



THE SCRIBLERIAN

Fall 2013 Edition

Sponsored by the English Department and the Braithwaite Writing Center, the Scriblerian is a writing contest and on-line journal for students by students. Revived during Fall Semester 2004 after a two-year hiatus, the essay competition is organized each semester by Writing Center tutors for ENGL 1010 and 2010 students. Winning essays are published on-line on the English Department website and past winners were also published in the print textbook SUU Guide to English Composition 2010-2011. The Fall 2013 Scriblerian Contest was planned and supervised by Chair Emily Moss with the help of John Iler, Jared Vanhille, Zach Allred, and Sydney Roberts. A total of 22 essays were submitted for the contest.

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Argumentative- English 1010

1st Place Winner: J.S. Wayne, "Sexualization of Violence in Comics"
For Professor Patricia Eagan

Introduction and Case Study

"What's perhaps most disturbing about [the Harley Quinn suicide art] contest... is that it essentially prohibits comic artists who are opposed to the eroticization of violence against women from applying for the honor of drawing a strong female character."—Callie Beusman, editorial assistant, Jezebel.com

Comic books have long been a controversial medium and frequent battleground in the ongoing battle of the sexes. In addition to the exaggerated physical assets and minimal costumes worn by many female characters in comics, there is also the matter of violence against these characters, which is often just as stylized and overblown as their attire. Feminist authors such as Callie Beusman of Jezebel.com and feminist watchdog groups charge that such violence, which often includes rape, torture, and even murder, when committed on the person of these characters, sends a clear message that violence against women, especially of the sexualized variety, is acceptable. However, let us consider the case of Harley Quinn and the recent backlash against the submissions call for the reboot of her comic as a sort of acid test to consider the veracity of these charges and their applicability to real life. By taking a reasoned and rational look at the genesis of the character and the nature of the reboot, we will be left with one inescapable conclusion: One page in one comic does not an overriding cultural ethos make, no matter how hard certain social elements strive to make it so.

On September 5th, 2013, DC Comics sent out a submission call on the Internet, offering a staff artist job to an artist who managed to successfully draw Harley Quinn, former villain and now antihero, in an array of suicide attempts on a single page. The first panel called for her to be standing on a rooftop wielding a detached cellular tower during a lightning storm. The second requested that she be portrayed wearing a bikini made of raw chicken and sitting in an alligator pond in hopes of being devoured. The third panel depicted Harley standing in a whale's mouth, cheerfully tickling the roof of said mouth with a feather, presumably to induce the whale to swallow her a la Jonah. It was the fourth panel, however, that prompted the most strident outcries:

Harley sitting naked in a bathtub with toasters, blow dryers, blenders, appliances all dangling above the bathtub and she has a cord that will release them all. We are watching the moment before the inevitable death. Her expression is one of "oh well, guess that's it for me" and she has resigned herself to the moment that is going to happen (Melrose).

The timing of this contest was unquestionably unfortunate, coming only three days before the beginning of National Suicide Prevention Week. The move prompted a joint statement from the American Psychiatric Association, National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, which condemned the contest as "potentially dangerous" and read:

We believe that instead of making light of suicide, DC Comics could have used this opportunity to host a contest looking for artists to depict a hopeful message that there is help for those in crisis. This would have been a positive message to send, especially to young readers (Truitt).

A number of online publications and commentary sites picked up the furor, which quickly separated itself into three basic rubrics:

1. DC Comics has no business glamorizing or sexualizing suicide.
2. DC Comics is arguably misogynistic and degrades women.
3. Comics in general are misogynistic and degrading to women.

In the aftermath of this transparent publicity stunt, DC Comics apologized to readers and artists alike who were offended by the content. They pointed out that, unbeknownst to the general public, the entire page was intended as a dream sequence with a Looney Tunes feel and was not to be taken seriously. The page in question was intended for the re-launch of the Harley Quinn franchise, issue #0, and the story would be necessarily short-lived if the main character killed herself on page one. DC quickly removed the contest and all mentions of it from their website, but not before a number of artists had already completed their entries. These entries were subsequently posted online, and in some cases were even used as background illustrations for the texts of the commentary sites.

Anatomy of a Character

The trope of sensationalized female character deaths has long haunted the medium, as has a terrible tendency to oversexualize and objectify women characters; it's almost surprising that it's taken DC this long to combine the two into a vile heap of casual sexism — because female suicide is *so fascinating and compelling and cool* [emphasis added]... —Callie Beusman

The problem with all of these arguments is that they overlook the essential nature of the character, as well as the general nature of comic books across the spectrum. Therefore, a closer look at the personality of Harley Quinn and DC in general is fitting to understand how and where these arguments do and do not hold water.

First, let us begin with considering how gender roles are portrayed in comic books. The men are typically muscular, if not outright musclebound, obviously well-endowed behind codpieces and under skintight costumes, and cerebral. The women of this world are often depicted as elderly and incapable of defending themselves from a number of threats both mundane and metahuman or as overtly sexualized caricatures with outsized mammary glands and a more or less complete lack of intelligence or common sense. One humorous and nominally less offensive example is Daphne, from the Scooby Doo cartoons and comics, a franchise also owned by DC. Daphne frequently finds herself in the position of hapless hostage cum eye candy, waiting for the valiant Fred, the brilliant-in-spite-of-himself Shaggy, and the titular hound to find and rescue her from the threat *du jour*.

DC Comics has long portrayed its heroes and villains with a number of psychological glitches and twitches. Some of the more notorious examples are the pedophilic Mad Hatter with his proclivity for little blonde girls, the narcissistic Riddler and his obsessive need to leave a calling card for his crimes, and even Batman himself, who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and possibly dissociative identity disorder. In many cases, these people are actually selfdefeating because of their pathological psyches. Knowing this gives a context to look harder at the character of Harley Quinn specifically and

understand why DC would not see such a range of suicide attempts as out of context or character for her.

Dr. Harleen Quinzel began her career with DC in 1992, working in Gotham City's infamous Arkham Asylum as a psychologist who was tasked with trying to unravel the tangled threads of the Joker's twisted mind (Reed). Instead of curing him, however, she quickly succumbed to a recognized psychological dysfunction known as hybristophilia, defined by The Free Dictionary as "[a] paraphilia [sexual fetish] in which a person is sexuerotically attracted to a person who has committed an outrage or a gruesome crime (Segan's Medical Dictionary)." This syndrome, also referred to informally as "Bonnie and Clyde syndrome" and in certain tightly controlled circumstances used interchangeably with Stockholm syndrome, sent Dr. Quinzel into a tailspin.

She adopted the clownish demeanor of her lover/mentor/tormentor, took on the moniker of Harley Quinn, and in short became just as ruthless, sadistic, and chaotic as the Joker himself. Indeed, the parallels between the Joker and Harley Quinn are so obvious that it could fairly be argued that she is little more than a female version of the Joker designed specifically to attract (or pander to) the female demographic for DC during a period of flagging readership across the board, but particularly among girls and women, in the wake of the highly publicized death of Superman. Unlike the Joker, Quinn has several redeeming qualities. When the abuse she undergoes at the Joker's hands becomes too much, she walks away in true supervillain fashion. Renouncing her evil ways and seeking to make amends for her past misdeeds, she joins the Suicide Squad, a group of superheroes working for the US government who take their team name from the idea that their assignments are tantamount to active and direct suicide. Nevertheless, they always prevail for truth and justice. Harley recognizes her illness and makes a concerted effort to "fix" herself, albeit in a self-destructive manner.

Given this, it is not only reasonable but realistic to assume that her dreams would be more than a little troubled. Many survivors of abusive relationships, both male and female, report thoughts of suicide, nightmares, or fantasizing about self-harm scenarios. In Quinn's case, the fact that she was an active and willing participant in her own downfall, albeit through a form of mental illness which raises the necessary adjunct issue of just how culpable she truly was, would almost inevitably lead to a number of such happenstances. Indeed, the very fact that she is a trained clinical psychologist may actually have left her more vulnerable to them, because she understands on an intellectual level the mechanisms and thought processes which would likely lead to these feelings and ideas and would be in a state of constant conflict as a result.

According to Dr. Steven Barney, president of the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association and an associate professor of psychology at Southern Utah University, it may well be that Quinn's innate fascination with the darker aspects of the human psyche and her interest in studying subjects who display aberrant psychology may have unconsciously led to her role as the Joker's paramour. She likely had no initial intention of falling prey to his blandishments and was well aware of his dangerously chaotic nature, but gradually her deeply buried unconscious desires and her conscious need to maintain professional distance were drawn into inevitable conflict. Dr. Barney likens this struggle to submerging a beach ball. "It's easy to hold the ball underwater for a while, but if you have any weaknesses in your arms, sooner or later the pressure to release the ball becomes unbearable," he said in an oral interview with the author (Barney).

Suicide and Sex in Comics

Anyone who knows anything about Harley Quinn knows she shares Joker's interest in the macabre. A contest to find out which artist can be most creative about her suicide would seem something Harley would do to try and locate someone with her same sense of warped perception of the world. – User/commentator "Brian From Canada," Robot6.com

In 1999, Gail Simone, a staff writer for DC Comics, coined the phrase "women in refrigerators" as shorthand for the often overblown deaths and violence perpetrated against female characters (Burlingame). This phrase stems from the reboot of the Green Lantern franchise, in which the titular hero returns home to find his girlfriend has been murdered and her body stuffed in the refrigerator. However, this phrase also serves as a ghoulish double entendre, referring not merely to the death of the characters but as a macabre reference to the intermediate destination of murder victims between the scene of the crime and the cemetery or crematorium, as appropriate: the morgue.

The idea of violence against women in comics is certainly not a new one. As comics have become progressively darker and edgier, comic writers have found new and more exotic ways to kill off female characters. One particularly famous example is the demise of Shelly Webster in James O'Barr's classic paranormal graphic novel *The Crow*, who died as a result of a brutal gang rape. In O'Barr's unique case, he was grieving the death of his fiancée, who died in precisely that fashion. Another is that of the character Silhouette in *The Watchmen*, whose death is made to appear directly linked to her public lesbianism. In the majority of cases, Simone observed the overriding reason for such deaths is generally to give the hero "manpain" and a motivation for revenge.

Comic books serve as a funhouse mirror of reality, not a template for it. Rapists and murderers, as well as even worse deviants, are dealt with harshly in these pages and often meet their demise at the hands of their own machinations, with a well-timed push from the hero or heroine. In DC's case, one particular aspect of a villain's psyche becomes the trope that informs their every move, as with early Harley Quinn/the Joker storylines, where her hybristophilia coupled with a formidable intellect results in a sexualized, less successful version of her twisted love interest. Nevertheless, the character must not only be true to their own mind, but also behave in a realistic way even in utterly unrealistic circumstances, as with Harvey "Two-Face" Dent, whose obsessive-compulsive disorder demands that his notorious coin be employed on every decision he makes. Failure to involve this prop results in acute psychological discomfort until he rectifies this oversight, and was used as the key to his defeat by the Dark Knight and the Boy Wonder in the movie *Batman Forever*.

