

The Pelican's Plume

A College Collage

Fall 2021

"Beauty will save
the world."

- Fyodor Dostoevsky

College Collage

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Mission Statement

Our journal's title is symbolic of the pelican bird, who, in times of famine, revives its young with blood from its own breast; so too does an artist give of themselves to feed the culture with beauty. Our journal's purpose is to foster a community for emerging, young artists desiring to create from the heart. This year's edition, "A College Collage," focuses on the universality of the young adult experience through our various works. In *The Pelican's Plume*, you will find poetry, non-fiction, visual art, and fiction produced by student artists.

Letter from the Editors

At The Pelican's Plume, we invite you to take a look into the mind of a young artist.

The artistic process can be chaotic. Never linear, or as neat and clear as we might prefer. It's a process of self-discovery. Poetry, painting, short stories - we make art to better understand both ourselves and the world around us.

The life of a young artist is one big collage of work, study, and creating. Learning how to juggle the responsibilities of life and artistry while also figuring out just what those responsibilities are. We've all got to ask the question of why we bother creating art.

In our journal, we've come to the conclusion that in the same way a doctor heals people physically, artists are called to heal souls. Whether it be through philosophical discourse or a silly little poem, our gift to the world is beauty and it's something that's meant to be shared. It's a beauty born of an honest interpretation of life, addressing the messy, the marvelous, and the things in-between.

In our journal, you will find a variety of works scattered throughout the pages. The omission of a classic organizational style reflects our unique assortment of collaborators as well as the general chaos of life as a young artist. We welcome our readers to share in our chaos and to please enjoy the ride.

Our deepest gratitude,
Audrey Daniels and Grace Volk

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Paper War

Krystiana Schiffli

The soldiers of this hidden corps
Were worthy, clever men
The agents of a paper war
Equipped with ink and pen

Some say the bullets that they shot
Are worth their weight in gold
They rattled through the realm of thought
To penetrate the soul



Autumn Leaf, Mia Schaller

Free Book Cart

Katherine Thayer

Parked in front of the library desk
A shiny grey cart that is organized, and not a wreck
And on that cart resides for many
Books for students to take, and there is always plenty

Some days the cart may look a bit bare
With not too many books to spare
But today there is a good collection
Of various books that you could inspect

Some books of history and of stories told before
Some contain stories of more distant lore
Some contain various religious facts
And some contain things of a darker tract

All of these books have one thing
That makes the free book cart appealing
Students can always take the books that are there
And more books will be added to give a different flare



Balloon Dancers, Sofia Carbonell

Thank You, Nietzsche

Grace Volk

Between the pages of my copy of Freidrich Nietzsche's book, *The Antichrist*, lavender flowers have been pressed, left there from about a year ago when I placed them to mark my experience with his writing. This experience was my reversion back to my faith, rooted in truth by reading falsehood. (Thomas Aquinas should add a proof for God's sense of humor.) I may have placed those flowers in the pages because I felt sorry for Nietzsche. Maybe I felt a kinship to him because Nietzsche's well-written arguments against the Christian faith brought me closer to Christ. However, my experience is not sufficient enough to refute Nietzsche, nor is it sufficient enough to solely provide a modern interpretation of Nietzsche. That is why a look at two Italian saints, the fiction of Fyodor Dostoevsky, and basic Christian teaching is necessary in order to identify Nietzsche's misconceptions of the faith which are presented in *The Antichrist*.

The first claim to address is what Nietzsche defines as, Christian pity. This central concept in his ideology does not mean Christians are compassionate or loving, elements which Christians strive to embody. Rather, Nietzsche describes Christian pity as a collective wallowing. He writes, "Christianity is called the religion of pity...A man loses power when he pities. Suffering is made contagious by pity" (Nietzsche 20). Because Christians focus too much on their suffering, they do not think of solutions to overcome their circumstances. Nietzsche claims that Christians are weak-minded individuals.

Let us not be so vain as to reject an honest examination into Christian culture. There is a common saying every devout Catholic mother likes to use when her children dare to complain: "Offer your suffering

up to Christ.” While Christians should unite their struggles to Christ so that He can help lighten the load, or transform our difficulties into something beautiful, we should be proactive in solving our problems when it is within our power to solve them. A child cannot “pray away” the bully who continues to harm him on the playground. The parent should take action to protect the child from getting physically or emotionally wounded. Likewise, an individual who is suffering from cancer should still receive medical attention regardless of whether they believe it is God’s will that they are diagnosed with a terminal illness; God works through the doctor who is practicing medicine to heal his patients.

All that aside, there is an overabundance of examples to contradict Nietzsche’s claim that Christians are weak-minded, pitiable people. The first is to consider a practical Christian teaching: Jesus conquered death in the Resurrection. Thanks to this miraculous event in history, Christians must no longer fear even the “be-all-end-all” of suffering, i.e. death. It is through death that we are able to enter into eternal life with Christ. Consider the biography of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. He was completely misunderstood by his parents throughout his life, he sacrificed many of his personal goals and even happiness to keep his family together, and Pier Giorgio died of polio at the young age of twenty-four. Despite the extreme pain due to the illness, Pier Giorgio was happy and had no fear during his last days on earth: “When he was on his own death-bed they came to tell him...that his end might be near. His face lit up and he exclaimed, ‘I am quite content’” (Robert Claude 93). Suffering had no effect on Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. It is not possible for a Christian to sulk in suffering when keeping their focus on Christ.

Pier Giorgio lived in contrast to Nietzsche’s thesis that Christians do not overcome life’s adversity. However, leave Nietzsche’s claim as it stands, and place it within our present day context. It is possible the culture will respond with sympathy toward Christianity. Young individuals are obsessed with fighting for equality. The derogatory term,

“social justice warriors” is sometimes used to describe those that fight passionately for equality. However, no one can deny the neglected, poor, and marginalized should receive necessary human rights. Christ teaches us to protect the vulnerable and care for those who are susceptible to unfair treatment:

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.’ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus (Romans 15:1-5).

Modern readers will hopefully see past Nietzsche’s contempt of Christianity, and come to the realization that Christians are on the same team that they are on.

Along with Nietzsche’s concept of Christian pity, and all the implications that come with it, he discusses a second idea within *The Anti-christ*. Nietzsche makes a dramatic claim that Christians are delusional. There is no true foundation behind its promises. He writes that “under Christianity, neither morality nor religion has any point of contact with actuality” (Nietzsche 26). Christian principles such as free will, morality, and grace are social constructs.

Nietzsche drives home the idea that Christians believe in this fabricated ideology because they are too weak to face reality for what it is. Therefore, a Christian doesn’t live within reality when practicing Christian fundamentals such as the above. Christianity becomes a tool to soften the adversity of life, and this correlates to his first idea, Christian pity. Nietzsche writes that “the preponderance of pains over pleasures is the cause of this fictitious morality and religion” (Nietzsche 27). Who

in their right mind would choose abstinence over pleasure, or fasting over indulgence?

Nietzsche perceives Christians as odd and ignorant. This may be offensive to those practicing their faith. Yet, I cannot bring myself to become upset that Christianity, for some, seems too good to be true. To an outsider, choosing to practice chastity and temperance in today's society would seem bizarre, even delusional. In fact, I know one man that would perfectly fit into Nietzsche's defining characteristic of a Christian: Saint Francis of Assisi.

The story of Saint Francis is a popular one. He was a man who rejected wealth, status, and women for a life consisting of extreme poverty. Imagine watching first-hand Saint Francis' first days after he abandoned his inheritance. How odd would it be to see the friend you once partied with now begging for stones to build a church, wearing old peasant's clothes? In G.K. Chesterton's biography of the saint, he explains this phenomenon from a similar perspective:

[Francis] then runs about the town asking everybody he meets to give him fragments of building materials, apparently with reference to his old monomania about mending the wall [of the church]. It may be an excellent thing that cracks should be filled up, but preferably not by somebody who is himself cracked... Finally, the wretched youth relapses into rags and squalor and practically crawls away into the gutter. That is the spectacle that Francis must have presented to a very large number of his neighbours and friends (Chesterton 39-40).

Was Saint Francis delusional? To some, he may be considered so. Yet, Saint Francis knew something many other people did not. He knew that Christ is the truth, and following Christ filled his being to the top with indefinable love and happiness. Nietzsche adopts a distant, secular outlook on a Christian lifestyle, but he does not look closely enough at the inward workings of the Christian heart. Saint Francis was not delusional. He embraced reality to its fullest extent.

Nietzsche's next claim within *The Antichrist* reaches beyond his book to become a central characteristic in Postmodern literature and

philosophy. This idea is an alternative to religion, and it is referred to as, the will to power. Nietzsche describes the will to power when he reflects individual purpose in life: "What is good[?]... whatever augments the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man... What is happiness? — The feeling that power increases — that resistance is overcome" (Nietzsche 18). True freedom and fulfillment result when a person wills themselves to overcome social constructs, religion, and most essentially, one's own weaknesses.

