joy as I reached happily for my ruler. After my unending and painful bewilderment the previous year, I was deeply grateful for something logical and measurable. My new teacher led me to great heights, but he did not expect me to float. Instead, he built me stairs.

From that day forward, I knew that science truly did exist everywhere, even in music. My view of education changed one harmonic at a time. Though my early years were filled with a suffocating confusion, my struggling was every bit worth the new philosophy that was shared with me in the end. Now I can say that I will never learn without looking for scientific application, and I will always take the stairs.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner: Kaitlin Pollock, "My New Eyes"

For Dr. Bryce Christensen

Marcel Proust, a French novelist, once stated, "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." During my sophomore year of high school, all I wanted was a new landscape. It seemed to me that a world of fascinating discoveries lay on the horizon past my small hometown, just beyond my fingertips. That changed after I spent six weeks on a paleontological field crew with a group of people I never would have regularly associated with. That summer was a season of discovery about my surroundings, but more importantly it was a summer of discovery about me. It was then I realized it's often the times we least expect to learn something, we learn the most. That summer I was given new eyes that forever changed the way I viewed the world around me.

Tropic, Utah—my hometown. Population 642, including the cows. In today's world of "here and now," one would think that a person couldn't survive an hour and a half away from the nearest Wal-Mart. As someone who persevered through the "disadvantages" of small town America, I can say now that I am grateful I am a small town girl. My backyard was a wilderness of adventure—my imagination grew to be as big as the acres of alfalfa that envelop my small beautiful valley. As a child I ran free through the hills pretending to be Indiana Jones on a quest to unearth a treasure that would change the world. Huts were built, friendships forged, and happiness was felt in the arms of my small town. I wouldn't trade my childhood experiences for anything.

As one grows older, imagination fades until it's almost nonexistent; reality tugs on the arm and beckons further and further from the days of make believe. School, work, and extra-curricular activities thieved away what little free time I had. No longer was the world as it was for me as a child. Things regarded as important before started to seem unimportant and embarrassing. As I drifted away from the realms of innocence and imagination, differences between my life and others were brought to attention—the grass seemed to be greener on their side. As I transitioned into high school, this became even more apparent.

My cousin happens to be from a large city and, therefore, from a large school. When we would see each other, she would tell me about all of the exciting and fun classes she was taking that were offered in her large school. Ballroom dance, AP Art History, bowling—the list went on and on. What did I have to compete with that? Well, I could take biology, chemistry, and American government, all of which are required classes. The few electives my high school offered were broad, closely related subjects. I felt trapped. I was missing out on learning all of the "cool" subjects because of the size of my high school. I wished I could move away and broaden my horizons at a larger school.

My dad is a geologist who works at Bryce Canyon National Park for the Natural History Association. One day he mentioned that a position on a paleontological field crew studying Bryce Canyon was opening up to one high-school-age student in the county. He explained that Weber State University and BCNP were partnering up to expand knowledge on the fossils contained within the park. One student would be "lucky" enough to be on a crew with a professor of paleontology from Weber State and a hand-picked selection of his best college students. My first thought: I pity the poor nerd who gets that job. When my dad suggested I apply for the position, I laughed and told him I didn't want to. But the more he talked it

up, the more I considered it. I ended up submitting an application with little expectations that I'd be selected. A couple of weeks later, I was notified that I got the job. Of course.

The project supervisor lived a couple houses up my street; I went to him to find out some details. He is a family friend and he certainly looks the part of a paleontologist. Standing at around 5' 11", this full-bearded man is one of the nicest people I have ever met. His contagious thrill for discovery and passion for his work radiates outwards and encompasses everyone around him. Ever since I have had the pleasure of knowing him, I have noticed that he is the type of person who makes me want to stop everything I'm doing and go find some fossils. That day I went to see him he welcomed me warmly and let me know what to expect once I started working. I was informed we would be doing a comprehensive survey of all the fossil content in Bryce Canyon National Park. This included hiking 3-5 miles of rugged terrain each day and locating possible fossil sites; taking 40-50 pound test bags back to base camp; washing and screening the dirt; and fine-picking the material under a microscope. It turned out that I would be on the crew with seven other people, all of whom were college juniors and seniors majoring in geology. I was suddenly very nervous about being a part of the crew. I started imagining them all as the type of people who were rough, rude, and wouldn't want anything to do with me. What if they don't like me because I'm so young? How am I supposed to get along with these people if none of them believe in the same things as I do or even have the same interests as me? These were some of the thoughts that tormented me, and I resolved that for the next six weeks I would be silent, just do my job, and try to ignore them without getting in their way. How little I knew back then...