Many feminist comic readers and critics argue that women are unfairly and illogically portrayed as "cut-rate" versions of male heroes and villains, although this sentiment has become fairly muted in the outcry over the perceived unfairness of gender portrayals in comics. In the case of Harley Quinn, there is a certain amount of justification to this argument. However, when the feminist argument is added to that of Harley Quinn's apparent attempts to court death in DC's fan art contest, the resulting logical edifice ends up working against the argument for a complex of reasons. First, Quinn has extricated herself from an abusive relationship in which she could only be the sidekick/punching bag. In doing so, she established a sense of self-worth and positive self-image which the suicide attempts portrayed belie. Second, it is reasonable to argue that Quinn is not attempting passive suicide, such as "suicide by cop" or agitating a supervillain into taking out their frustrations on her. In the case of the portrayals DC specified, she is an active, even gleeful participant in her own death, albeit in a dream sequence.

When she fails to get struck by lightning, even though bolts from the heavens are striking everywhere but where she is standing with a large detached cellular tower, one possible interpretation is that the gods themselves are refusing her plea for death. Her failure to get eaten by alligators, even though she's wearing a bikini made of raw chicken, may be seen as an intensely personal indictment of her own physical appeal, especially when the specified look with which she is to be drawn is taken into consideration. "Not only can I not believe I'm here, but even alligators don't want to eat me!" is the underlying message, which in its own turn virtually demands the reader's attention be directed to considerations of psychosexual Freudian and Jungian archetypes and sexual activities such as matters of personal attractiveness and her "suitability" as the recipient of oral sex which range far beyond the scope of this discussion.

Standing in the mouth of a whale is the only panel in which Quinn is depicted as having a good time, and even then, we can only assume this attempt is doomed to failure as well because of the presence of the fourth panel. This also feeds further into the "I'm not good enough to be eaten" idea considered in panel two.

Finally, she rigs up a diabolically clever Rube Goldberg mechanism consisting of various electrical household appliances and a cord, which she need only cut or pull to achieve the desired result of dropping the charged devices into the water she herself occupies, thereby completing and simultaneously terminating her desire for death. The interesting thing about this method, if "interesting" is the word to apply, is that out of all the methods she considered, this is the one with both the highest probability of success and the only one that requires her direct intervention to function properly. In this case, it is as though she decided to stop leaving her fate in the hands of Fate and decided to take a more proactive and certain role.

Dr. Barney commented particularly on the disconnect among the suicide scenarios mentioned. "The odds of getting struck by lightning, even during a lightning storm and holding a metal contraption, are something like 10,000,000 to one," he remarked. The alligator and whale scenes were even more improbable, because the alligators must be hungry or they will not attack and the whale is as likely to vomit as a result of having its uvula tickled as to swallow. In the latter case, this problem is compounded by the logistical difficulties of getting into the whale's mouth in the first place, as one can hardly expect the leviathan to open its mouth placidly so Quinn can jump inside. The negative visceral reaction to the bathtub scene, he said, is the most rational because "People do this in real life. They don't generally go to such extreme lengths, but this attempt is by far the most plausible (Barney)."

However, the question of each attempt's implausibility within the context of the dream sequence was countered during the interview by pointing out that Quinn's psyche has evolved through intimate and direct experience of psychological dysfunction. The evolution of her dysfunction and its likely retained presence in various forms in her mind renders it only natural that she would question her self-worth, her sexuality, and even on some level pray for death in the most fundamentally religious sense, which Dr. Barney conceded would be consistent with the self-destructive impulse Freud called the thanatos drive, the counter to the libido or survival instinct. What all these attempts have in common is that she is the orchestrator and conductor of her own doom. She needs no man, or anyone else, to help her shuffle loose the mortal coil, although Dr. Barney raised the issue that in the first three scenarios, her demise still relied heavily on external factors (Barney). There is no outside intelligence guiding or directing her hand, no reliance on anyone else to end her presumed suffering. The fact that she is nude in the bathtub

proves nothing except that even the most severely disturbed individuals generally prefer not to wear clothing in the bathtub. As she is working out scenarios by which she can die by her own hand, or at the very least as a direct result of her own actions, she is behaving in a way that is perfectly legitimate given the circumstances in which she has been placed and therefore could be argued to be acting in accord with feminist principles of self-reliance.

Many who commented on the nudity required in panel four of the contest made much of the fact that nudity was specifically stated as necessary to begin with. The argument here is that if nudity in the bathtub can be assumed, then emphasizing it only sexualizes something that should not and cannot be made sexy.

There are two possible counterarguments to this statement. One is the ever-increasing popularity of so-called "snuff films," in which a nude man or woman is killed, often in barbaric ways. Snuff films and their viewers are themselves symptomatic of other paraphilias, but it can be argued that so long as the depictions are, and are understood to be, fictitious and the acts depicted therein are not replicated on living beings, there is no inherent harm in this. Quite to the contrary, Dr. Barney asserts such transgressive fare in many cases provides a "safe" outlet for latent desires that could otherwise become dangerous or even monstrous if acted upon in the real world (Barney). This can be applied in a more subtle and gentle way to comic books as well.

The other counterargument is that Quinn's nudity in this scenario is a result of happenstance, a necessity of place, and has little or nothing to do with the sexual assumptions accompanying the presence of a disrobed human body. Therefore her nudity or lack thereof becomes more or less irrelevant in the context of the scene.

Another frequent observation is that comic books largely cater to adolescents and adult men trapped in a state of perennial postpubescence, otherwise known as Peter Pan syndrome. While this observation is valid to a point, it is also a gross and more than slightly sexist oversimplification, as it ignores the ever-growing popularity of comic books among female readers of all ages, races, and demographics, many of whom go on to become comic book artists in their own right. The overwhelming box office success of superhero movies in general seems superficially to accord with this androcentric perspective on comic characters and their readers, but women heroes and villains have become increasingly prevalent and indeed far more diabolical in their actions than many of their ovary-challenged opposite numbers. Additionally, the current artists and authors of the Harley Quinn series are a male/female duo, Jimmy Palmiotti and Amanda Conner, which surely ameliorates or negates outright the sexist connotations of Quinn's demise. When one considers that some 12% of the staff artists at DC today are women, it becomes clear that the game is changing with regard to how gender is viewed in the comic community (Los Angeles Times).

The most obvious and oft-heard argument is that comic books subliminally suggest that violence against women, whether perpetrated by others or themselves, is acceptable. The counterargument here is equally obvious: Comic books often serve as morality tales. The heroes and heroines generally treat one another with respect, and when this is not the case, the transgressor typically is punished in short order, often by their own actions. It is easier to spot the villains specifically because of the way they treat underlings, both of their own and the other gender. This is not always true, such as in the case of Starfire, an alien heroine who is largely treated as a sex doll by the men of Red Hood and the Outlaws through her own opinions and beliefs about what constitutes acceptable expressions of sexuality, but

this certainly stands as an exception rather than the rule (Hudson). For a better example of what a sexy but not overtly sexualized comic book heroine is, one might consider Wonder Woman's role as the lead and often only female point character in the Justice League.

Conclusion

[Comics] tell me that I can be beautiful and powerful, but only if I wear as few clothes as possible. They tell me that I can have exciting adventures, as long as I have enormous breasts that I constantly contort to display to the people around me. They tell me I can be sexually adventurous and pursue my physical desires, as long as I do it in ways that feel inauthentic and contrived to appeal to men and kind of creep me out. –Laura Hudson, editor in chief of ComicsAlliance.com.

The quote above is both alarmingly accurate and terrifyingly inaccurate, primarily because of the assumptions involved. The author, while in one direction raising a perfectly valid argument, also completely ignores the Lois Lanes and Mary Jane Parkers of the comic book world. The fallacy of her argument in the other direction stems from the assumption that women cannot be legitimately sexual if that sexuality is depicted in a way that is not appealing to men. This comes back to the crux of the problem with the Harley Quinn debacle.

On one hand, the debate is restricted to her (subconscious) desire to end her life. This is an understandable concern at a time when teen suicide is a prevalent news topic, and parents are justifiably interested in limiting their children's access to anything that might suggest suicide is a reasonable solution to life's problems. It would have helped DC's case immensely had they given full disclosure at the outset and told the artists why they wanted this particular series of panels incorporated. While this would not have done anything to ameliorate the issue of poor timing, at the very least it would have demonstrated that the underlying intent was not, as such, to glorify or advocate suicide.

On the other hand, the specter of nudity in comics and its inherent link to sexuality was raised yet again. Well-meaning but not completely informed people jumped on the bandwagon to condemn DC, whose stylized version of sexuality has been a bookstore mainstay for nearly eighty years. This in turn created its own set of problems, because it brushes up against the issue of whose hand is worthy to depict which gender's or class's sexuality and in what forms.

It is a lamentable fact of modern life that a woman who admits to being interested in or taking pleasure in sex and her own sexuality is considered immoral, a whore, and a "bad influence" on the women around her. A woman who dresses in revealing clothing because she chooses to is celebrated for her "liberation," but at the same time is condemned as a "rape magnet," a "slut," and a woman who caters to men's ideals of how women should look, dress, and behave. Conversely, a woman who dresses in clothing calculated to conceal her body is reviled as an uptight prude, especially if she evinces no interest in sex whatsoever, a classic case of "damned if you do and damned if you don't."

A problem all sides seem to ignore by mutual unspoken accord is that pens held by both genders have collaborated, even when they were nominally working at cross purposes, to create this conflicting and self-contradictory rubric by which female appeal and sexuality is too often judged. However, if men in comics are portrayed as the ideal of manliness, complete with rippling six-pack abs and outsized

genitalia, is it not reasonable to expect that women in comics will receive the same treatment? There is nary a complaint advanced regarding how Superman or Wolverine are depicted, but Star Sapphire and Rogue are feminist-baiting time bombs looking for a place to detonate.

What must first be realized is that men and women are inherently different, both due to cultural and social acclimatization and because of very real, legitimate physiological and emotional differences. This does not mean that neither side is more or less capable of representing the needs, desires, and feelings of the other. Rather, it suggests that each gender views the other through a somewhat skewed lens. By initiating a constructive and realistic dialogue between men and women, it is likely that the art of comics would more accurately imitate life as we know it.

The largest problem, and the point both sides have lost sight of, is that comic books are works of fantasy, created by artists and writers and read by millions for entertainment. While they hold a mirror up to the issues of the real world, they are a dark, cracked, dirty mirror that does not and cannot accurately reflect all the shades of gray in the complex species we call humanity. In much the same way, they do not accurately portray the “average” human being of either gender, nor are they intended to. This same complex of issues is reflected, albeit in a somewhat altered form, in the debate about the use of condoms in erotic romance, the question of who should and should not write different forms and flavors of erotica, and what merit one side or the other brings to our knowledge and understanding of what human intimacy is and can be.

In the case of Harley Quinn, the fact the entire page was a dream sequence has gotten lost in the outcry over what is and isn't acceptable in comics in this day and age. Comics imitate life; they do not in and of themselves directly influence life, anomalies like James Eagan Holmes, who shot and killed 12 people and wounded 70 others during a midnight screening of *The Dark Knight Rises* in Aurora, Colorado in 2012, notwithstanding. While no one in their right mind will argue that suicide is an acceptable resolution to the day to day problems of life, very few people will argue that no one in their right mind has never thought of suicide either.

The final issue to address here is that of reality versus fiction. For this entire argument to be possible in the first place, it demands that all sides are first willing to cede the characters concerned a level of existence they do not properly possess. When it becomes apparent that we are discussing fictional beings with no existence outside of the pages of comic books and in the readers' minds, the entire argument acquires a distinct air of silliness. Dr. Barney points to the example of James Eagan Holmes as an example of what happens when severe psychological dysfunction and a shaky grasp on the boundary between fantasy and reality collide (Barney). However, he also notes this is an aberration, not a trend.