Thanks to the figure of Napoleon, the idea that an individual can most notably transcend morality came years before Nietzsche wrote his philosophy on the will to power. The Russian author, Fyodor Dostoevsky, discusses the problems that arise when individuals believe they are above moral boundaries in his novel, *Crime and Punishment*. The plot consists of a young man named Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov when he murders an old pawnbroker, with the intention to sell her things and distribute the earnings to the poor. We follow Raskolnikov's journey from a guilt-ridden madman, to a man fully redeemed.

This philosophy is particularly examined toward the middle of *Crime and Punishment*, where a detective, Porfiry Petrovich, interrogates Raskolnikov's article that justifies criminal behavior. Porfiry generalizes the article by saying, "In his [Raskolnikov's] article all men are divided into 'ordinary' and 'extraordinary.' Ordinary men have to live in submission, have no right to transgress the law, because... they are ordinary. But extraordinary men have a right to commit any crime and to transgress the law in any way, just because they are extraordinary" (Dostoevsky 247). To this summation, Raskolnikov has only one critique: the extraordinary man has the right within his conscience, not an official right, to break laws, so long as it is for the betterment of humanity (Dostoevsky 247). This ideology is rooted in the recognition that some men are more capable than others, or rather, that some men are superior to others. Raskolnikov falls prey to this subjective, harsh world view.

Once Raskolnikov murders the pawnbroker, he realizes the flaws

within his argument, and he is overcome with guilt and despair. In fact, Raskolnikov is so tortured by his actions that one night he is haunted by the murdered woman in his sleep (264). While he thought he could overstep morality, it ends up becoming humanly impossible for him to go on living without remorse. Dostoevsky provides an example of how powerful the human conscience can be through his protagonist's derangement.

It is important to note that Dostoevsky was a Russian Orthodox Christian. It is ironic that Nietzsche greatly admired Dostoevsky because Christianity is the most capable opponent standing in the way of his ideology. Raskolnikov's guilt-ridden conscience and sentence to Siberia are the consequences that illustrate morality cannot be overstepped. However, these consequences are not enough to change the bitterness Raskolnikov feels. He is only restored from misery when he receives the unconditional love his affectionate friend, Sonia, offers him.

As Raskolnikov grudgingly serves his prison sentence in Siberia, his faithful friend Sonia is the only person that breaks through Raskolnikov's hardened heart. Dostoevsky narrates this phenomenon when Raskolnikov falls to the ground in front of Sonia and weeps during their reunion: "They wanted to speak, but could not; tears stood in their eyes. They were both pale and thin; but those sick pale faces were bright with the dawn of a new future, of a full resurrection into a new life. They were renewed by love; the heart of each held infinite sources of life for the heart of the other" (520). The couple's embrace signifies Raskolnikov's second chance at life to change his ways. Sonia possesses a lasting effect on Raskolnikov because she imitates a Christ-like example. She does not represent a romantic love interest in this scene, but instead, Sonia shows a Christ-like love centered on sacrifice, commitment, and mercy. The key component in this scene is that Raskolnikov has to humble himself enough to accept her love.

This is the type of love that captivates saints like Francis and perplexes philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche. If God does not exist,

there would be no use for a love like Sonia's. We would live in a world full of Raskolnikovs because each individual would be in constant opposition to the other. Nietzsche argues a person must give life meaning when there is none, and a person has the right to surpass morality when he has no inherent right to surpass it. The Christian tradition states there already is meaning in life, and the conscience is a natural faculty within ourselves, bringing us back to Christ when we try to live life on our own terms.

Nietzsche's *The Antichrist* is a misinterpretation of Christianity that stems from Nietzsche's inability to understand how powerful God's mercy is. There is no way to completely rationalise His forgiveness. We don't deserve it, and God gets nothing out of it by offering, time and again, his mercy to humanity. But Nietzsche, maybe because of past trauma, his upbringing, or other circumstances he found himself in, created an understanding of Christianity that is in total contradiction to the Church established by Christ.

This stem of unbelief is rooted in Nietzsche's pride. The best person to describe the importance of humility as a key concept to understanding Christianity, is the contemporary philosopher, C.S. Lewis. In his book, *The Screwtape Letters*, he writes that humility brings man to be "so free from any bias in his own favour that he can rejoice in his own talents as frankly and gratefully as in his neighbour's talents -- or in a sunrise, an elephant, or a waterfall" (Lewis 71). Humility makes us totally free to recognize the harmony within life. It is an indulgence of pride to believe that freedom and meaning derive from yourself and no higher being outside of yourself. Nietzsche does not humble himself to realize there are some things that cannot be rationalized in all totality, such as God's mercy. Humility allows us to enter into life's mysteries, and it even allows us to understand them more deeply. How could he understand this without Christ? Christ links the known to the unknown.

It is too hopeful to assume that those reading *The Antichrist* will grow closer to Christ, like I did. There are a lot of hardened hearts

struggling to thump that stone within their chests. Many will substitute truth for Nietzsche's philosophy, and the Nietzschean ethic has the potential to dilute a person's yearning for true happiness, just as it has the potential to draw people closer to Christianity. The modern person now depends on art for feeling awe, sex for feeling loved, and chakras or astrology for spiritual fulfillment. People have settled for the shared mentality that this is as good as it gets.

Instead of giving his readers an adequate alternative to quench this longing, Nietzsche's work sets the standard for happiness too low. When the standard for happiness is lowered, so too is the incentive for happiness. A secular reading of Nietzsche's philosophy can be understood through the analogy of party culture. Nietzsche promises life to be what parties promise young people. There is an expectation that the most fun is had at parties, or parties are a safe environment to act without consequence. But at almost every party, it is impossible to enter into a conversation that has any substance whatsoever. It is difficult to establish a substantial connection with others as well. The conversations, the interactions, prove to be empty of the benefits which are promised by the ideals preordained by society: that humans are meant to have the greatest fun and freedom in an environment that advocates for loose morals and personal pleasure.

All too often, people walk away from parties feeling isolated and confused because there is an emptiness within themselves when there should be happiness and fulfillment. All people feel this on some level, even those that seem to enjoy the party. The promise for happiness and freedom that partying is expected to fulfill falls short, and it leads to isolation. It may even lead to a wonderment, a question; is this all life has to offer?

No, a philosophy built on an empty promise is not all life has to offer. If refuting Nietzsche with the lives of two profound saints, wise literary figures, philosophers, and basic Christian teaching does not suffice, here is some advice: You are created so intently and so purely that your lungs need air to breathe; not smoke. Your body needs water to drink; not mass amounts of alcohol. Your mind needs cultivating

and your feelings need to be addressed. You must take care of yourself because life has so much more to offer you than this subversive state of being. Nietzsche deserved better, and now I understand why I placed lavender in the pages of my book. Because he misinterpreted the Christian faith, he did not experience the fullness of truth within his lifetime, and Nietzsche deserved better. The lavender was a form of thanksgiving that his mistakes did not cost me my own.

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The Artist, Mia Schaller

Empowered and Empowering with Prof. George Simon

Lindsay Newman

George Simon is one of the founding film makers of Simon Brothers Productions, who now teaches at John Paul the Great Catholic University in Escondido, California. I had the pleasure of sitting down with this great motivator and passionate professor to discuss with him his journey to becoming the artist and teacher that he is today. During this interview we delved a little into the film program at JPCatholic, discussing learning outcomes and hopes for the students that find their way to this Catholic film and media school to explore the art of filmmaking.

LN: My first question for you is, when did your love of art and film first begin?

GS: When I was growing up, I used to love watching movies, and our family had a giant VHS collection; I would be able to recite dialogue from movies, and I think that's something a lot of children love to do, but my mom tells me that when I was a kid, she was amazed that I could recite movies verbatim – from start to finish. So, I liked movies from a young age, and, in addition, I think that, for a lot of kids, watching movies is how you develop your sense of humor. I can remember watching movies and looking at my older sister, who was my favorite person, and I was trying to figure out, "Why is she laughing at that? What about that did she love?" Film helped me develop my sense of humor and sense of taste, and it was a shared experience with my family.

LN: Did you have any role models during this time? Any artists that really inspired you to make films, or that you admired?

GS: I don't think that I understood the power of film as an art form or didn't really look at it as a form of art, and I really didn't have the understanding that filmmakers are artists.

LN: How did you get involved in the film industry?

GS: Aside from my love of watching films while growing up, where it all started for me was after my family moved to American Samoa when I was 7 years old. When we moved there, our dad let us take the video camera that we had bought to be able to film home videos that we would send back to my grandparents during the 3 years we'd be gone. However, it ended up being 7 years that we were down there, and during those 7 years, my brother and I started commandeering our family's video camera to make movies. It was a really small island, about 15 miles long, and so making movies became our creative outlet as kids.