My first day arrived. At 7:45 A.M. I found myself taking steps filled with apprehension up to my boss, Jeff's, house. I just could not see a way that it was all going to work out. Maybe I could fake sick, I thought to myself. Adorned in my backpack, hiking boots, and sun hat, I was introduced by Jeff to the rest of the crew. I remember being surprised that most of them were normal looking. I guess when you grow up watching movies you expect the average paleontologist to be in khaki shorts, a button up shirt, with tall socks and a goofy hat, but they wore everyday regular clothes. We all tried to make awkward small talk and I had never felt so out of place or different. Eventually we split up into smaller groups and then headed out to the vehicles to start the day. I was put in a truck with two of the guys—one a 6' 5" giant teddy bear, and the other a balding vegan with a bushy red beard. There I sat, smack dab in the middle of these bizarre smelling strangers wondering what I had gotten myself into. (One thing I learned during my summer internship is deodorant is not a top priority for field geologists.) The only thought on my mind? I'm going to kill my dad when I get home. As we set out for our destination, Cory, the giant teddy bear, reached for his iPod and selected a song to listen to. When he made his selection, time stood still. In that moment, my ears heard "Hotel California" by the Eagles. My eyes were opened, and I knew that all of my fears and assumptions had been dead wrong. These were my kind of people.

Throughout the course of the next six weeks, I grew closer to these people than I ever thought I would. As it turned out, we had much more in common than I assumed. They were great people who had unique views to offer me. They helped expand my views and opinions on life and the world. While sweating out in the hot summer sun, battling the bugs, climbing steep hills, and discovering fossils of ancient animals and dinosaurs, we forged a bond of friendship that will always make me remember that summer with a smile. Science brought a group of people together that never would have chosen to be friends under normal circumstances. Although we had many differences, it was our similarities that brought us together and helped us become friends. I was in better shape than most of them, and I knew just as much about fossils and fieldwork as they did. Together we were all in new territory. They had

great senses of humor and were, in fact, regular people working towards a college degree, not the rough people looking for a fresh piece of meat to subject to mental bullying I had imagined. What these people helped me see through our experiences together was far greater than any Lasik surgery could provide.

The things I learned about Bryce Canyon, stratigraphy, ancient mammals, dinosaurs, and geologic time were interesting. They gave me a greater appreciation for our historic predecessors and my hometown area. It also validated my beliefs, and offered me opportunities to grow into who I am. I realized that I was in a very unique situation most individuals would never find themselves in. I was a part of a research team that basically mapped the fossil content of Bryce Canyon National Park. We discovered things that helped enlarge the understanding of the Park's historic environment. Even my cousin with her fancy classes couldn't compete with that.

Overall, that summer holds fond memories. There were days when I was tired of packing a heavy pack filled with dirt that may or may not have contained things we were looking for. There were days I thought I was going to die attached to a microscope. And the gnats? I cursed them every day for their relentless and incessant flying into my ears, mouth, eyes, and nose. But, I wouldn't have had it any other way. That experience changed me. It brought the realization that life is about the here and now—what we make of the situations we are given. Different situations arise in everyone's life; the uniqueness of our opportunities provides chances for lessons to be learned about ourselves. There is always something good in any situation. As someone who grew up in a small town, I can confidently state that I was provided exclusive circumstances that I'm proud of. Further still, since I have grown up ten miles away from a national park, I have been provided with additional opportunities that others may not ever dream of having. I rarely considered my environment to be positive until that summer. It was then I realized that I was raised in the greatest town in the world. My new eyes help me continue to see that every day.

Honorable Mention: Keven A. Ray, "Twisted But Not Stirred"

For Dr. James Aton

The sounds of a tongue lapping up the bloody flesh from a fresh, half-decapitated, lifeless, yearling fawn can be heard by the nearby cliff chipmunk as it rests under the safety of a forearm-sized branch of a bristlecone pine tree, eating on a small oak nut or acorn. A ground dwelling species, the chipmunk has burrowed its home under a fine specimen of a twisted bristlecone tree. The sandy red dirt is piled outside of the home; this is an instrument of irrigation, designed to keep the flowing waters of floods and rain away from the residence.