Ultimately, the Harley Quinn submissions call was a publicity stunt that went somewhat awry due to an oversight in timing. It cannot be argued that, whatever the initial intentions, it had the highly desirable dual effect of stirring controversy and provoking public interest in the Harley Quinn reboot. The first month's sales reports from DC concerning issue 0 will doubtless make for fascinating reading for comic fans on both sides of the debate.

Whether the reader thinks suicide is right or wrong under any circumstances, whether the reader believes comics are too sexualized or not, the fact is, it is time for people to start remembering that there is a hard and firm line between fantasy and reality, and become more concerned with the former than the latter. What is said and done as entertainment does not automatically have a place in the real

world, but the dialogues controversial materials create can be invaluable for helping one sort out their own beliefs and ideas about what is and isn't acceptable, and why. It is in this regard, and this regard only, that the fantasy world of comics can be reasonably said to intersect with or have any effect upon reality. This is what makes comic books so valuable, and this is why the writers of comic books, regardless of gender or orientation, should feel free to explore socially relevant topics in any way that moves them. The discourse thereby engendered in the public purview is well worth the discomfort it may cause readers. In fact, that very discomfort could well become a catalyst for social change. This, ultimately, is the true value of comic books.

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2nd Place Winner: Amanda Vincent, "A Light in the Darkness: Natural Treatments for Seasonal Affective Disorder
For Dr. Julia Dombs

Whether a person is a health nut, an outdoor enthusiast, or just an average Joe, being outside in the sun feels great. Waking up to the sun shining through the bedroom window brings a kind of joy not felt on cloudy days. Kids seem to feel this joy the most when they go running outside to play right after the clouds have cleared from a rainstorm. Since the beginning of time, people have based much of their life around the sun and seasons. However, in the last thirty or so years people have changed to a more indoor lifestyle, thus losing touch with nature and the benefits of the sun. Bright light therapy is being researched as a way of bringing the benefits of the sun inside. It can treat conditions such as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), postpartum depression and even Parkinson's disease ("A SAD Story" 5). Further research is still being done to prove this. Nature has been providing health benefits forever, and mankind is only now beginning to realize by how much. Bright light therapy is nature's own way of healing people who suffer from SAD and researchers are learning that it is the safer way.

Many people do not know what SAD is or if it is even a real disorder. According to the American Psychiatric Association, SAD is a depressive disorder that has been recognized for over twenty years ("A SAD Story" 4). Being that SAD is a mental illness, both psychiatrists and medical doctors are trained to diagnose it. However, many of the symptoms of SAD are not usually seen in depressive disorders, but are seen in sleeping and eating disorders (Jacobsen, et al. 57). As anyone who has been to a doctor knows, one of the hardest things to do can be telling them what your symptoms are. Sometimes it is hard to put in to words exactly how you feel. However, knowing what all your symptoms are can help make sure that you properly diagnosed.

Some of the many different symptoms of SAD include things like depression, carbohydrate cravings, increased appetite, weight gain, a rise in sleep duration, a loss of energy, guilt, a loss of interest in things once found fun, feeling worthless or hopeless, and damage to social and/or occupational performance (Laskoski 8). Dealing with these symptoms for several months out of the year is hard. The worst part is the fact that a majority of people who suffer from SAD are affected during the fall and winter, when most of the big social holidays are. It is hard for family and friends to understand why the SAD sufferer is not enjoying the festivities. It can become so hard for the SAD sufferer to be around loved ones during the holidays that they will think of any excuse to get out of going rather than feel like they are on the outside looking in.

People may think "So what? That sucks for them, but I am not part of that." What they do not realize is that there is a good chance they are a part of it, or at least someone they know is. The exact causes of SAD are still unknown: however, it is thought to be a genetic disorder as it is often seen in people who have a close relative who has an affective disorder such as Bipolar or alcohol abuse. Another strange thing that has been found is that women are four times more likely to be diagnosed with SAD (Jacobsen, et al. 57-8). As people become aware of the disorder, they start asking questions to understand more.

As someone who suffers from SAD I can spill the beans of how it feels when SAD begins to affect a person, in this case me. For the most part I am fine until Halloween, having only occasional days of depression. After that though, it almost feels like someone else has taken control of me. I think, say, and

do things that are out of line with who I normally am. I can feel it coming on, and there is nothing I can do to stop it. I am trapped in my own mind, and there is no way out. Being that it is winter, I am always cold. I feel like I am trapped in ice or better yet a cave made of ice. It is dark as a starless night, cold as the frigid waters of the arctic, and I am alone in here. It is my own personal version of hell, and I have to face it every year. While everyone else is running around shopping, visiting, and just being happy, I find joy nowhere. It gets to the point where I began to question whether it is even worth getting out of bed to face the day, and without proper medication I even become suicidal, something I would never think of during the rest of the year. SAD is a potentially devastating disorder to deal with. It disrupts lives and families. It destroys work relations. It demoralizes confidence. It can be overcome.

The common way of helping people deal with SAD is to prescribe antidepressants to manage the symptoms. The two that have had the most research done on them are fluoxetine (commonly known as Prozac) and sertraline (commonly known as Zoloft). However, the side effects from drugs can be undesirable and cause almost as many problems as they are supposed to cure. To name a few, they include things like suicidal tendencies, nausea, headache, weight gain, insomnia, nervousness, anxiety, dizziness, dry mouth, decreased libido, rash, changes in vision (Laskoski 8), and with Prozac, if taken for more than a year, a person may run the risk of a negative impact on their long-term mood and health (Norden 419). Another downside to prescriptions is that pregnant women cannot take them as they are known to cause birth defects. Because of all the potential side effects, more and more people are looking at alternative ways to deal with SAD. Most of the alternatives being researched are looking at natural holistic ways to heal people.

The need to find successful and safe ways to treat SAD is great. According to a study done in the late 1990s around 35 million people in the United States are affected by SAD and its milder counterpart Subsyndromal Seasonal Affective Disorder. Both forms of SAD are thought to be caused by light deprivation which is in part caused because people spend so much time under artificial light (Brainard 476). This light deprivation cause coincides with the fact that as a whole people are spending less time outside, as SAD has been known of for twenty years and people have been indoors more for the last thirty years.

There are various treatments for SAD being researched, ranging from things like getting more exercise, to herbal remedies, to bright light therapy. Exercising not only benefits one's health by getting and staying in shape, it can raise the level of serotonin one creates, this being a major defense against depression (Norden 419). The herb St. Johns Wort is used in the United Kingdom as it is known to work as an antidepressant (Linde, Berner, and Kriston). However, as the Food and Drug Administration does not, at this time, regulate herbs, this is not a method used in the US. A treatment that is gaining more publicity in the US is bright light therapy.

Bright light therapy has been looked at as a way to cure the symptoms of SAD almost since it was first diagnosed twenty years ago. Unfortunately, many of the earlier studies may be flawed for one reason or another ("A SAD Story" 4). The reason this is so unfortunate is because it means more time and money must be spent re-researching, and funding is hard to come by for any medical research. Another reason is as of 2005 SAD accounted for about 10% of all cases of major depression ("Light Therapy" 6), which means there are many people out there who need help, and antidepressants do not work for or can be used by everyone.

As with all illnesses, disorders, and diseases, there is no one magic cure that works for everyone who has ever used it. Light therapy is the same way. Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal informs us that “60 to 80 percent of SAD sufferers benefit from light therapy” (8). On the flip side, we learn that occasionally people with bipolar disorder develop mania as a result of light therapy. Also people with photosensitive skin or a retinal condition are poor candidates for light therapy ("Light Therapy" 7). Why are they poor candidates? Because of how light therapy works. It goes back to the sun.

The preferred treatment method for light therapy is to spend time outside in the sun every day, not just walking to the office from the car. Something as simple as a ten minute walk around the block can satisfy the daily requirements of sunlight. However, this is not always possible due to the busy lives we lead. The alternative method is to use a light therapy box. The reason that people need a special box or lamp to use for light therapy is because indoor light ranges from 100 to 800 lux (10 lux equals light from one candle), as opposed to the 2,500 lux minimum a body needs to stop producing melatonin. Melatonin is a natural hormone that is produced to help make us sleepy at night (Brainard 476). When we do not get the light our bodies need to turn off melatonin production, we often stay in a groggy, somewhat dazed state of mind that can lead to depression.

According to Michael Norden, being exposed to bright light has been shown to raise the level of serotonin one creates (418). This means that bright light therapy switches off melatonin and switches on serotonin. The best part about light therapy is the rather limited side effects with the most common ones being jitteriness and headache, which is much better than the numerous side effects that antidepressants can have. Another bonus is that light therapy can bring a decline in depression symptoms within one week compared to the up to six weeks that antidepressants need (Laskoski 8). Because light therapy has fewer side effects and results can be seen more quickly, light therapy needs to become a first line defense in the fight against SAD.

Currently because of the culture of drugs in the US, all too often if someone complains to a doctor that they feel ill, they are given a shot or pills. If we go to a doctor complaining about being depressed all the time, out comes the prescription pad. This is in part because of how we have been raised. We have been trained over the years to believe that we cannot get better without a pill. Many things, like the common cold, do not need pills. However, pills can be beneficial depending on what they are being used for. Yet researchers are finding that in some cases nature has already provided the cure. Well before doctors, researchers, and medication, the sun has been there. She has kept the “blues” away since the dawn of time, and she continues to provide health benefits to anyone who spends time in the sunlight. Nature is there for us, just waiting for someone to find the key to healing. Bright light therapy is the way to bring the benefits of the sun indoors, and it is a safe way to help people who suffer from SAD to overcome it.

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Expressive- English 1010

1st Place Winner: Tiffany Obray, "What are Fragrance Commercials Really Selling?"
For Professor Joy Sterrantino

As I sit on my couch absentmindedly watching television, an image on the screen captures my attention. Before me stands a gorgeous woman draped in a flowing, gauzy gown, staring deeply at her unseen audience. The screen flashes images of her long neck, her dark eyes, and her golden legs. It then closes in on her delicate hands as she slowly runs them down the soft curves of her body. Intense and hypnotic music fills the silence as the woman arches her back and gently tilts her head, causing shining dark hair to cascade in thick waves around her shoulders. In the background I see the silhouette of a man. He sits on a bed wrapped in silk sheets, his bare chest exposing sharp angles of defined muscle. His eyes are locked intently on the goddess before him, completely entranced by her beauty. As this erotic scene unfolds on my television, I wonder what the advertisement could possibly be selling. Then in the last few seconds of the commercial the woman utters in a sultry whisper the name of a designer perfume and before us dances a glistening vial containing this seductive elixir.

Judging by the glamorous and seductive nature of the woman in the ad one might assume men would be the target audience. However, it is not so much the woman herself but what she represents that the advertisers are selling. She emulates power, beauty and sensuality, which are all things women crave to feel themselves. This specific type of marketing is extremely consistent among fragrance commercials. Almost all of them depict stunning women adorned in dazzling and promiscuous clothing. Often times the scene unfolding around them is one of majestic beauty and erotic mystery, such as diamonds raining from the sky, or orange and pink clouds swirling around creating a dream like atmosphere. These enchanting images create a sense of wonder and desire. They make the viewer believe anything is possible. Through these subliminal messages the fragrance companies ensure us that if we simply purchase the fragrance we will be desirable like these women and will have the power they wield.