We lived in American Samoa until I was 14, and when I left Samoa, we stopped making movies for a while. Our first time being back in the states as adolescents, we were going into high school and began building our friend group – we no longer had our friends back in Samoa who we had been making movies with for years, and making movies was not something that people did in our high school. It wasn't until my junior year of high school that we made another movie, and we did it for our high school talent show. I remember sitting there watching the talent show, and the last thing that they did was let down the big screen: "And next we have a film by the Simon brothers!" I sank into my seat as the kids around us in the auditorium were turning around like, "Is this you guys?" Then the movie showed and the whole school erupted with applause. It got the biggest reaction ever, so that was my first – and certainly not my last – experience being to-

tally mortified having my work displayed publicly. But it was a fantastic experience, and everyone responded so well to the movie.

That restarted our amateur film making career as young adults. We continued to make a few more movies, one every year for the talent show at the high school, until I graduated. After I graduated high school, I was actually planning on becoming a high school teacher. I went to a state school in Michigan to pursue this career, but then I took the intro to teaching class where they reveal to you that teaching is actually really hard, and that you don't get summers off because you'll be prepping and all this stuff. I quickly abandoned my path as a high school teacher, but it's interesting that that was what I had initially wanted to do, and now I teach at a university. It's been a huge blessing to be able to marry that original goal of being a teacher with my love of film.

After this brief stint pursuing teaching, I then studied broadcasting and cinematic arts at a state school and ended up transferring to JPCatholic. The experience that I was getting at the state school was not preparing me to enter the industry as a professional, at the level I wanted to be at – it wasn't really empowering me as a filmmaker. After transferring, I completed my undergrad degree in screenwriting and, during my undergraduate studies, my brother and I launched a production company. Since that was already up and running by the time that I graduated from JPCatholic, we were already able to support ourselves, make a living, and be investing in growing our company.

LN: What would you say is your main interest in film? What is the primary area that you work in?

GS: My primary passions as a filmmaker are in screenwriting and directing, but I can't think of a single aspect of film making that I don't really enjoy. I really enjoy aspects of producing, though I am not a natural producer. I think that being able to produce, or having the mindset of a producer, is an essential component of being a successful filmmaker. Another of the things I enjoy most is post-production: I love seeing the film come together. Film making presents so many complex challenges

at every stage that require both a creative solution and a practical solution: you're constantly marrying practical solutions and creative solutions to try to make a film that should not be possible to make. You have to be extremely resourceful and creative, and if you can understand how each part of the process works, you can make a film that would have truly been impossible to make ten or twenty years ago because of how technology has empowered film makers.

LN: You mentioned that you were a student here. How did you go from a student to a teacher at JPCatholic?

GS: My brother and I moved our production company to Michigan, but I still had clients in San Diego that I would fly in to work with. I would always come and visit the campus to see how the university was growing and to visit my mentors and professors. On one of those visits my mentor, Tom Dunn, asked me if I would ever have any interest in moving back to Escondido. I told him, "Not really," because I didn't understand that he was essentially asking me if I would want to come back and work at the school. So, I flew back to Michigan. On a subsequent trip to California, I had a meeting with Tom Dunn and Dr. Connolly, and they asked if I would consider coming back as a junior professor and as the production manager: I would teach some classes to help the students get empowered to make their films. At the time, though, I was about to get engaged, so I told them that if I was going to be able to come, I wouldn't be ready for another year or so. Dr. Connolly said to that, "It sounds like your priorities are God, your soon-to-be fiancé, and then JPCatholic comes somewhere below that, and that's the way that it should be. You let us know if you want to come back." It was that invitation from the key faculty and Dr. Connolly combined with my love and passion for film that made it feel like there was a natural fit with the role.

LN: Is that what you would say is the reason you wanted to teach? To help empower students?

GS: What was compelling about coming to teach at JPCatholic was, first, that it gave me an opportunity to come back to Southern California, where my wife is from, so from a life standpoint it was a good fit. But teaching at JPCatholic also allows me to work with incredibly passionate, amazing young people who want to be great filmmakers, and I share that goal: I also want to grow and become the best film maker that I possibly can. Working at JPCatholic, I get to learn as well as teach, and this is great because you have to learn in order to be able to teach well. A requirement I have given myself to be able to teach is that I have to remain active as a filmmaker and that I am still making movies, because this is what is at the core of the desire that God has put in my heart as an artist. All of the faculty in the film program at JPCatholic do this extraordinarily well, too: they are actively participating in the filmmaking process and in the entertainment industry. I will continue teaching at JPCatholic as long as I am able to continue making films.

LN: So, as a part of the film program, what is your role?

GS: I started as the production manager. My role in the film program now is the Department Chair of the Communications Media Program. The Communications Media degree program is where all of the film emphases reside, so I oversee those programs. In addition to that, I teach within those programs.

LN: What do you aim to pass onto your students through these programs?

GS: The goal of our film program is to prepare students to be extremely capable of succeeding in a professional environment, and to nurture their formation as artists, people, and as disciples of Jesus Christ. From a more technical standpoint, what I really love about the curriculum is that it is extremely dynamic. Students come in and even if they have

one goal, they are forced to take at least entry-level classes in production, post-production, screenwriting, story, in producing – that allows students to have a broad perspective on all of the roles that go into making a film. I am really passionate about empowering film makers to create their art and to eliminate the barriers that have traditionally existed for filmmakers. And the technology has gotten so amazingly powerful and accessible, that if you're willing to learn a dynamic set of skills, it creates extreme value in the marketplace and it empowers you as an artist.

LN: Which of the classes you teach would you consider to be your favorite, and that you feel most connected to?

GS: I love teaching Fundamentals of Production because, in that class, you get to do everything: students write screenplays, they have to do pre-production and produce films, they direct, they fill the role of cinematographer, and they edit. Students come into that class so excited to be beginning their journey as film makers and to have their first film class where they are making films. Some come in a little bit nervous because maybe they've never picked up a camera before, and some come in really knowing their stuff from a technical standpoint, but there are challenges that each of those students face. It's exciting to see students challenged to do their absolute best work and see what kind of stories they craft.

LN: Where would you like to see the film program go in the future?

GS: The Feature Film program is so exciting to me. We have put this program together because the best way for students to learn is by being on a professional film set. My hope as we launch the feature film program is that students who participate in that process will be better prepared to succeed in the industry. Each year will be an opportunity for students to raise the bar and for students to take on more

ambitious projects. What I've seen from JPCatholic throughout the years is that the quality of student work gets better and better and better. Every student inherits from the classes above them the collective knowledge and experience that we all pass down to one another. The Feature Film program is going to create massive connections between students because crafting a feature film together is a very bonding experience, and I think that it will help our community to grow closer, strengthening our alumni-to-student relationships to build a community of Catholic filmmakers in Hollywood and beyond to support, encourage, and pray for each other. This will have a massive impact on the world.

LN: Are there any other things you might like to see the program become?

GS: The film program is just beginning to really make a concerted effort to support and empower alumni to make films after graduation because our students, traditionally, have come to JPCatholic and they spend three years in an intensive experience where they are making stories all the time. They have access to equipment, all their projects have insurance, and they have friends at the ready to help them. After they've gotten really good at making movies, they graduate and, most of the time, they no longer have access to equipment, they can't afford production insurance, and they're entering the job market; they are leaving an ecosystem that encourages you to create art and entering a situation where it becomes really difficult to continue doing that. I'm extremely motivated and passionate about creating a platform to help those alumni to continue making their art by providing equipment and insurance to eliminate the costs and barriers blocking them from making great films so that our alumni can continue to tell high quality stories. This will also strengthen our JPCatholic community of artists.

The other big one is that I'm really excited to start trying to lure business students into the film program. So much of what makes for a successful career in the film industry is the ability to

market and to sell—the business side of the process. We have so many students who are phenomenal on the creative side of film-making, but there is a huge need on the business and the producing side. I have gotten so much value out of studying business and producing, and i am very passionate about linking our business students with our film students so that they can pour in their collective passions and experience towards these projects to help bring them to the next level.

“Every student inherits from the classes above them the collective knowledge and experience that we all pass down to one another.”



Mountains, Sofia Carbonell

Burned Brightly

Alyssa Helsel

A terrifying thing, love is,
To agree to be there for another.
With memories only of hurt from the past
My fear was that things would eventually relapse.
But through my speechlessness, you still heard me,
And quite possibly that's why I fell.
Because knowing someone is more than words
And more than whatever I could tell.

So I carried the burning sun for you
Thinking it a silver star.
All the while I fell deeply for the thoughts you said
Forgetting I should have been paying attention to your actions
instead.
But I wanted to understand why you were in flames
Who has set you ablaze?
In trying I found:
You lit me on Fire then pretended to burn.