Outside, a black ant is in search of a meal. It circles the exposed roots of the tree, climbing and reaching out for a scent with its antennae. This ant is a forager in the colony and has failed at his job of finding food for many days. Climbing back down to the base of the tree, the ant gets a scent and follows it for a few feet as it gets stronger and reveals an unresponsive, likely dead, grasshopper. The ant now secretes a pheromone chemical, and makes a trail with it back to the colony to get some troops to help retrieve the feast.

Getting back to the grasshopper, the ants find that a tarantula has made a meal of his own and has the grasshopper suspended, halfway hanging from his mouth. This *Aphonopelma lodi* spider is native to Utah and not only has a silk-producing spinneret in its abdomen, but also has them on its hairy feet. Commonly stalking its prey late in the day or night, this tarantula can sit for hours waiting for an insect to emerge. This day the tarantula finds a susceptible meal, but can easily be prey itself to a nearby rattlesnake, and crawls back into its burrow.

A western rattlesnake sleeps coiled up next to a rock in the shade of a cave overhang that has weathered apart over hundreds of thousands of years by the elements. Small holes in the ceiling of the cave emit pinpricks of sunshine, which glisten upon the red, iron-rich ground. A brush mouse scurries across the ground in a quick fashion, almost as if ignorant to its dangerous surroundings. The quick rodent nearly grazes the snake, passing it within its domain, then turns uphill and continues to frolic aimlessly. Suddenly, a set of talons exhausts the breath from its lungs and then lifts the mouse into the air violently.

A red-tailed hawk now soars up into the sky with its prey clutched tightly, floating through the air using the lift from a breeze coming off the cliff ledge. The hawk, soaring high, is a witness to a scene of serene beauty. Tall mountains covered with thick trees take up the background with Brian Head peak to the east and Cedar Breaks taking up the majority of the landscape from the east to the southeast, with the grand amphitheater of magnificent colors touching the edge of the Twisted Forest. The backdrop for these bristlecone pine trees looks like a reddish field, and the way these half-bare trees look from this height resemble greenish sagebrush scattered throughout the few acres. Just off the edge of Cedar Breaks stands a three-hundred-foot drop-off descending into the reddish limestone ledges. At the bottom of the colorful descent lies a thick forest that continues until reaching the Cedar Canyon road. The bristlecone forest slopes away from the drop off and bottoms out with a clump of spruce and pine trees, and then it ascends upon a green hill covered in wild grasses and aspen trees.

A tall narrow limestone peak looks like a secluded place for a meal, and the hawk lands. Its weight presses down on the mouse through the talons. Its beak opens, grasps the mouse, and now the hawk pulls, violently tearing the head from the body. With this action repeated, the mouse is devoured pieces at a time, which tear off with ease for the strong and able bird. Now the hawk takes flight and soars close to the ground, through the red cylindrical limestone caps, and into the ancient pines. The unique root system of the bristlecone pine tree can almost make it seem buried above the ground, almost as if the dirt washed away and nothing is attaching it to the ground. This species of tree, known as the world's oldest living organism, has been dated as old as five thousand years. In this particular area, they are around twelve hundred years old. The cylindrical branches resemble a bristle brush, which is where they get their name.

Passing through the trees, the hawk continues down the slope of the ridge and reaches the clump of spruce trees where a mountain lion is enjoying its kill. The feline has downed a young fawn by pouncing on it and biting its neck until it no longer shows signs of life. Now it feeds, taking in the energy of its prey. Cougars are widely found throughout the western hemisphere in most of the habitable locations in the Americas. It cannot roar due to missing the specialized larynx, but it yells with a distinct war cry. The mountain lion is king of this area, next to black bears, and balances out nature by taking out the weak.

The way cats, snakes, birds, mice, chipmunks, and even the tiny ants interact within the environment is a circle. It is a pattern of life. The big cat is going to meet something bigger, the small ant is going to meet something bigger; the dirt, the rocks, and the trees are all subject to something bigger. Elements constantly interact with the earth through weather, geology, and chemistry. These elements create and destroy, build up and erode, give life and unavoidably take it.