In almost all cases these commercials teach us absolutely nothing about the actual product. Sure, every now the ad might feature a woman holding a rose or show a scene where impossibly large lilies blossom everywhere the woman steps. These images give a brief glimpse of how the fragrance might smell. But, in most cases the advertisers rely solely on getting our emotions involved. Instead of selling consumers a perfume that smells like vanilla and freesias, they are selling a product that will make women feel mysterious, sexy and sophisticated.

How effective is this type of marketing? Shopping for a new fragrance is a difficult and daunting mission. There are hundreds of sparkling bottles in all different shapes and sizes, colors ranging from gold to deep purple. It is a sensory overloaded task that quickly becomes exhausting. The sales person sprays perfume after perfume on little white cards for the shopper to sample. Very quickly the scents start to smell the same and it becomes almost impossible to separate the good ones from the bad. However, if we remember the commercial for a certain fragrance we can give that one a try. Even if the perfume doesn't smell much different than the rest this is the one we are more likely to buy because of the association the advertisement has created. These fragrance companies ensure women that if they wear their perfumes they will become sexier, more sophisticated and appealing to those around them.

Advertisers rely on the cultural myth that deep down every woman longs to feel sexy and desirable. Therefore, if these companies can offer an easy solution to that yearning, why wouldn't women buy it?

Argumentative- English 2010

1st Place Winner: Ana Sophia Weaver, “Closing the Achievement Gap”

For Dr. Julia Combs

Studies have shown that Dual Language Immersion Programs help students attain high levels of second language proficiency by using the child’s first language in instruction. Do Dual Language Immersion Programs close the achievement gap between native English speakers and Hispanic English language learners? This project reviews literature and case studies that address this question. Dual Language Immersion Programs, if implemented correctly, can close Utah’s achievement gap between English language learners and native English speakers by helping students acquire academic language proficiency.

Background

Dual Language Immersion. Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Programs, or Dual Language Immersion Programs, have become popular all over the country and are perceived by many as the new face of bilingual education—without the stigma (Watanabe, 2011). The Center for Applied Linguistics (2012) reported that as of December 5, 2012, their Directory listed 422 Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Programs in 31 states, and Washington, D.C.

Dual Language Immersion is a bilingual education program based on the theory of linguistic minorities’ integration with the dominant majority (Peleato, 2011). In bilingual education, English and the country’s predominant language, a second language, are used for instruction through a variety of instructional approaches. In the United States, Dual Language Immersion is an enriching instructional approach that uses English and the child’s native language, like Spanish, to help the child acquire English proficiency. The Dual Language Immersion, or two-way immersion model, divides instruction between two classrooms: A percentage of the day the students are immersed in English and the other percentage they are immersed in a second language. The English teacher instructs students in the English language a percentage of the day in English language arts, reading, writing, and spelling, as well as other subjects of the curriculum. The second language teacher instructs students in the second language for the other percentage in literacy, math, and other subjects of the State Core Curriculum. Students learn in an enriching academic environment (Utah’s Spanish Dual Language Immersion Program Brochure, 2012). Although this model works best when half of the students are English speakers and the other half speaks the second language, ideally neither language group should fall below 30% of the classroom population. A heterogeneous mix of students means English language learners (ELLs) are not segregated in a program with a “watered down” curriculum. Thus, each group can serve as a linguistic resource and as peer models for each other. If this program is implemented successfully, after five years students are expected to be fluent in two languages (Cummins, 1981b; Peleato, 2011; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Federal Law Protections for Limited English Proficient Students. According to Gallimore and Goldenberg (2001), the underachievement of ethnic minority students has been a national issue since the Supreme Court outlawed segregated schools in 1954. Significant in granting Federal civil rights protection for students with limited English proficiency have been Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. In addition, the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Lau v.*

Nichols (1974) and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act case, *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981) set legal standards and a Federal framework of protection for limited English proficient student rights (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1997). For example, in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), the Court's judgment stated that students who do not understand English "are excluded from any meaningful education and are going to find their classroom experiences incomprehensible and in no way meaningful" (as cited in U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1997, p.67). Since then, to comply with the law, states have used varied and multiple methods to respond to these laws. Such instructional programs have adopted a variety of educational approaches ranging from total English immersion to various types of bilingual education (as cited in U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1997). Regardless of these legal protections, in 1998, in California, only 30% of limited English proficient students received any form of bilingual education (Cummins, J., 1981b).

The Politics of Bilingual Education. Opposing viewpoints to bilingual education are evident in the development of new English-only legislation in some states. Among the supporters of English-only legislation was Arthur M. Schlesinger, a renowned liberal who passed away in 2007. He believed the institutionalization of bilingual education would fragment the nation (Schlesinger, 1998). He defended the old-fashioned American melting pot against political correctness and multiculturalism and he saw these as forces disuniting America. Schlesinger (1998) feared that the bonds of cohesion of our national heritage would be weakened by linguistic apartheid. Another supporter of English instruction has been U.S English, a nonprofit organization that promotes English as the common language of the United States. According to Imhoff (1990), the position of U.S. English is that only English should be used as the language of instruction in the U.S.

In the 1990s, after dealing with the challenge to educate more than a million limited English proficient (LEP) immigrants, California constituencies started questioning the effectiveness of their bilingual programs. California citizens perceived bilingual education as a handout for immigrant families and immigrants viewed it as an ineffective remedial program for LEPs. It became such a controversial issue that in 1998 voters passed Proposition 227, a referendum aimed at eliminating the use of bilingual children's first language (L1) for instructional purposes. Under this initiative, all children in California public schools were to be instructed in English. California voted for English-only instruction, and seventeen other states followed suit, among them Arizona and Massachusetts (Rossell, 2003). After Proposition 227 passed, Rossell (2003) and many others believed English language learners would transition into English within one or two years. Flash forward to 2011-- a newspaper in California, *Los Angeles Times*, reported that Proposition 227's assertion that English immersion was more successful than bilingual education was wrong. The *L.A. Times* reported that from 2003 to 2010, the gap between English learners and all students had widened, with ELLs falling behind all other students (Watanabe, 2011).

Furthermore, in an English-only state, Arizona, Sullivan (2011) found that because of lack of language supports, English language learners are being identified as students with learning disabilities and placed in special education in disproportionate rates. Teachers cannot tell if the students are struggling because of a learning disability or a language barrier (LinanThompson, 2010). This places an undue burden on the Special Education program and does not meet the needs of ELLs that are improperly placed in these classes. Moreover, lack of achievement can also give these students a sense of inferiority which may affect their ability and motivation to learn and slow down the process of language acquisition. This issue weakens the argument of the effectiveness of English-only instruction for ELLs.

Dual Language Immersion in Utah. Utah, a state with smaller minority populations, has not experienced the heated political bilingual debates that California and other states have. Up until 2008, Utah, in compliance with the English Acquisition Act (2002), has instructed English language learners through a Sheltered Instruction approach program. The program is called English as a Second Language (ESL). ESL is a pullout tutoring program mixed with regular classroom instruction, wherein English Learners in Utah are supported and instructed in English. It is designed to transition students into full English instruction within a year or two (Rossell, 2003). Until 2008, English language learners, for the most part, learned English through this instructional approach. In 2008, Utah legislators in the House and Senate introduced the “International Education Initiative –Critical Languages Program” bill, which amended section 53A-15-104 and enacted section 53A-15-105 of the Utah Code. This bill modified Utah’s Critical Languages Program and established a Dual Language Immersion Program with target languages in Chinese, French, Portuguese and Spanish. School districts do not pay any of the cost of implementing this program and do not need to hire extra teachers; just teachers with bilingual skills. It doesn’t cost more.

In 2010, Governor Gary Herbert issued a challenge to implement 100 Dual Language Immersion Programs throughout Utah by 2014. As of now, 78 programs have been implemented in 17 school districts and two charters. Although the goal is to have 100 Dual Language Immersion Programs in the state by 2014, these programs will not meet the needs of all ELLs in Utah. The rest of limited English proficient (LEP) students in the state will continue to receive English language support through English as a Second Language (ESL) sheltered instruction.

Performance Data

Academic Performance of Hispanic ELLs in Utah. Criterion Reference Tests from the Utah State Office of Education have consistently shown an achievement gap between native English speakers and English language learners. This gap has been especially significant when it comes to Hispanic students (See Appendix A, Figures 1-3). Figure 1 and 3 illustrate the discrepancy in achievement between native English speakers and Hispanics English learners in Utah. For example, in 2012, 84% of native English speakers were proficient in Language Arts compared to 36% of Hispanics. Moreover, in the U.S. as a whole, Hispanic students account for three-quarters of the students with limited English proficiency (Thomas & Collier, 1996). Alarming, statistics indicate that Language-Minority (LM) students are 300% more likely to drop out of high school than other students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Most immigrants come to this country in search of the American Dream. Hispanics’ inability to access proficiency in academic English is a barrier to their pursuit of higher education. As a result, Hispanics who drop out of High School are more likely to resort to crime. This is an important issue since demographic data indicates that English language learners are the fastest growing segment of the school-age population (Goldenberg, 2006). Goldenberg (2006) points out that by 2025 one in four public K-12 students will come from a home where a language other than English is spoken. He considers this discrepancy between English-speakers and English-learners an issue that should concern us all because of its large cost to society. Marginalized groups in Society aspire for the comfort and prosperity of the American system. Without an education, some Hispanic drop outs lose hope of the American Dream through legal means. Society can educate its population or pay to house them in jails. Nonetheless, society cannot afford to squander its human capital.

Case Studies. What are the advantages for ELLs who are being instructed in Dual Language Immersion Programs? Which is the most effective bilingual education model to help English language learners become proficient in English? My reviews of literature in this field support the use of instruction in both Language one (L1) and Language two (L2) in helping English language learners become proficient in language acquisition. Two recent major national meta-analyses have found that instruction in a student's native tongue helps close the achievement gap between native English speakers and English language learners.

Case study conducted by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence. Thomas and Collier (2002) were the first researchers to analyze data bases collected by school districts in all regions of the U.S. in the field of language minority education. They conducted a National five-year research study (1996-2001) with funding from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) of the U.S. Department of Education. They collected 210,054 student records from five school districts. Although 80 primary languages were represented in the student samples, three of the five research sites focused on Spanish speakers.

Thomas and Collier (2002) concluded that 50-50 One-Way and Two-Way Bilingual education programs and 90-10 Two-Way Bilingual education programs “are the only programs that assist students to fully reach the 50th percentile in both Language one and Language two in all subjects and to maintain that level of high achievement or reach even higher levels through the end of schooling” (p.7). Note that in these bilingual programs, English speaking and Spanish speaking students are taught in their primary language. Researchers also found that the strongest predictor of student achievement in learning a second language was formal instruction in the primary language (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Cummins, 1981b). Furthermore, Thomas and Collier (2002) found that when English language learners attend segregated, remedial programs, the students do not close the achievement gap after they are placed in the English mainstream. In other words, they don't reach the 50th percentile. Native-English speakers in Two-Way Bilingual programs equaled or outperformed their comparison monolingual groups on all measures. Moreover, not only do native English speakers not lose any cognitive abilities by learning a second language, but they also have cognitive advantages over their English-only peers (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Bialystok, 1994).