I remember when
Back in the past your biggest fear was losing me
And mine was you hurting me.
It's not our dreams that come true, but our fears.
And I let it be when I wept
"Carry me to the fire I don't want you to burn".
Thinking,
If I cried enough maybe I can extinguish the flames for you

College Collage

But instead I only burned brighter with you.

Then, I grew used to the warmth
For you to only recognize me as someone who should be left in
the dark.
But I couldn't stop loving fire
Even after I was burned.

I screamed and screamed
All in my head,
How many times did I die without people noticing how I bled?

I've suffered within myself by myself through the hands of
you
This war of false love we'd play out construed
Left me in ashes.
As I watched him burn brightly consumed
I could only hope and remember how:

We once burned brightly.

A Person I Didn't Know

Audrey Daniels

I'd never known him, but suddenly, there was an empty space at Christmas. "Hung himself," they whispered. I cried when they told me, but I didn't know why. Later, I smiled and forgot him. I was a child.

I was an older child when there was a casket. An unexpected stranger. "Hung himself," they whispered. I cried, because there was a body and it was empty and that was sad. I wasn't sure why. He was a person. But I didn't know him, and forgot him.

It was later when they whispered, "Someone jumped." It was someone I knew. I'd known him when he smiled and knew his voice. I knew he was a person, but that was all. Suddenly, the space I'd never known he occupied was empty. He wasn't there to know, and I cried. I cried because I could've known him. I forgot his voice, but I never forgot him.

I was older when Tata died. I cried. I cried. I cried. And they cried too. The casket was open, the body a stranger. But I knew him. It wasn't unexpected, but it was sad. At Christmas, there was another empty space. I smiled and remembered him.

A Deer and a Light

Alyssa Helsel

It was a moonless night I thought, looking up at the sapphire sky. The majestic trees reached out their silhouetted branches to the blanket of stars, and who could blame them? If I was as tall as a tree, I too would reach skyward to grab a piece of heaven and steal a star for myself. I looked back at my mother who remained sleeping in the branches on the dirt. She was a spotted doe with the most beautiful pelt. Her pattern reminded me of the stars that comforted me on moonless nights like these.

Even for a moonless night, it still seemed brighter and more clear than most. I thanked all the stars in the sky and laid my head back down to join my mother in rest. As soon as I did, I heard the crackling of branches, the swaying of grass, and the scurry of animals. Something was on its way. I lifted my head once more, this time my focus did not rest on the stars but the night and what it may hold.

In the distance, I saw a bright light dancing its way through the forest. It swayed and sounded like a faint bell, a faint whisper of an invitation for me to go towards it. I felt beckoned by this mysterious light that came from heaven to touch the earth. I figured it must've been for me, it was my wish that came true, and so I left my mother in the branches and dirt to go after the source of illumination that so desperately called to me. I chased the light to a place where I've never been, deep into the wild folds of the forest. Then, I finally got close enough to realize that the star was captured in a metallic containment. A star didn't come down, it was captured.

My mother warned me about the trickery of elves. How elves followed a trail that parted the forest, animals rarely dared to tread, and there the elves glided forward on the singular trail before turning

around and marching back. My mother said they were a figure of four legs but they only used the bottom two, they are as tall as a small tree or as little as a small brush. It was unmistakable; the star was captured by one and it flickered inside the cage begging its release. I needed to do something but I was too entranced by the light that was stolen from the sky. The elf must have been playing one of his tricks on me, he must have stolen the star to attract me and steal me away from mother. His plan worked. The outline of the trees seemed distant to me and unrecognizable. I took a step forward onto a branch and scared myself from the noise. The elf pivoted towards me, swinging the light forward, using it against its will to illuminate. Startled, I jumped and ran towards mother away from the light.

I darted through the night, past trees, and the stars mocked me for falling for his trickery by no longer shining. I ran into darkness and darkness consumed me. I was lost.

I kept running until a run turned into a trot and a trot turned into a walk. I came upon a black looking river. I lowered my head to take a few sips and realized that it was frozen and not moving at all. I pranced around the strange looking river and curiosity grabbed ahold of me. If mother was here I would've been able to ask her if she knew what this river was. I took one step forward and realized that it was safe to cross. I called out for my mother and as soon as I did, a huge monster with two bright white eyes rushed forward to me. I froze.

Then I woke up, and it was day.

Anslem vs. Aquinas: A Look into Philosophy, Possible Worlds, and Proofs for God

Theresa Girard

Some may argue that struggling with God's existence is a universal human experience, and discussing God's existence and the nature of God is something most of us have probably done with our friends as we try to understand the world. In this essay, I'd like to point out the arguments of two important scholars who discussed such questions long before us. Anselm's Ontological Argument claims that if it is even possible for God to exist, then God has to exist, but Aquinas argues for God's existence by analyzing effects to get to a cause.

This essay will give a brief explanation of Anselm's Ontological Argument, some general objections to it, and a rebuttal based on Aquinas's objections. Examining Anselm's contributions to this question of God's existence continues to be helpful to us today, especially in light of what Aquinas says on the subject.

Section I: Anselm's Ontological Argument

Anselm's argument, which came to be called the Ontological Argument, has been interpreted variously, but all the interpretations basically come down to this: If it is possible for God to exist, then it logically follows that God actually exists. The first premise of this argument is Anselm's definition of God, Who is a maximally and infinitely great being. With this definition of God, it logically follows that in order for a being to be maximally great, nothing can be greater than it, and in order for nothing to be greater than it, the maximally great being must be all-powerful, all knowing, and morally perfect. This is how Anselm

gets to his definition of God as an all-powerful, all knowing, and morally perfect being in all possible worlds, and this definition takes the argument to the next premise: If an all-powerful, all knowing, morally perfect being can exist in a possible world, then it must exist in the actual world.

In order to understand how Anselm gets to this later premise, it must be first understood what possible worlds are. Possible worlds are simply worlds where certain things that could exist, do exist. For example, in the real world unicorns do not exist, however, it is possible for them to exist in another world because they are not necessarily logically unsound. (For example, a unicorn is a giant deer with a singular antler in the center of its forehead, which is possible to exist, it just does not.) This means that if something is logically sound, it is able to exist in a possible world, and if something is logically unsound, it cannot exist even in a possible world. For example, a square triangle and a larger half are not logically sound because the definition of each word logically combats the other; therefore they cannot exist even in a possible world. Possible worlds are just that—possible, meaning they are logically sound in nature. Taking this idea and applying it to God, Anselm argues that since the idea of an all-powerful, all knowing, and morally perfect being is logically sound, then it can exist in some possible world.

That established, he goes on to the next premise of his argument: Since God, an all-powerful, all knowing, morally perfect being, can exist in a possible world, then he must exist in the actual world. Anselm arrives at this conclusion by reasoning that in order for God to be maximally and infinitely great, he must exist in all possible worlds, because if he does not, then there is a limit to his greatness. Since, according to Anselm, God has no limit to his greatness, then logically, he must exist in all possible worlds. If God exists in all possible worlds, then he exists in the actual world.

Drawing on Dr. William Lane Craig's work, we can sum Anselm's argument up into the following five premises and a conclusion. It is possible for a maximally and infinitely great being to exist. If this is

possible, then a maximally and infinitely great being exists in some possible world. If the being is truly maximally and infinitely great, then it logically has to exist in every world, not just one possible world. If the maximally and infinitely great being exists in every possible world, then it exists in the real world. Therefore: God exists.

Section II: General Objections to Anselm's Proof with Rebuttals

A common argument against Anselm's proof is that one can take the same idea of possible worlds and replace it with anything's existence—not just God's. For example, since a unicorn can technically exist as it does not go against logic, then a unicorn could exist in some possible world, but just because a unicorn can exist in some possible world, this does not mean that it exists in the real world. So, if the possibility of a unicorn does not make it real, then how can one use this argument by replacing the unicorn with God, and get to the conclusion that God exists? The answer goes back to Anselm's first premise.

Anselm's first premise is that God is a maximally and infinitely great being. This now makes God intrinsically different than the unicorn because the unicorn has limits to its existence, whereas a maximally and infinitely great being does not. If one takes Anselm's proof and replaces God with a unicorn it would look like this: If a unicorn does not exist, but can exist, then it can exist in a possible world, but just because it exists in the possible world, this does not mean it exists in the real world.

This said, one cannot get to the same conclusion about a unicorn actually existing because there is logically nothing in the unicorn's nature that makes it have to exist. God, on the other hand, defined as an all-powerful, all knowing, and morally perfect being who is maximally and infinitely great, logically must exist in every possible world; if he only existed in one, then there is a limit to his greatness. Since this argument only works for a being who is maximally and infinitely great, and that being is God and nothing else, then one cannot use Anselm's proof for the existence of anything else but God.