Case study conducted by the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth. In 2002, the U.S. Department of Education formed the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth and funded reviews of research on the development of literacy in second-language learners (August & Shanahan [Eds.], 2008). The panel was charged to examine and report on the research literature of the development of literacy in language minority students. As in the former study, the researchers concluded that the studies they reviewed demonstrated that both at the elementary and secondary levels, language-minority students instructed in their native language (usually Spanish) and English perform, on average, better than language-minority students instructed only in English (August & Shanahan, 2008). The author has found these findings apply to her experience as a second language learner. In her hometown in Mexico, she attended a bilingual school from the time she was five years old until she graduated from high school. In first grade, she started learning to read in English. She could not relate to the books or the language. It wasn't until the second grade, when she was taught in her native language, Spanish, that she started to learn to read in both languages. When she began reading books in Spanish, she started to make connections between sounds and letters and between words and books. In sum, she learned from personal experience that it is important children learn to read in their

native tongue, the language that draws on their background knowledge of language and expresses their culture and identity.

Application of Research Theory in Elementary Schools

Texas and California have implemented successful Dual Language Immersion Programs (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Peleato, 2011). Among other factors in contributing to the success of these programs, has been instruction of ELLs in their native language. To illustrate the researchers' findings on the importance of using native language in curriculum instruction, the author reviewed the dual language model implemented in City Elementary, Texas. In addition, the author interviewed the principal of East Elementary in Cedar City, Utah, to find out how East Elementary's first year of dual language immersion is going.

City Elementary in Texas. City Elementary, "an inner city, urban-diverse campus, in south central Texas" (p. 308) implements a 90-10 Dual Language Immersion Program. Iliana Alanis and Mariela A. Rodriguez from the University of Texas at San Antonio conducted their case study in this school recognized for contributing to students' academic achievement (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008). City Elementary's Dual Language Immersion Program has been educating children in English and Spanish since 1995. The study's sample consisted of 321 students with 85% economically disadvantaged, 87.8% Mexican American, and 29.4% Spanish only speakers. At City Elementary, English-speaking parents have the option of placing their students in the Two-Way program or in an all-English classroom. This is important because it stresses that dual language programs are not compulsory. Parents have a choice. In this 90-10 model, teachers instruct children in Spanish for 90% of the time and in English for 10% of the time in the first grade. Gradually they decrease the amount of Spanish instruction until fourth and fifth grade when the percentage of instruction provided in English and Spanish is the same, 50-50.

The researchers analyzed Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in reading, mathematics and science. Only fifth graders were part of the sampling. According to research by Thomas, Collier and Abbott (1993), there is a correlation between the length of time spent in a dual language bilingual program and student academic achievement. These researchers found that "significant differences in program effects become cumulatively larger as students continue past the third grade when the curriculum becomes cognitively more complex" (as cited in Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008, p. 310). Alanis and Rodriguez (2008) analysis began in 1999 when the first group of kindergarten students entered the fifth grade. When results were collected in 2000, the results were impressive (See Appendix B, Figures 1-3). English language learners consistently outperformed their English-only peers on standardized tests in the district and the state from 2000-2005. Reading Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) scores for limited English proficient (LEP) students from 2000-2005 were in the 80% to 100% range. It is important to note that tests were administered in English and that Spanish instruction did not hinder the development of English for either the native English speakers or the native Spanish speakers. TAKS scores for mathematics were the most impressive, 100% passing rate for LEPs! During a three year period, LEPs Science scores were in the 75% to 85% range compared to the rest of the state's student scores which reflected 50% passing rates.

The researchers also identified important social factors that contribute to the sustainability of an effective program. Alanis and Rodriguez (2008) specified these factors as active parent participation, pedagogical equity, effective bilingual teachers, and knowledgeable leadership and continuity (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008). It is important to note that in English-only instructional programs, parental

involvement is not possible for many Hispanic parents. According to Henderson and Berla (1994), the most accurate predictor of student's achievement is parental involvement in their children's education.

East Elementary in Cedar City, Utah. East Elementary in Cedar City, Utah recently implemented the Dual Language Immersion Program. Mr. Burton, the principal was enthusiastic about the program (S. Burton, personal communication, April 2, 2013). The academic year 2012-2013 is East Elementary's first year with a Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion Program; therefore, there is no data on East Elementary's success with dual language immersion. When the author visited with Mr. Burton, he was quite enthusiastic about the program. He expressed how positive all parents are about their children being enrolled in a second language instruction program. Mr. Burton indicated that Dual Language Immersion Programs do not cost the district any more. They do not have to hire extra teachers or pay teachers more; they just have to hire different individuals who can actually teach in the target language. The author asked the principal how students were doing in the program. Mr. Burton told her about a Spanish speaking student who was in Kindergarten last year. This student would not talk at all. Mr. Burton was afraid the student had "Selective Mutism" or was having trouble acculturating. This year that student is enrolled in first grade's Dual Language Immersion Program. Mr. Burton recently observed a change in this student. The student is now more engaged in class activities and has become very self-confident. When the English Dual Language Immersion teacher had this student tested for Language Arts, test results indicated this boy had met state reading standards for his grade! He met the state's benchmarks! Mr. Burton is thrilled to see positive effects in the achievement of limited English proficient students in East Elementary's Dual Language Immersion Program.

Conclusion

Research supports the effectiveness of Two-Way Bilingual programs such as Dual Language Immersion. The use of English language learners' primary language in the referenced studies and schools suggest that maintenance of children's native language supports and facilitates transition into English, while strengthening a sense of ethnic identity. Research shows that native English speakers do not lose English language proficiency by participating in these programs, but that they gain cognitive abilities. Therefore, Dual Language Immersion Programs, when implemented correctly, have proven to be beneficial in helping Hispanics become proficient English learners and have helped close the achievement gap. Moreover, immigrants who receive an adequate education and achieve the American Dream contribute to the welfare of America and its prosperity. Future data collection of Utah's Criterion Reference Tests of Hispanic students who participate in Dual Language Immersion Programs for a period of five years or more must be developed to establish that Dual Language Immersion Programs close the achievement gap between Hispanics and native English speakers.

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2nd Place Winner: Christina Meikle, "Changing Cultural Values as Revealed by Fairy Tale Curses"
For Professor Charla Strosser

Curses play a crucial and fascinating role in fairy tales. They move the plot along by providing a conflict for the protagonist to overcome. They provide motivation for the characters to act and to fight against opposition. Furthermore, there are aspects of the human personality that cannot be seen until one is presented with a difficult obstacle. Were the prince in Beaumont's *Beauty and the Beast* never cursed, for example, what could a reader learn about Beauty by her choice to wed him? It is by her willingness to overlook his ugliness that her kindness is revealed. The presence of the curse in this story allows the modern reader to learn that kindness was a highly-valued quality in the time of Beaumont. Thus curses reveal many of the most dominant social values in older fairy tales. For example, anyone who reads many of them will notice the protagonists' ever-present struggle to find a mate and wed. This shows the importance of marriage in yesterday's society. A reading of a modern fairy tale, like Gail Carson Levine's *Ella Enchanted*, reveals a dramatic shift in the societal view of marriage. Through an analysis of curses in old and new fairy tales, one can see the changing cultural values of yesterday and today.

In comparing these older and modern fairy tales, one must first know what elements to focus in on. An examination of Propp's list of 31 functions provides at least four elements that must be examined in regards to the curses. Function 8, villainy, states: "the villain causes harm or injury to a member of the family" (386). In fairy tales featuring curses, this function may describe the moment in which the curse is cast, if it is cast by a villain. Analyzing the way in which this function happens will reveal something about the real misfortunes of each culture as represented in the story. If the curse is not cast by a villain, it may instead be made manifest through function 8a, lack: "one member of a family either lacks something or desires to have something" (386). In this case there may or may not be significance in how the curse comes about, and this must be questioned. The nature of the curse, however, will still reveal what it is that the culture values, as this will be the thing that the protagonist lacks. Often the initial misfortune of the curse will come to light through function 9, mediation: "misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command" (386). Such a "request or command" would then refer to the achievement necessary to break the curse. Perhaps most important in this analysis will be the details of function 19, liquidation: "the initial misfortune or lack is liquidated" (387). This will represent the moment in the story when the curse is actually broken. It is in the details of this moment that the strongest messages and morals of the story are brought to light. Therefore this will be the function that will tell us the most about the culture's values. An analysis of these functions in several older fairy tales and several modern fairy tales will provide the needed contrast to identify any cultural shift of values.

In De Beaumont's *Beauty and the Beast*, the title male character is placed under a curse for no apparent reason. The Beast explains to Beauty, "An evil fairy condemned me to remain in that form until a beautiful girl would consent to marry me. She barred me from revealing my intelligence. You were the only person in the world kind enough to be touched by the goodness of my character" (41). There are a few interesting points to examine in this description.

First, we are given no explanation for why the fairy chose to curse the Beast except that she was "evil." This definitely qualifies as a villainy function. The Beast's ugliness was not a punishment for any

misdeed, nor was it in any other way brought about by his own shortcomings. This may represent the fact that bad things can happen to good people for unknown reasons. In the pre-revolutionary France of the 18th century, senseless suffering abounded. The audience of Beaumont's tales would naturally accept and respond to it in literature.

Second, the nature of the curse inflicted on the Beast involves the loss of two things: his good looks and his intelligence. This provides an insight into the culture of Beaumont's time, showing that these two traits were considered the most necessary in order to win over a spouse. The feat of breaking the curse seems insurmountable with these two major disadvantages.

Finally, the details of mediation—how the curse is to be broken—must be considered. The fairy decrees that the Beast will maintain his form until “a beautiful girl [consents] to marry” him (41). Until he manages to find such a partner, he is trapped in his grisly form. Marriage was viewed as a necessary step in this time; there was no success without it. Furthermore, the Beast's explanation implies that the curse created a test of Beauty's virtues, as it revealed her kindness in looking past the outward appearance and loving the Beast for “the goodness of [his] character” (41). From the Beast's brief description, at least four key values of 18th-century France are revealed: beauty, intelligence, kindness, and the crucial step of marriage.

It is this last value that demands the most attention in this study. Evidently, this literary focus on the challenge and importance of pairing off has been around for a long time. For centuries it was the most elemental task placed before each young person and it was seen as an absolutely necessary step in becoming a successful, contributing adult in society.

Some 200 years before Madame de Beaumont, Straparola wrote of a similar curse in *The Pig King*. Here, there is a bit of blur between the villainy and lack functions, as the fairies who cast the spell are neither good nor evil. A sleeping Ersilia receives a spell from three fairies, who we are told “held mankind somewhat in scorn” (42). They are taken with her beauty and think themselves to be doing her a service—and yet with their blessings the third fairy throws in the curse that Ersilia's son will “be born in the skin of a pig, with a pig's ways and manners” (43). She adds the terms of mediation in the curse contract: that he will remain in his pig-state “till he shall have three times taken a woman to wife” (43). She makes no mention of any particular character traits that are necessary to break the curse, but increases the Pig King's challenge of finding a mate by requiring that he achieve it three times. Once again, the task of marrying off the Pig Prince seems insurmountable—this time to the royal parents—as the prince is completely devoid of the crucial spouse-luring characteristics of good looks and manners. It is worth noting that although the fairies' requirement was that the prince take a third woman to wife and not necessarily that she be good, it is only because of Meldina's outstanding qualities that she survives the wedding night and succeeds in breaking the curse. She is described as “lovely”, “grateful”, “humble”, and “amiable” (45). In other words, these cultural values, though not mentioned in the mediation, are made clear in the details of the liquidation function. Thus this story, like Beaumont's, highlights these desirable qualities and the ever-present task of marriage.

Such an analysis of curses in traditional fairy tales could go on and on. What do all of these examples have in common? Curses in *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* are famously broken by true love's kiss. However, as has been demonstrated already, this is not always the case. Meldina was not motivated by true love to marry the Pig Prince, but by her humble and grateful nature. Beauty herself stated of the Beast, “I may not be in love with him, but I feel respect, friendship, and gratitude toward him” (40). No,

true love is not the universal cursebreaker. Nor is the goodness of heart that is commonly mentioned, as an analysis of the princess's role in breaking the curse of *The Frog Prince* will quickly reveal. The single element that these and so many other traditional fairy tales have in common is simply the finding of a spouse or companion and pairing off.

From the perspective of Maria Tatar and other fairy tale scholars, this emphasis makes sense for its time period. As Tatar explained in her *Beauty and the Beast: Introduction*, “what many of these tales seem to endorse in one cultural inflection after another is a reinscription of patriarchal norms, the subordination of female desire to male desire, and a glorification of filial duty and self-sacrifice” (27). In a time when women had little say in whom they would marry, let alone if they would marry, stories like these would encourage children and adolescents to accept the roles society was pushing upon them.

These societal roles would not, however, remain stagnant forever. Over 400 years have passed since Straparola wrote his fairy tales, over 200 years since Madame de Beaumont, and over 150 years since the brothers Grimm. In order to conclude which values are represented in today's fairy tales, it is necessary to analyze a modern example. Gail Carson Levine's 1997 novel, *Ella Enchanted*, provides a fascinating contrast to the aforementioned tales.

Ella's curse is given to her unintentionally—or rather, it is given with the best of intentions. The fairy Lucinda grants the gift of obedience to the newborn baby. This means that Ella must obey every order she is given—even, as the book jacket blurb suggests, if someone were to order her “to hop on one foot, cut off her hand, or betray her kingdom”. This curse could then be described by the Propp function called lack. Yet Ella is not lacking in good looks, etiquette, or intelligence, as were all of the other protagonists encountered so far. Her lack is even more substantial by today's standards. What Ella lacks is her free will, her independence— something that our 21st-century American culture prizes more highly than almost anything else.

The function of mediation is not found in this story; there is no request made of Ella and no instruction given for how to break the curse. Even the absence of this function reveals something about our American culture: that we value the obstinate tenacity required to find a solution where none is provided.

Throughout the story, Ella tries several different methods of breaking the curse. First she tries to put an end to it by sheer grit, refusing to obey when a command endangers her own life. Her will is too weak and she fails to end the curse (44). Later she seeks out Lucinda and begs for mercy, which is not granted to her (127). This particular failed attempt teaches her that she must not depend on anyone but herself to accomplish her goal. This independence is a highly-held value in today's society, and one that parents wish to teach to their children. It was rarely taught in the previously mentioned traditional fairy tales, where the curses were always broken following the intervention of an outside character—generally, the potential spouse. The liquidation, or breaking of the curse, finally occurs when Ella's passion, loyalty, and love are brought to new heights and put to the test. Under the right circumstances, she is finally sufficiently motivated to muster the determination and strength of will necessary to break the curse. Modern readers are encouraged to develop this kind of determination and to fight with all their strength to achieve their goals, as children in the 18th century were taught to accept the roles that society placed before them. Notably, this is the first fairy tale in this analysis in which the liquidation does not involve pairing off. On the contrary, Ella actually breaks the curse by refusing to marry the prince.

While marriage is not necessarily looked down on in today's society, it has definitely slipped from its once-prominent position. As feminist scholar Rosemary Auchmuty observed:

Statistics and contemporary commentary show how marriage, once the ultimate and only acceptable status for women, has declined in social significance to such an extent that today it is a mere lifestyle choice. This is due to many factors, including the 'sexual revolution' of the 1960s, improved education and job opportunities for women, and divorce law reform, but the catalyst for change was the feminist critique that called for the abandonment (rather than the reform) of the institution, and made the unmarried state possible for women. (1)

Now that marriage is "a mere lifestyle choice", it need not be presented as the only option in the literature that teaches values to the upcoming generation. Earlier on in *Ella Enchanted*, Prince Char states that he has "resolved never to marry" (219). This resolution would certainly be viewed as rebellious by Char's royal parents, who cling to the value and expectation of marriage. In this way the King and Queen represent those in our society who are stuck in the past and hesitate in the face of cultural evolution. Char, however, as the leading male hero in the tale, sets a new standard for the present generation. He is independent and free-thinking and will determine for himself whether or not marriage will be his "lifestyle choice". Ultimately, Ella and Prince Char do marry and live happily ever after, but only after they have both refused to do so upon anyone else's orders and decided that it is what they truly desire.

Ella Enchanted is not the only fairy tale to teach these modern values. The 2006 film *Penelope* presents a modern fairy tale about a girl fighting to overcome yet another curse. She is the unfortunate victim of a curse cast by an angry witch on her family generations before her birth; as the first female born to her family since the curse, she bears the face of a pig. The lack function is fulfilled as poor Penelope lives a life of solitude hiding her face from the world. She lacks companionship and the "normal" life she so strongly desires. The mediation appears once again in the terms of the curse: Penelope is told she will only be free of the curse when "one of her own" accepts her and loves her as she is. Her parents assume that this means that someone of blue blood must love their daughter.

From the nature of Penelope's curse one can see that physical beauty still matters in today's culture. Penelope suffers ostracism and ridicule because of her deformity. However, she learns that wealth and beauty are not as important as her parents have led her to believe. To Penelope's parents, appearances are everything, so they keep Penelope locked up to preserve the family's honorable name. In this way they, like Char's parents in *Ella Enchanted*, come to represent old-fashioned and outdated values. However, it becomes clear through the course of the story that looks are not everything in today's world. When Penelope finally ventures out on her own and reveals her face to the world, it does not take long for society to be charmed by Penelope's personality and accept her as one of their own. Penelope begins to recognize that there is more to her identity than her physical appearance. She begins to develop confidence and self-respect. Penelope, like Char, is juxtaposed with old-fashioned parents to show a preference for "new and improved" social values.

Finally, the liquidation function—the breaking of the curse—reveals the fairy tale's moral. Penelope, like Ella, finds that the power to break the curse has been within her all along. When she finally learns to love and accept herself, the witch's terms are satisfied and the curse is broken. Thus the modern audience learns that self-respect and acceptance are much more powerful and valuable than one's physical appearance. Interestingly, the curse is again broken in the very moment that the heroine is

refusing to wed. Penelope decides that she would rather live with the curse forever than marry a man she does not love. Once again the old expectation to marry at any cost has been undermined, as Penelope realizes that she may be alone forever because of this decision and makes it anyway.

As the analysis of these fairy tale curses has demonstrated, fairy tales are teaching different lessons today than they did in centuries past. Why, then, is this drastic shift in fairy tale morality necessary in today's society? Fairy tales have adapted because society has adapted. Today's parents and teachers recognize either consciously or subconsciously the messages that are portrayed in fairy tales and they have provided the demand for stories that teach values that are updated and modern. Scholars acknowledge that yesterday's heroes will not serve the needs of today's children. In *Girl vs. Test*, an article on the timidity that young girls must overcome in their academic pursuits, Lisa Damour discusses the very real impact that fictional role models have on modern children. She theorizes about the impact Cinderella (as an outdated role model) or Mulan (as a modern role model) would have on modern students as they face standardized testing:

Just think of poor Cinderella. She can't even stand up to her stepsisters when they tear her dress apart, and she might still be weeping in the courtyard if it weren't for the intervention of her fairy godmother. Picturing Cinderella at the SAT, it is easy to see a young woman who dissolves in the face of an unexpectedly tough question...If we imagine Mulan at the SAT, we know that she would show up with a take-no-prisoners attitude, eager to prove what she can do, and in the mood to kick that test around and come out on top. Does she run into questions that knock her back? You bet. Does she go cry in the courtyard? No way. She leans forward and tackles the next question with renewed vigor.

If modern parents and teachers are hoping to instill Mulan-like confidence and other modern values in today's children, the fairy tales they use as a teaching device must be adapted accordingly. Similarly, in a society where marriage is no longer a person's only life path and where it is commonly recognized that there are more important things than good looks and polite passivity, fairy tales must reflect updated societal priorities.

Fairy tales, as a literary genre that is ever-changing and adapting, provide a unique resource in understanding the evolution of human society. It has been demonstrated in this analysis that fairy tale curses reveal valuable insights into the cultural values of the fairy tale's time. In traditional fairy tales they reveal traditional values; in modern fairy tales they reveal modern values. As long as people continue to live, learn and change, fairy tales will reflect this cultural history. Where there is an awareness of the rich resource available in this genre, there is a remarkable advantage in understanding human morality now and throughout the years of generations to come.

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Expressive- English 2010

1st Place Winner: Mariesa Miller, "Dog Therapy"

For Dr. James Aton

I grew up begging for a dog. In my eyes, every child had three indisputable rights "to life, liberty," and a puppy. My mother disagreed. Her response to my persistent plea was always the same. "We aren't dog people, dear." This was true of my family at the time. We often jested at those elderly, canine-worshipping couples and at those who carried photos of their so called "babies" in posh, leather wallets. We scrunched our noses at the thought of pet dander and gaped in bemusement at those who fussed over their sweater-clad pups. No, we weren't dog people, but it didn't matter to me. I still wanted a puppy.

Nothing was more exciting than the day my mom finally caved in. My older brother was about to move out for the first time, and our close family was in distress. We foresaw a gaping hole that would be left in our home after he moved. Searching for something to fill it with, my mother consented to get a non-shedding golden doodle. From the first moment I picked Lily up, I could sense that she was special. She was a spirited dog, and while nothing could replace my adored brother, Lily could certainly detract from the pain.

As she grew into those oversized paws, her grip on my heart tightened. Her soft, white fur was my refuge from the gales of growing up. Her tail always wagged when I walked in the door, regardless of whatever stains were on my report card. She bounded after me on the days I felt like running away. Shallow boys and untrue friends could never fully break my heart, because my furry companion was one I could depend on. Popularity, looks, and maturity were all irrelevant in her blissfully ignorant eyes. Lily just wanted someone to play with, and I could be that someone.

It didn't matter if I was tired or tangled in problems. She needed to be fed, brushed, and played with every single day. Without the ability to do these things for herself, Lily gave me an opportunity to show a small fleck of kindness. I was always happier after meeting her needs. Some days, running around like a maniac to give a dog exercise was the last thing I wanted to do. I always did though, and it probably benefitted me more than it did her. In her own unassuming way, Lily taught me that helping others is one sure way to make myself happy.

Some winter mornings it was difficult to get out of bed. On those days, my mom would crack open the door to my bedroom. Lily would bound inside, jump on my bed, and lick my face until I was wide awake. She was thrilled to see me, and I rewarded her love with praise and attention. Her early-morning enthusiasm made me wonder if I had been missed through the night. I must admit, it was flattering to think that my presence could have been craved so. Whatever her motives, that energetic greeting could turn even the sleepest grouch into a morning person. It was the best way to start the day.