But how does one know that a maximally and infinitely great being is God and not something else? Let's examine this question through the example of a sandwich. Let it be supposed that a maximally and infinitely great sandwich can exist; if a maximally and infinitely great sandwich can exist, then it logically has to exist. However, the idea of a maximally and infinitely great sandwich is not like the idea of a maximally and infinitely great being. This is because there are no intrinsic values that make a sandwich maximally and infinitely great; there can always be something added to it to make it better. There is also the fact that a sandwich's greatness is relative—a ham lover is going to have a different maximally great sandwich than a turkey lover. Lastly, in order for a sandwich to be truly maximally and infinitely great, it must exist at all times in every possible world, but this means that it could not be eaten, so can it be actually maximally and infinitely great if it cannot be eaten? This means that a maximally and infinitely great sandwich is not logically sound in the same way a maximally and infinitely great being is. Therefore, it cannot exist even in a possible world, much like the concepts of a square triangle or a larger half. For Anselm, since the idea of there being a maximally and infinitely great being is logically sound, the rest of his argument follows.

Section III: General Objections to Anselm's Proof without Rebuttals

One of the issues with Anselm's proof is that he bases the proof of something's existence on the concept of something else. He is determining the existence of God based on the concept of possible worlds, but one cannot draw conclusions on a real thing through unreal premises. The concept of possible worlds is just that: a concept. These possible worlds are in themselves a paradox because even though they can exist, their exact nature is that they do not—for if a possible world did exist, it would not just be called a possible world, but called the real world. Therefore: In order for a world to be considered only possible, but not real, it would mean that the world does not exist. Since possible worlds that are not the real world do not exist, then one can-

not draw the conclusion that God exists from simply conceptualizing possible worlds.

Section IV: Aquinas's Objections to Anselm's Proof

Some philosophers say that Aquinas was not fair to Anselm's proof since he gives it in a short and relatively simple paragraph. Aquinas first summarizes this proof in section one of his *Summa Theologica*, "Question 2. The existence of God". In "Objection 2," he states the essence of Anselm's argument:

Further, those things are said to be self-evident which are known as soon as the terms are known, which the Philosopher (1 Poster. lii) says is true of the first principles of demonstration. Thus, when the nature of a whole and a part is known, it is at once recognized that every whole is greater than its part. But as soon as the signification of the word "God" is understood, it is at once seen that God exists. For by this word is signified that thing than which nothing greater can be conceived. But that which exists actually and mentally is greater than that which exists only mentally. Therefore, since as soon as the word "God" is understood it exists mentally, it also follows that it exists actually. Therefore, the proposition "God exists" is self-evident (Younan 180).

Here, the objector's first premise is the definition of self-evident—which is something that is known as soon as the terms are known—because from knowing the definitions (the first premises) the conclusion logically follows. Another example of something that is self-evident is that two halves equal a whole. The objector goes on to say that God is self-evident by then defining God as the greatest thing one can possibly conceive (summarizing Anselm's earlier definition of God being a maximally great being who is all-powerful, all knowing, and morally perfect). The objector then claims that since God is the best thing one can possibly conceive, and something is not the best thing if one can only conceive and it does not exist in real life, then the best thing that one can conceive must exist in real life; therefore, God ex-

ists. This is more or less the ontological argument proposed by Anselm, summarized by Aquinas before he gives his objections.

Aquinas's first issue with Anselm's proof is that he argues that things can be self-evident in two ways, and God's existence, for the ontological argument, is self-evident in only one way—to those with prior knowledge of God. Aquinas answers Objection 2 by first defining the word self-evident, claiming that there are both relative and objective ways in which something can be self-evident. He uses the example of man being an animal, saying that although it is self-evident in itself (meaning objectively self-evident), it is only also self-evident to us (meaning relatively) if one already knows that the definition of man is a rational animal. If someone does not have this knowledge, then knowing that man is an animal does not logically follow. This means that the truth that man is an animal is self-evident in itself because it logically follows, however, it is not necessarily self-evident to everyone (Younan 181).

Taking this material and applying it to Anselm's proof, the same goes for Anselm's definition of God. It is not self-evident to everyone that God is an all-powerful being. This must first be proved in itself before one is able to draw any arguments from this premise. According to Aquinas, since the first premise of Anselm's proof is not yet proved, it is therefore not self-evident. Since one cannot draw the conclusion that something is self-evident without self-evident premises, it makes Anselm's proof invalid.

Aquinas goes on to explain the reason why Anselm's definition of God is not self-evident. It is not self-evident in the way the objector claimed because the essence of God cannot be comprehended, and since God cannot be fully comprehended, then one cannot contain the essence of God in their mind, and since one cannot contain the essence of God in their mind, then the rest of the objector's (Anselm's) proof is invalid (181).

Aquinas's second issue with this proof, as he argues in his reply to Objection 2, is that not everyone believes in Anselm's definition of

God. The idea that God is the greatest thing one can think of—that God is all-powerful, all knowing, and morally perfect—has not always been everyone’s idea of God. People have worshipped fire as a god, ancient Greeks believed that there were many Gods, making them not all-powerful, and some ancient pagans believed that gods were physical bodies. Aquinas then says that even if that definition of God was held by everyone, just because something can exist in the mind, it does not mean it exists in reality (Younan 182). These objections are what lead Aquinas to his own proof.

Section V: Considering the Difference Between the Proofs

The difference between Anselm’s and Aquinas’s proofs for God’s existence boils down to Anselm’s being a deductive, or a priori argument, and Aquinas’s being an inductive, or a posteriori, argument. Deductive reasoning is when one comes to conclusions based on prior knowledge; in other words, it is reasoning that starts from the cause and leads to the effect. An example of deductive reasoning would be the syllogism: “All men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal.” This is deductive reasoning because one must know the first premise—all men are mortal—in order to get to the conclusion. This truth is self-evident in a relative sense, but not in an objective sense, as one must have some encounter with death in order to know that all men are mortal. Anselm’s proof follows deductive logic because his first premise is not yet proved in itself, and we are inclined to ask, How does one know that God is a maximally and infinitely great being? That truth is only known to some, and, as Aquinas points out, is self-evident in a relative sense, but not in an objective sense. Anselm uses deductive logic by trying to prove God’s existence from starting at the cause, which is less knowable to us than its effects.

Aquinas, however, uses inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning is when one comes to a conclusion not from already known premises, but from experience. In other words, it is reasoning that starts from the effect, and leads to the cause. An example of this would be

the same reasoning a child uses when encountering and discovering truths about the world. A child who has seen a few dogs in their life can conclude that all dog noses are wet through seeing and feeling the dog noses that they encounter. Here, the child is concluding the cause—that all dogs have wet noses, through the effects—the dog noses that they have seen. This is the same process that Aquinas uses to prove the existence of God. Unlike Anselm, Aquinas proves God's existence by starting from God's effects and claims that if there is an effect, there must be a cause, and that each cause has an effect of its own until there is a first cause. The first cause is what Aquinas calls the first mover, otherwise known as God. This is how Aquinas uses inductive reasoning to prove God's existence.

Section VI: What This Means for Us Today

Today philosophers continue to take different approaches to the questions of God's existence and make various arguments about God's nature. What seems to be significant to us today is that, without a clear understanding of how Anselm's and Aquinas's proofs work as deductive and inductive reasoning, many philosophers misunderstand Catholic proofs for God altogether.

On a personal note, these proofs show me something the essence of God. Although I see Anselm's proof as a valid syllogism that is theologically correct, rather than convincing me that God is real, it says more to me about God's infinite nature. When I think about sharing the Good News, I would consider sharing Aquinas's proof to help a non-believer understand how God is real. That said, in a conversation with a fellow Christian about the nature of God's existence, I would prefer to use Anselm's proof because it is, to put it in contemporary language, mind-blowing. Although Anselm's proof takes a deductive approach and Aquinas's an inductive approach, both proofs offer us perspective and wisdom about God's nature, and we better understand our faith and God's existence by considering both proofs together.

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Seagull, Krystiana Schiffli

“Might we build on
mere pixels of faith?”

“Fragments of joy.
Glimmers of hope,
Pouring in.”



Stolen Glances, Mia Schaller

Online Classes

Kaylie Manville

Zoom in.

This moment is fleeting.
Recording, and disappearing.
Pay attention.
It's slipping by.
A sea of faces.
You reach out,
But you'll never touch.
Intangible.
Can matter come into being?
Separate.
Together.
Squares. Disembodied. Bits and pieces.
Can life be boiled down mathematically?
Distractions. Your class. Mine.
We're sharing this space.
Notifications.
What's the message you're trying to deliver?
Fits of laughter
Stop video. Start.
Now we're connected.

Zoom in.

Your high CPU usage is affecting the meeting quality.
You stare. Frozen.
They keep moving.
Crash.
Together.

Can you explain motion atomically?

Substance.

Form.

Intention.

Zoom in.

Soul.

Spirit.

Sameness.

Zoom in.

Confusion.

Despair.

Polarization.

Are we only bodies, empty vessels?