Now that Lily is a mature dog, those bright morning greetings are rare. She stands two feet tall with strong muscles and focused attention. Her once fuzzy coat has refined into more dignified curls, and the exuberance of puppyhood has generally receded. She now performs tricks with mastery and resists the

urge to destroy all my shoes. I remember wishing she would stay small forever, but now I wouldn't take back those months of growth for anything in the world.

We've reached adulthood together, and both of us are more intelligent than we used to be. Her round, coffee-colored eyes often suggest a mysterious understanding as they peer into mine. There's no telling to what extent her thoughts delve, but I do know that she is sensitive to human emotion. When I'm happy or excited, she drops her tongue in an animated pant, and her tail begins to rapidly swoosh around. If ever I'm sad, she slowly and somberly curls up at my feet and presses her head gently against my leg. I have nick named these interactions "dog therapy," because they have a healing effect on my heart.

The core of our friendship was forged in the mountains. I'm never happier than when there's dirt under my feet, and I think Lily feels the same way. There's a wild excitement in her eyes as she sniffs out squirrels and chases butterflies. Her natural, animal side comes out, and she glories in the open freedom. I too need to release my untamed soul from time to time, and Lily is the perfect companion. I feel safe in her presence, but she never detracts from the sweet solitude of the great outdoors. Despite her inherent mental state, Lily remains fiercely loyal. I never put her on a leash, because I trust her to come back whenever I call. This confidence validates the sincerity of our friendship. She bounds ahead of me on the trail but stops to look back every so often, making sure I'm still in sight. If she follows her nose off the path after a rabbit or squirrel, all I have to say is, "Lily, trail!" and she swiftly returns to the marked course.

The best thing about my dog is her simplicity. She has no judgments, no worries, and no regrets. The only thing she seems to care about is the present. Too often, my troubles revolve around past events or future anticipations, but Lily has shown me how to change through example. She lives in the moment, loves people, and plays. Aren't these things we should all be doing? Before we met, I didn't think a canine could be a mentor, but now I see things differently.

Today, I'm a "dog person" through and through. I miss her severely living away from home, but I try to incorporate her lessons into my life every day. Loyalty, sensitivity, and unconditional love have all been a part of this friendship that will ultimately outlive our bodies. I will hold on to our bond forever.

2nd Place Winner: Heather Evans, "The Place In-Between"

For Dr. Julia Combs

I had been walking one evening in March, marveling at the new leaves already starting to blossom on the trees. Life was happening all around me. Spring was just around the corner. I was nineteen and not far away from having a baby. I was no longer a girl, but not yet a woman. This is what I call the place in-between. I was afraid of the unknown. Would I be a good mother? Would I be able to help her grow and learn? The closer I got to finally meeting this little person I created, the more my past came rushing up to overwhelm me. I was abused as a child, and grew into a young woman who lacked confidence and self-love. When I was fifteen I was taken away from my father and step mother. My father's parents pulled me out of the darkness, giving me a chance for a better life. I had married my high school sweetheart a few months after graduation and a year into our relationship found out he had been unfaithful to me. I filed for divorce and resumed to pick up the broken pieces of myself. As I was walking, I thought back to the months before then and how everything had changed so suddenly and drastically.

A few months after my husband and I separated, I started to gain weight rather quickly, which happened to be only in my waist area. Living in a constant state of depression months before had caused me to lose my appetite, and a feeling of dread washed over me as I thought about possible reasons for gaining weight. Being pregnant was the first thought that came to mind, so I went out and bought a pregnancy test. The test came back almost immediately as positive. The breath was knocked out of my chest. I was living in Saint George, Utah, and had no family whatsoever in the state. I scheduled an appointment with the gynecologist, still feeling shock from the results of the test and hoping for the possibility that the test was inaccurate. I sat in the chair at the doctor's office in one of the examination rooms feeling very alone and scared. Tears spilled from my eyes and down my face.

My body was shaking as I experienced my first panic attack. A nurse walked in my room with a monitor to listen for a heartbeat. She set down the little device when she saw me and wrapped her arms around me. Having her reach out to me was so unexpected but immensely comforting. My breathing stabilized and my body stopped shaking. She pulled away and looked right into my eyes and said, "Honey, you will be okay." I had not known this woman, but somehow I knew she was right. Even though I knew it was going to be hard, I also knew that I was going to be okay.

I laid back in the chair, and the nurse applied some jelly all over the skin on my stomach. It was cold and made me jump a little. My stomach felt like I had swallowed a tiny watermelon and it was now stuck in there. She was able to pick up a heartbeat almost right away. As I listened to the quick rapid beating, I started to get goose bumps all over my skin. The realization that I had created life hit me, and oh how wonderful and scary it was all at the same time! I heard the nurse ask me a question, but I couldn't comprehend what she was saying. I muttered something of a reply, barely audible. I couldn't think, I couldn't vocalize my thoughts into words.

"Heather, you are measuring pretty far along. I'd like to see if we could get you into the ultrasound room to take a look at the baby." The nurse's warm hands were pressing and poking on my stomach. "What do you mean measuring pretty far along?" I managed to choke out. She looked at me with warm and motherly eyes, "Well, you are telling me that you have been pretty regular with your period up until this last month, but your uterus already feels high up and you have started to show. I'd like to take a look

and make sure everything is okay.” Fifteen minutes later, I was led into the ultrasound room. Still in shock, I lay down once again, and lifted my shirt up. I kept telling myself to take deep breaths and just relax. I can get through this, I said to my other stressed-out self in my head. The nurse was talking to me again and I had no idea what she was saying. I shook my thoughts out, took in one deep breath and apologized. “I am sorry, what were you saying?”

“You are about twenty weeks along. The baby is developing nicely. We might be able to get it to move and we can see what you are having.” My heart dropped, and then started beating uncontrollably. “Excuse me, but what I am h-ha-having?” I started to stutter, I couldn’t even talk. The nurse’s eyes lit up, “Yes dear look! You are having a little girl!” My eyes fixated on the screen at the small watermelon I had swallowed. It now resembled a baby. My baby had one arm up to her face and was moving her hand around. She started moving her legs and turning all different ways. The black and white image on the screen shook me to my core. This was really happening. I was going to not only have a baby, but a little girl.

After scheduling my next appointment with the doctor, I left the hospital and made my way out into the parking lot where my car was. I was starting to feel light headed, and I didn’t know if my legs would get me to my car or if they were going to buckle underneath me. By the time I realized I had made it to my car, I was already inside and sitting down with my seatbelt on. “What am I supposed to do now?” I asked out loud to no one in particular. I had no clue where to begin. I placed a hand on my stomach and felt a peaceful and loving calm come over me. I smiled and started the engine.

I drove home to the apartment I was living in by Dixie College and called my best friend Cody to share the news with her. I could barely get out the words that I was pregnant before I started crying again. I was an emotional mess. I had never cried this much. She was at my front door in less than five minutes with a frozen pizza and tub of ice-cream. We stayed up until three a.m. the next morning, munching on pizza and stuffing our faces with ice cream. Being with her was comforting, that empty and alone feeling was temporarily gone. A few days passed and I knew that eventually I would have to call my estranged husband to let him know that I was pregnant.

I decided I would talk to his mother first as I was still very close with his family. I desperately needed advice and guidance, and I knew she would be a great person to get this from. I was a little surprised that when I shared my news with her that I was expecting, she was thrilled! I felt surprised at her reaction because I was honestly expecting her to act differently towards me, given the circumstances of my relationship with her son at the moment. My depression had sucked me into a fear of caring what other people thought, and possibly having to face disapproval. I sighed with relief. It felt like a small weight had been lifted off my shoulders. She encouraged me to call my husband right away.

A few hours later I worked up the courage to call him. I could feel the anger and resentment building up in my body as I dialed his number. I knew my face was turning red, I could feel the heat spreading up my neck and across my face. At this time in my life, this was honestly one of the hardest things I had to do. I needed to heal and move on with my life, and now by having a child with him I was being tied to him permanently. I envisioned a life of just me and my daughter living in happiness. I couldn’t even swallow the thought of having to share her and be away from her and she hadn’t even been born yet.

The first words out of his mouth when I told him we were having a baby were, “Are you F-ing kidding me?! I don’t even believe this child is mine, I want you to take a paternity test before I claim her!” Click.

He hung up on me. That conversation went well. An overwhelming desire to run away came over me. It was a powerful feeling of hopelessness and fear. I was picturing myself packing up my car, and driving far away from the town of Saint George and out of the state of Utah. I clearly wasn't wanted here and would most likely end up raising this baby alone with no family of my own close by. It was tempting, but I knew that what I needed most right now was to try and stay clear headed without my emotions getting in the way.

A few hours later, my husband called me on the phone and asked if we could meet up and talk. Later that night, I sat in my bedroom and looked at the man who I had once thought I was going to spend the rest of my life with. Every memory and the emotions tied up with it started to build up inside of me. I felt weak, insecure, not good enough, tired, and afraid. He wanted us to try again, and work things out. He said he loved me, and I believed him. The room felt like it was closing in on me and my heart was racing in my chest.

A million questions rattled off in my head. Is this the right thing to do? Can I trust him? I never once stood up for myself, and shared my fears or feelings with him. I knew I was being cowardly, but in a selfish way, I wanted to make sure the baby and I were going to be taken care of. We decided to stop the divorce from going through and try to work on our relationship. A few weeks later, we moved into an apartment together off Sunset Blvd. It was a cute little two bedroom place on the top floor. A huge tree grew up to our front living room window, and we had a lovely view of a park across the street.

My belly grew bigger and bigger as the weeks continued to pass us by. The only family I could call was my grandparents, it was time to share with them that my husband and I were trying to work things out, and that we were expecting a baby soon. My grandparents were very supportive of my decision, and tried the best they could to help out in any way possible. I was working at Target part time and going to school to become a licensed Master Esthetician. My husband was promoted to a supervising position with a construction company. We were doing pretty well financially and had everything ready to welcome our baby into this world and bring her home. We decided to name her Mkinzy Kay.

As I reached thirty six weeks, I was constantly feeling uncomfortable. My size zero pants still fit, only I wasn't able to button them any longer because my belly hung over them. I bought a bunch of stretchy tube tops and wore them over the zipper and button so I wouldn't have to buy maternity jeans. I woke up every morning feeling like I needed to deep clean my house. The counters were spotless, the carpet looked brand new, there wasn't a speck of dust anywhere and my floors were so clean they could be eaten off of. Oh the joys of pregnancy. A

t thirty six weeks pregnant, I went for a walk in early March as spring was approaching. So many events had transpired up to that day. I was at that in-between place. I knew that as each day ended, I was growing a little more as a person, woman, and soon-to-be mother. My daughter had not yet arrived but she inspired me to become a better person. All the abuse, pain, hurt and trauma I experienced needed to be let go of for good. I am not who I was in my past. My life was ever changing, and even though parts of it seemed hard and unbearable, I was still learning and changing for the better. Every kick and movement from her was exciting. I pictured what her face would look like, and daydreamed about how it would feel to hold her for the first time. As I walked along the path, I noticed how colorful the trees and flowers looked to me. I had been so wrapped up in "life" that I forgot to notice the beauty of the world around me. I was motivated that day to go home and start a journal. I wanted to create list of goals for myself too.