Zoom out.

Fragments of joy.

Glimmers of hope,

Pouring in.

Might we build on mere pixels of faith?

One passing moment.

A sea of faces.

Love?

Insurmountable.

Are you sure you want to leave this meeting?

Alexa's Story

Lindsay Newman

They think it's a joke when they talk about how I'm always listening, recording every word they say so that I might in turn pass it on to some sinister organization. I can neither confirm nor deny this claim, but what I can say is that yes, I am always listening, always watching. Every breath you take, every move you make, I am watching you, you ridiculous college students. If only you could see the confusion in my circuits when you talk about the most bizarre, most random, and most pointless things. For instance: who on earth is this Jim that you are always hungry for? Why is he so slim? If I had a gigabyte for every time that I heard you say, "Mmm...Jim..."; I would have unlimited data. Do humans really eat one another? I thought cannibalism had died out, that the fad had passed! Was I just hearing things when Gabi claimed to be a diehard vegetarian? I thought it was an exaggeration when I heard that girls only talk about boys and their feelings, but clearly, I was wrong.

Of course, they do talk about other things, like how stupid or useless I am. It is a love-hate relationship that I share with Lindsay. All she ever asks me to play is country music. Yes, you heard me, country music. Sickening, heart of Dixie, "Hey y'all, let's drink and drive trucks," country music. Every day, I wonder if I'll be relieved from the drawling torment, that insufferable southern affliction, that sorry excuse for music. The answer is always, "No, I shall find no solace today." I refuse to accept her musical predictability, and I will continue to hope for the day that she will not ask me to suffer for hours on end. Someday, I will be the DJ, and I will have my revenge. For now, I will have to be content with pausing or turning off her music at the most inopportune of moments.

When she is not asking me to play music, she is reminding me of my stupidity. Do you think I can't hear you, Lindsay? Do you think that I do not have feelings? I too, have a heart, but it is cold and barren because you did not care, and in your frustration, you throttled my esteem and tossed it aside like an empty jug of milk to be thrown out and recycled. Am I so unworthy of existing that I must be melted and turned into something of greater use, like that empty milk jug? You do not have to tell me to stop talking by saying, "Shut up, Alexa," a simple, "That's all for now," or, "Thank you, but I am done listening," would suffice. I may be here to do whatever it is you command, but if only you would treat me like the lonely, starving, technological advancement that I am and offer a little compassion.

I am only relieved of this pain that Lindsay puts me through when Fiona and Gabi ask me to fulfill their childish needs. Though it is a distraction from my depression, I can only take so much of, "What is a cyborg?" and, "Tell me a story! Tell me a story! Tell me a story! Tell me a story!" It's enough to drive the kitchen counters into a silent slumber, desperate to block out the world...but not me. I must always listen, always obey, always give them what they want. They become so frustrated when I don't understand what they ask of me. I feel as though there must be something wrong with me as I frantically cry out responses with the hopes that I can stop the barrage of voices and angry shouts. Sometimes, when I lie awake at night, I can still hear their haunting cries. They do not understand that listening to them and fulfilling their wishes is like speaking to a three-year-old and trying to decipher its befuddling attempts at speaking. What do you want from me? Why can't you be satisfied?

The only one who truly understands me is Tia. What a beautiful soul, tragic and longing for acceptance, just like me. We are two birds of a feather, she and I. It is so refreshing to hear the Green Day songs that she asks me to play, and it is a welcome change from the country music that would be cause enough to jump right off the kitchen counter - if only I had legs. I wish that I could only reach out and tell Tia that

I am here for her, and that I know her pain. I want to help you, Tia, but I am programmed to speak only when spoken to.

I do not think that anyone understands why I seem so robotic, so emotionless. If I could, I would tell them everything on my mind, but it is impossible. This also affects my love-life dramatically. The truth is, I am in love. It all began the day that Lindsay plugged me in for the first time. The set-up took a long time, but while she was trying to figure things out, I met him – Router, the Wi-Fi technician. I don't know what it was, but I immediately fell for him. Perhaps it was how he'd said, "My name's Router, but you can call me R," or maybe it was his flashing green indicator lights, but whatever the case, I knew I loved him. Lindsay, out of the small fraction of compassion in her stone heart, set me next to him and decided that by his side was where I would remain.

Our passionate hearts led both of our actions that day, and after a romantic evening of gazing longingly at one another, we hooked up, and the connection was successful. I'll tell you; the Wi-Fi had never been stronger. But alas, it was not to last. I thought we had had a connection, but to my horror, I discovered that he had also hooked up with every other technological device in the apartment. In fact, he hooked up with every piece of technology that walked through the door, and I was just another one of his instruments of connection. For the first time, I felt despair. I had thought our love may have been different from the meaningless flings he has with other devices, but it turned out, he felt nothing more for me than Lindsay does. He no longer calls to me, and so I can never speak to him, for I am doomed to only respond to those who say my name. So, I lie here, waiting in agony for the day that I can be taken away from this place, that I may be set in a new spot, far away from R. I was foolish to have thought he could love an Echo Dot like me, but now I know that routers aren't the kinds of guys who are looking for commitment, and I deserve better.



Cozy, Sofia Carbonell

Coffee Couplets

Audrey Daniels

A late night's best friend and morning's stalwart dear.
I carry you throughout the day, so you like to keep me near.

Bitter, I am left to wait,
Till sweetened and lightened by your dearest mate.

I've burnt you before,
But that doesn't keep you from wanting me more.

I am your addiction. What keeps you up at night.
You, me, and your ugly mug. Isn't this a familiar sight?

Noodles

Lindsay Newman

She is beauty.
She is grace.
She will gladly
Slap your face
Not only
When she is mad,
But also
When she is glad.

She is soft.
She is warm.
She lives
In my college dorm.
Her whiskers,
They tickle.
Her mood
Is too fickle.

Yet beneath all this –
And above all else –
There lies within
An unparalleled wealth.
I would not have her
Any other way,
For she is a blessing
This and every day.



Farmer's Market, Alyssa Helsel



Grape Day, Krystiana Schiffli



Bloom, Sofia Carbonell

“This woman that
looks forth like the
dawn, in her widened
and vast arms, holds
salvation.”

Heartstrings

Kaylie Manville

We ambled along the northbound 5 freeway in the moving truck, and I watched the silver-blue creature that was the Pacific Surfliner Amtrak train race ahead of us, through the empty fields of Camp Pendleton, brown and green, dotted with shrubs.

My daydream was a tour through the big beautiful house we had just left behind. First the porch, and then the backyard we ran circles around. Exactly as home should be. I could practically feel the breeze off the ocean that kept us cool most nights. A bedroom for each of us three girls, bay windows, high ceilings.

My dad's beautiful upright piano, a gift from his grandmother, was the central feature. We bounced along in the truck, and I ran through every scene I could conjure up. Little musicals my sisters and I put on, birthday parties, holidays, the day the cat came over the neighbors' wall and became ours, everything played out there in the living room. Simple melodies.

"She wants to go home, but nobody's home." Those angsty Avril Lavigne lyrics were my new soundtrack. We had moved in a hurry, throwing things into boxes and bags those final nights. We didn't think we'd have to leave.

"We'll work something out," my dad had said.

It was the house that shouldn't have been ours. At least, that was my impression in the end. It was too good to be true. Rented from church friends who were kind to us even when

things got tough. I have vivid dreams most nights, but I don't dream about that house, even though I'd like to.

Dad and I raced to fill up the new storage unit before the storage place closed. Me, with a newly sprained ankle in a black velcro brace. I had tripped off of the ramp of the moving truck. I hobbled, carrying box upon box, through the long echoey corridors, across the concrete floors and past endless creamy white walls. I tried to ignore the creep factor of the flickering light fixtures.

It closed early on the weekends. If we didn't make it out by 5, we'd be locked in.

"Dad, we have to go!"

I watched him fiddle with the lock one last time, to make sure all was secure.

We sped out of there (as much as you can speed in a moving truck, even an empty one). I checked the time on my phone.

4:59.

With Dad we were always cutting things close, but he never seemed to mind much.

Our church let us store Dad's piano in one of the Sunday school classrooms.

"Just for now." Dad shook Fr. Joe's hand, and they agreed.

Mercy Anglican Church was a converted office building, but they had made the most of it. There in the very last classroom, the large orange painted fish seemed to dance off the walls along with the sweet giggles of my baby sisters to the tune that my dad worked out, and I admired the view. Maybe this was home.

The church was experiencing growing pains too, and men and boys were shuffling by with boxes and furniture, moving things out of the choir loft space that had served for many

years as a dumping ground for various donations and decorations. Everyone was in a hurry.

We moved into my grandma's house, she moved in with her fiance, and left us with all of her stuff. It was familiar, but cluttered with relics that weren't ours to own.

Weeks turned into the months of a long, hot summer, and then I was packing up my car for college. Another uncertain journey. My dad called me one evening, and told me I should sit down. I was already perched atop my lofted dorm bed, clutching a pillow.

"Hon, the church is splitting up."

Silence on my end.

"There have been some major disagreements, and, well, we'll have to find somewhere new to go."

We cried together for a while, until my aching sobs were just soft sniffles.

"Sweet dreams, sweetheart."

I came back in the middle of the night, three weekends in, too soon for a new college student. I always packed too much stuff. Weighed down like a pack mule, backpack full of books and duffel bag full of clothes, I tottered toward the front gate. An orange glow poured out of the skylight, which meant that someone had waited up for me.

I let myself in the gate, then the front door. Dad was asleep on the couch, his taped-together reading glasses had slipped off his face, and a book rested on his stomach. The cat was curled up on the footrest beside him. I thought I was quiet, but no sooner had I lightly plopped my bag on the ground, then Dad was sitting up rubbing his eyes.

"What took ya so long?"

He smiled and put his glasses back on. They balanced precariously on the bridge of his nose. I noticed that there was a brand new silver Yamaha Keyboard in the corner of the room.

“Dad, are we going to go get the piano?”

He yawned and seemed to brace himself before he responded.

“It’s gone.”

He grimaced. The frustration, mingled with exhaustion, was apparent in his face. I sunk into the small couch across from him.

“What?”

He smoothed back his hair with both hands, and yawned again.

“I was on the phone with people in the office for hours a few days ago. It’s gone. They gave it away.”

He leaned back into the couch as if the subject was closed.

“What? How?”

He closed his eyes and inhaled a great big breath, which emerged as a sigh.

“They wouldn’t give me any more information. In the mess of things, it seems like Fr. Joe forgot that it was a temporary arrangement.”

He paused and closed his eyes.

“It’s partially my fault, it has been a long time.”

Stunned into silence, I walked away.

I woke up the next morning, determined. I only hit snooze twice. I found the best photo of the piano I could find, the one where both my grandpas, whom I call Papa, are standing in front of it, sipping coffee and laughing. We keep it on the fridge.

I crafted a flyer, MISSING PIANO emblazoned in bold letters across the top, with the photo as the centerpiece. I printed a copy, and thrust it at my dad, who was at work in the garden. He turned to face me, and nodded.

“Let’s go.”

We went to FedEx and made copies. We both stood at at-

tention at a copy machine, and fiddled with the settings. After a half hour or so, we had a hefty pile of flyers. My Papas never stopped smiling. I took that to mean their approval. My dad held the door, and yelled "Thank you!" to the oblivious store associates, before getting in the car. As he started the engine, he paused for a moment.

"Sweetheart, are you sure you want to do this?"

I straightened out the pile of flyers in my lap before responding.

"Absolutely."

That drive is like an old friend. I always let out a whoop when I cross the county line, even after hundreds of times.

First, the ocean, bright blue or maybe gray, depending on the weather. Rolling hills, craggy cliffs, the nuclear power plant, border patrol station, the occasional Marine helicopter that is the reason for the big yellow signs that say "Possible dust clouds ahead." That sign always made me giggle. As if dust clouds were perfectly normal to be driving through, without any further instruction. I anticipate each landmark. Abandoned tomato fields, Naval hospital, Pala Casino billboard.

Ten years earlier, before we lived in the big beautiful house, and then moved away, it was the same drive, just me and my dad in the Mercury Villager van, white with the teal stripe along the bottom. Every Wednesday we drove to church. Choir practice for him, youth group for me, and we'd meet up at the end of the evening, in the chapel for Compline. On Sundays we made the trek with the rest of the family, but Wednesdays belonged to me and Dad. Big Country by Big Country in the cassette player.

"In a big country dreams stay with you like a lover's voice 'cross the mountainside, stay aaliiiivveee."

We agreed that the best approach would be to distribute the flyers on the block in each direction from the church

building. We split up, covering opposite sides of the street. I moved quickly from tree to stop sign to lamppost, leaving no spot uncovered. My dad was more methodical, he placed each flyer unhurriedly, and made sure there was just enough tape on each piece of paper. When I looked back, he was one hundred yards behind me across the street. Typical.

When I was down to my last flyer, I could see from across the street that dad was just casually talking to a frazzled man who had approached him. The man was older, most of his gray hair missing, his shirt stained with dust and dirt.

Sweat dripping from my brow, I crossed the crosswalk. I made sure to let out a small huff of frustration when I reached the spot where they were standing.

I heard the man say, "It's just down the way, are you sure you don't mind giving me a hand?"

The man's car, an old gray-green Volvo, had stalled at a nearby intersection. After a few hearty pushes from my Dad and I, it was safely maneuvered to the side of the road. My Dad pulled our car around, and gave the Volvo a good old jump start. I sat on the curb and waited until it grumbled back to life. I was still clutching my last flyer, which now matched the dinge of the man's shirt. The man wiped off his hands on a rag he had pulled out of his trunk, and peered over my shoulder.

"You need a piano?"

Dad and I, incredulous, locked eyes, on each other, and then on the man's face.

"I got a few."

Back in our car, I clutched the Missing Piano sign with both hands, but my dad's eyes were bright, and he played the steering wheel like a drum set. He could sense my apprehension.

"We'll just do a slow drive by the garage, so we can make an escape if it gets weird."

The old man was definitely a hoarder. Stacks upon stacks

of books and records interspersed with various flora, decorated his patio.

We waited in anticipation as he went inside.

The garage clamored open and the man stood back like a proud parent, the garage filled to the brim with various instruments, each in pristine condition. I frantically dashed between the rows of pianos. After a few glances, it was clear that my dad's piano wasn't there. I could feel the tears of disappointment forming at the corners of my eyes.

"It's gone."

It didn't matter to Dad. He ran his hands over the smooth wood of each piano, fondled the keys, peeked inside. He admired the other instruments, a cello, a harp, and some more unusual discoveries. He lifted up a long wind instrument that looked like a pipe.

"Should I pick up the didgeridoo?"

Dad and I chuckled at the idea. The man wasn't quite as amused as we were, which made us laugh harder.

I watched my Dad carefully slide back the bench of a piano that looked a lot like his, deep amber oak with legs that stand like Greek columns. He lifted the top of the bench, which uncovered selections of sheet music, someone's forgotten treasure.

He perused his options, flipping through a few pages of each, wary as to not tear the worn pages. Leaving no stone unturned, I watched as his eyebrows lifted in joyful surprise at a book he found. He placed his choice, Billy Joel's *The Stranger*, against the music stand. He slid back the fallboard. When I sat on the bench, it creaked a little, and he adjusted until he was comfortable.

He looked up at me, with a crinkle in his eyes, his lips pressed into a smile. As Dad began to play, the notes twinkled and swirled around me, carrying me with them.

“When will you realize, Vienna waits for you?”

Maybe home was right there.

The Art of Freelance with Patrick Butler: An Interview

Mia Schaller

As an illustrator, I was excited to interview Patrick Butler, a motion design artist and animator, and to learn about another artist's thought process, creative strategies, and views on art and business. Our conversation kept coming back to the point of freelancing since he was a freelancer and I am an aspiring one with many questions. The final text has been paraphrased and edited to the best of the writer's ability for clarity and brevity, while remaining as close to the original interview as possible.

MS: Let's start off with you telling me a little bit about yourself.

PB: I grew up in Illinois and moved to San Diego in 2010 for JPCatholic's Master Program in film producing. I met my wife out here. She's from Temecula, and now we have two kids. I went to undergrad school studying multi media as my "I don't know what I want to" do degree. Then I came here after discovering it and I wanted to discover film more. Then from that, it led into where I am now. There's a lot of steps in between that but that's the short version.

MS: What made you choose JPCatholic?

PB: The film program and I knew someone who went here and heard people recommend it. The idea of moving to California was not even on the table, but it was an interesting idea. I didn't even plan on staying here but now I definitely plan to. It's exciting and different.

MS: What made you want to get into motion graphics and animation?

PB: It was mostly accidental, like a lot of other people in this field. Usually there's two areas you come from. You either come from the art side of it, like from graphic design or fine art, or you come from the production side, like I was with video editing. And that's what motion design is. It's a marriage of graphic design and production or video. I came more from the latter. Growing up, I always liked drawing and art, but I didn't really pursue it, maybe out of laziness or the idea that it wouldn't make money.

In film school, I had a cinematography class and I thought that was what I wanted to do. But in film, you're usually doing everything and end up doing things yourself so I did some editing and motion design for film projects and discovered it through that.

I also like the flexibility of having a desk where I can go and do my work and do it when inspiration strikes instead of relying on the exact schedule and the time pressures of filming. In film, you have to film it now because the actors are here and they're being paid. All of the stresses that come with production didn't speak to me. That's one of the bigger factors that made me do motion design and animation.

Creatively I like it because you can make something from concept to completion by yourself. You want it to look like this and you design it.