I grabbed a blank journal and a pen, and went to sit in her bedroom. Her walls were painted a soft yellow, and I had decorated them with old vintage Winnie the Pooh pictures. I had found a Winnie the Pooh rug that was big and so soft. It was made of Chenille, and was sewn with soft neutral tone colors. Her crib was set up against one wall in the middle, and her changing table was across the room aligned with the crib. My grandparents had bought both as a set, and they were made from very durable cherry wood. They were beautiful pieces of furniture, and I was grateful to have been given them. I bought her a tall four drawer dresser that matched, and found a Winnie the Pooh lamp and stuffed animals to sit on top.

I sat down on her rug, and as I started to write in my journal, the words spilled out about my traumatic childhood. I pictured my father's face, sad and worn down as he would look at my twelve year old bruised and battered face from the beating my step mother had inflicted on me, and then walk away without a word. I couldn't imagine what must have gone through his mind when he would look at me. I didn't understand why he never stood up for me, and continued to allow the abuse, but I endured anyways.

Something felt different that night as I closed my journal. I was finally dealing with things that had happened to me when I was younger, but was continuing to affect me as I grew older. I refused to live in resentment and anger. My daughter deserved the best of me, and everything I had to offer. Tears had streamed down my face and spilled on to the paper, but I didn't stop writing. I wrote until my fingers hurt and cramped up. My eyes were red and my face felt puffy. I titled my journal, "The Road to Recovery." I talked to my child in my stomach. I told her she was my little angel, and I thanked her for helping me heal. I felt a sharp kick to my ribs and sucked in a breath as the pain seared through my side. In my head I thought, "She must have heard me."

At three in the morning, I was so uncomfortable in bed that I woke up out of a deep sleep. I rolled off the side of the bed and waddled my way into the kitchen. My stomach started to tighten up really hard and it felt like the air was being squeezed out of me. I was starting to have contractions. Since I was only thirty six weeks pregnant, and technically still had four more weeks to go until she was due, I wasn't too worried about the contractions. I got out some bread, jelly and peanut butter, thinking maybe some food would comfort me and I could go back to sleep. As I picked up the jar of jelly, another contraction hit me so hard that I dropped the jar and it shattered into pieces on the kitchen floor. I gripped the counter and tried to focus on my breathing until the contraction passed. As soon as I could walk, I made my way into the bedroom to wake my husband up.

He was frantic and excited, rushing me hurriedly into the car so we could go to the hospital. Four a.m. was approaching, and I was in a daze. I might be meeting my baby soon, and the thought was surreal. We made our way into the labor and delivery room. As we approached the nursing station, another contraction started coming and I felt my legs start to give out. I almost fell to the floor but my husband had his arms around my waist and he caught me. The pain was excruciating, and it was hard to remember to breathe. My head was throbbing from lack of oxygen. The fluorescent lights were harsh on my eyes, and the walls were an ugly beige color. I remember asking the nurse if the delivery rooms were more pleasant to look at, but she just turned her head away, smiling at my comment. The contractions were coming faster and faster, everything around me started to blur, and all I could focus on was the pain. Doctors and nurses were moving hastily around me, getting everything ready for the delivery.

I was living minute to minute in unbearable pain like I had never felt before. Surely, being tortured felt a lot like this. My thought process was at a standstill, and I was slow to respond to anything that was said to me. My mother in law was suddenly in my line of sight. When did she get here? She was telling me that it was now almost five in the morning and the doctors said I was close to being ready to push.

“Push what?” I asked her. I heard her chuckle. “Heather, are you alright? You do realize you are about to have a baby, and last time I checked pushing is how you get your baby out. Unless of course, you have a C-section, which you my dear, are not.” Another contraction hit, and I grabbed the side of the bed. I could hear myself saying out loud to everyone in the room that I wasn’t ready for this, and I didn’t know what I was doing. The fear of delivery gripped at me, and the embarrassment of having six plus strangers watch a baby come out of you-know where was overwhelming. Because I was scared of the giant needle to receive the epidural, I had refused a medicated delivery.

I was so close to having my baby that I had no other option but to endure the pain and give birth naturally. As a contraction ended, a nurse was telling me that when the next contraction came I was to push. “I don’t know how to push!” I yelled at her. “Think of it like you would push when you go to the bathroom, okay?” I must have looked at her like she was crazy, because my mother in law was chuckling again and walked away. “Are you serious? That is gross, I can’t do that!” I think I was slightly frantic by then, possibly a little erratic. But before I could spill out any more angry words, or be rude to the nurse trying to help, another contraction hit and she was telling me to push.

Black stars appeared in my eyes. I could hear nothing but the sound of my heart beating. Everything to both sides of me was a blur, including everyone’s faces of the people in the room. I thought I might pass out. The pain was numbing. I pushed a total of three times, and at five forty nine in the morning, on March twenty seventh, my daughter Mkinzy Kay let out her first cry. The doctor that delivered her wrapped her in a blanket, and placed her in my arms. At that moment nothing else mattered. She was so small and yet perfectly beautiful in every way. I smiled at her, and took her tiny hand in mine. Her skin was so soft and she had thick white globs all over, but I still thought she was the prettiest thing I had ever seen. Her eyes were open and she just stared back at me. They were a dark brown color just like her dads, and she had a full head of thick brown hair. She had the chubbiest cheeks, and rolls on her legs that made me think of the Michelin Man mascot.

I will never forget the day she was born. I was no longer stuck in my in-between place. I was here in the now, right where I belonged. Growing more and more into a woman that I could say I was proud of. She saved my life. She gave me hope, and showed me love. She taught me so much in just the eight and a half months I carried her, and from the incredible experience of giving birth. I was meant to have her in my life. I might have only been nineteen, but I was ready for everything god had blessed me with. Because of her, I am a better person, woman, friend and mother.

Honorable Mention: Brett Baker, Lessons from Soccer
For Dr. Julia Combs

When the snow melted, the plain scenery melted with it. The area acquired a new energy. As the energy passed through, it transformed the lifeless and colorless surroundings into a vibrant paradise. The trees became colorful with their blossoms. The rich fragrance of flowers filled the air. The birds added their voices to make a sweet harmony. Not only did the plants and animals come alive but the students were reborn. It was a day like this that we started playing soccer.

"I'm a forward," Cade called out.

"I'll a forward too!" exclaimed Taylor. Positions were filling up rapidly. I didn't want to be stuck as the goalie, so I shouted, "I'll be a defender!" The enthusiasm rushed in our blood, through our bodies, and seemed to burst onto the field. The game began. But wait! "Aren't we missing something?" I asked myself. "What about all the rules?"

In a flash, my mind went back several years when my cousins and I played soccer as kids. "Did we play by the rules? If so, what were they?" My mind was viciously and desperately looking for answers, analyzing every detail I could remember. Finally, what seemed like an eternity turned out to be a matter of seconds. I had found some rules. I opened the dusty box inside my brain labeled "soccer guide." I didn't have time to dust off the lid. Instead, I ripped the top off to see what information the box contained. To my surprise, there was only one sheet of paper. As I reached down to pick up the piece of paper, something didn't feel right. Before I realized it, I was jerked back onto the soccer field. I was shocked and alarmed. Guys were running toward me with the ball. "What do I do?" I wanted to call a time out so I could read my instructions first. Knowing that that wasn't going to happen I abandoned my box and focused on the ball.

Brad kicked the ball with his left foot, right foot, back to the left, and right past me. "Aren't you supposed to stop the guy with the ball? Yeah, I guess you're right. I should have done something. It's okay. You got it next time!" I reasoned with myself.

Once again the ball came towards me. "This is it," I reassured myself. Adam was dribbling the ball down the field, with the left foot, right foot, back to the left. I swung my leg hoping to make contact with the ball. I missed. Those who handled the ball seemed to glide effortlessly down the field guiding the ball wherever they wanted. It was proof that I didn't stand as an obstacle to them. For that reason, the opposing team kept running the ball to my side of the field for the remainder of the day.

The end of the day finally came. I started to walk home. As I walked, I could feel my tendons tighten up with every step. I looked down to see if anything was left of my legs. I saw what looked like muscle or at least some mass, but they didn't seem to feel right. I felt as though there was an overly stretched out rubber band attached from my hip to my foot, and it couldn't control anything in between. The energy I once had was evaporated. As I continued to walk I started talking to myself.

"How in the world could I get that ball?"

"Well, you could trip them." I mumbled.

“That’s true, I could, but that wouldn’t be very nice.”

“Hmm, how about kicking them in the shin guard? It’s there to protect them so it won’t hurt too bad, but it would slow them down long enough to get the ball,” I thought jokingly.

“No, just have patience. It’s only the first day!”

“Alright,” I agreed.

The next day came, and I was eager to do better than the day before. I arrived early so I had a little time to practice before everyone got there. I quickly stretched and ran on to the field. As I pulled my leg back to kick the ball, I felt my muscles reluctantly move to accommodate the movement. Though my muscles were stiff, I decided to kick the ball anyway. My foot made direct contact with the ball. It seemed as though I had just kicked a bowling ball. A shot of electricity passed through my leg making it completely numb. “Wow! I should have stretched more,” I told myself as I started to stretch more carefully. By the time I finished, most of the players had arrived.

“Hey Brett, do you want to be goalie today?” Taylor asked.

“Not really, I’ve never been a goalie and I don’t think I would be very good.” I replied.

“That’s okay, why don’t you start as the goalie and after a while we will switch you out with Tom,” Taylor insisted.

“Okay, I can try it out,” I answered halfheartedly. “Besides no one really gets too close to the goal, and if they do it’s not for very long,” I persuaded myself.

It didn’t take very long for the opposing team to score. One goal in particular became cemented in my mind. The defenders on my team were preoccupied with other players. Then, Matt broke free with the ball. I was the only thing between him and the goal. He swiftly and gracefully guided the ball right to the goal post. I stood there and watched him stop the ball, turn around, and kick it in backwards. It happened so quick that questions clouded my mind and paralyzed my body. My coach was as just as shocked as I was.

“Wow, that was pretty embarrassing,” she commented.

“Yeah, I’m used to it.” I replied.

Experiences like this filled the following weeks. Despite the dark and heavy chains of embarrassment and frustration, I felt there was still a little flame flickering inside. “Keep playing,” my mind continually encouraged me. Gradually, I started adding kindling to the flame. I studied other players and how they handled the ball in different situations. I asked teammates for advice and terminology. When I practiced, my skills at handling the ball improved considerably and the kindling turned into sticks. I was able to look up, dribble the ball, and pass to teammates. Suddenly, I started adding logs to the fire.

This became evident one hot afternoon. The sun’s rays beat on our faces until they were bright red. Occasionally, a light breeze would offer some relief as it pushed our sweat filled shirts against our bodies. The faint flavor of blood was evident in my mouth as exhaustion began to set in. Cade kicked the ball to me. I dribbled halfway down the field then quickly passed to Adam as I ran closer to the goal. “Cross!” I yelled. Adam kicked the ball across the field. It was a perfect pass. My heart skipped a beat as I

kicked the ball toward the goal. After the ball left my foot, time seemed to almost stop. The ball headed for the corner of the goal in between the goal post and the Jake. Suddenly, my heart started to beat then pound violently. Will the ball hit the post, or will Jake block it with his out stretched arms? The ball slid past Jake's fingertips into the goal net! I made my first goal. I started celebrating like I had just won the world championship. It never felt so good to play soccer than it was at that moment.

After I calmed down a little, a soft but powerful thought came affirming that I was a winner but not because I made a goal. Life has a funny way of teaching lessons especially when we least expect it. I've learned a couple of these unexpected but very valuable lessons in a big open field.