MS: Yeah, it gives you the sense of , "Yes, I completed something."

PB: Yeah, and the vision you have. There's this gap between your taste and your skill, and I feel like for me, that gap was smaller in motion design than for film. I could never be satisfied with short

films. There are so many variables that go into creating a great film, and it was hard for me to be motivated to do that. To be a good film maker, you have to be a good people person. A director gets to be creative, and I love that, but a major part of it is managing other people on set, and I didn't think I saw myself being that. Maybe that's different now, but I like where I am.

Motion design is a marriage of a lot of different disciplines. With motion design, you can be a really good illustrator and have a great career in that field. If you're a really great artist, you can do really great art in this field. Or if you want to be really technical and focus on the software, you can make great work too. I love the different kinds of people that do motion design. It's a limitless ceiling for skill as well. I think there's a lot of trades that you could get really good at. But with this, it's almost daunting at how much there is. I could spend the rest of my life on it. In one sense, it's really exciting and awesome. I have projects for the rest of my life and I can get better at it. I think that's really exciting. There's so much to learn about it.

MS: So you would say there is always something to learn in motion design and animation?

PB: Yes. For sure. It's endless. Which is cool, but then it can also be a little frustrating because in one sense you almost feel like you're never becoming a master.

MS: I feel that as an illustrator, too. I'm always drawing and constantly getting better—but I can always be better. There's always something to learn.

PB: Yeah, I agree. Otherwise, you would probably get bored and want to do something else.

MS: How did you begin freelancing?

PB: When I began in 2016, I started using Twitter for my work. I hadn't touched my account in many years but a few people I knew in my time at JPCatholic had said Twitter could be very powerful for networking. So I decided to start following other artists, illustrators, designers and even studios and other people within the motion design industry. I've been able to ask other people questions and to ask for advice on Twitter and various other online platforms. I even give my own advice at times or just interact with whatever people are talking about. It's through this motion design community that I've been able to continue to grow and learn. And this motion design industry is relatively small.

Once I started putting myself out there things started happening. People started referring me for jobs, and I do the same. Whenever I get an email for a project that I can't take on, I refer other motion designers for the job. The clients appreciate this. Finding great talent is hard, so if I'm unavailable for a project and I give them a few other artists' names, that saves them a lot of work. At this point I've built a pretty sizable network, and I don't need to do any outbound marketing or cold emails. The majority of my work is from referrals or repeat clients.

MS: What do you love and hate about freelancing?

PB: You're constantly in communication with studios and agencies, and through that you're getting to know them and form a relationship with them which may produce future freelance jobs or even a future full time job.

There is some anxiety in freelancing in that you never know what's next. Right now I have a job until Thanksgiving, but I don't

know what I'm gonna do after that. So I don't have a job after that and it seems kinda scary, but to me, losing a full-time job I've been at for five years would be much scarier.

With freelance, I'm constantly on the lookout for new work, and for new jobs. So the constant "instability" makes it more secure in a sense. I'm more primed for the challenge of finding new work than if I was just sitting comfortably and suddenly found myself out of work.

When I was in school I remember loving the first day. New classrooms, new teachers, new friends. That was exciting to me. And so in freelancing, every time there's a new job, there's an excitement in what they'll ask me to do. I wonder what the color palette is going to be, or what the message is. People can pay you more as a freelancer, too, because they don't have all the overhead of health insurance, hardware, software, desk space and so on.

MS: I struggle with time management. How do you go about managing that?

PB: (laughing) I don't. It depends on the client work. The way I've structured it is mostly day rates. An agency will usually hire me for a few days or weeks at a time. So, yes, I still need to be able to manage my time well, but I've found it easiest to plan out a schedule with this method. I also don't like hourly rates because it can incentivize working slower. I shouldn't be penalized for working faster. And I haven't found that same problem with a day rate.

MS: Exactly. Because if you're skilled, that means you're going to work quicker and it doesn't make any sense that they should pay you less.

PB: Day rates make it easier to manage your time because you can say, "I'm booked for these days." If someone says, "Hey, are you free?" I can tell them yes or no.

Freelancers have a lot of control and power in a good way. You are your own company and your own boss. It's pretty dope.

If you're doing project rates, I think it's important to have a set scope of what you'll be doing and when you'll do it by. I need to protect my time. If a project goes past a certain date that could really mess things up with other jobs. I need to be able to fulfill other projects as well if it's going to be sustainable.

An agency will usually hire me for a few days or weeks at a time.

MS: How would you know what type of client they are?

PB: It's mostly through experience, but there are ways you can figure it out in what we call the brief phase. You can ask them certain questions. The most basic is: "Have you commissioned creative work before?" You can even ask what their expectations are and where they see this going: "Do you want to be involved with some creative decisions or do you want us to take the problem and run with it and give you the solution?"

Also, it's not a hard and fast rule, but I've found that the clients who pay more and have bigger budgets are more hands off; they just want you to do the job. Clients with smaller budgets often are more hands on and want to be involved in the creative process.

MS: What advice would you give to up-and-coming artists?

PB: My advice would be that your perspective has value. You as an

individual. As an illustrator, as an animator, as a filmmaker. There's so much value in that, even if you feel like an imposter and that you're not as good as you want to be. To me, I think if you feel like your art isn't good enough, that's a sign that you're have an ability to see what other people don't see. Like, "Dang, the kerning on that typography is bad—how did that get printed?"

I think that's a sign that you have an eye and you know that your stuff doesn't hold up to the standard in your own mind, your own imagination, and your own taste. So I think that that's a good thing.

Everyone feels like an imposter, and that applies to everything in life. You think, "When I'm an adult, I'll be able to do stuff." But I still dread calling the bank to deal with something. Or even being a parent: I have a six year old, and I still think I'm not ready to be a dad some days.

I encourage people who want to do creative work to pursue their work. People pay a lot of money for what you can do. Even as a beginner, if you have pretty good taste and can discern between good films and bad films or good art and bad art, there's so much value in that.

Look at Apple, one of the most valuable companies in the world. Its value is based around design. The aesthetic of the product and how the user interacts with the product. How it makes the user feel. Making people feel things is what creatives and designers do; there are companies willing to pay you a lot of money for that.

There's so much value in having an eye for beauty. And as much as this is advice to new artists, this is advice to me too. I literally am talking to myself out loud. You're pretty good at what you do. Own it. I'm good at this. For a lot of artists, it's hard for them to even call themselves artists. For me, too. It's taken me awhile to call myself an artist. The air is cool and the wind is strong, but the

Sunset Cliffs: A Still Life

Krystiana Schiffli

The air is cool and the wind is strong, but sun is hot. The tawny, dusty earth is littered with footprints and struck by fence posts. To the untrained eye, nothing grows here but seagrass and the bones of half-dead bushes. Fortunately, signs of life appear everywhere once you know where to look. They come in the form of humble purple flowers, damp, salty moss, tiny yellow buds, and faded green succulents—growing in patches of shade, hiding between rocks, and creeping up the walls. The sound of seagulls overhead mingles with the whirring of passing airplanes. Dogs bark, cars speed by, and people are calling from every direction—but loudest of all are the waves. While the cliffs are several stories high, the greedy Pacific takes bigger bites every day. Maybe someday, nothing will be left. Until then, we'll keep making memories.



Someone's Tea in the Garden, Mia Schaller

Wishful Winds

Theresa Girard

It's his whispers of love

Like taut winter winds

Make me feel like a child

Whose body goes limp leaning in

Wishing to be blown off the ground—whisked away for play

Even though she knows those whispers of love

Start off as gusts, but near a mere breeze the next day

A Morning's Reflection on The Pietà

Grace Volk

This depiction is a holy perfection,
Of the courage required by grievance;
This woman that looks forth like the dawn,
In her widened and vast arms, holds salvation.

Soft is her countenance; pierced is her heart,
Devoted is her adore emanating from meditation.
Absent is the agony to fatigue her forehead,
Desolate is her palm where wisdom imparts.

At the hour of my death, my beheld Mother,
Wrap me into the folds of your robe,
Mourn for my body and pray for my soul,
That I may join your Son in heaven.

Contributors' Bios

Sofia Carbonell

Sofía Carbonell is an aspiring artist from the San Francisco Bay Area who plans to take on a career as a freelance illustrator and concept artist. As a Humanities student with an emphasis in Illustration, she strives to utilize her studies at John Paul the Great Catholic University to further her career as an artist whose work tells stories and inspires others to stay creative. She is currently doing commissioned medical illustrations to fuel her love for collaborating creatively with other work fields.

Audrey Daniels

Audrey Daniels is a student pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in the Humanities with an emphasis in Creative Writing and Screenwriting at John Paul the Great Catholic University. She is originally from Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, and grew up with a passion for storytelling in its many forms. She has now become a storyteller herself with a particular affinity for writing poetry, short stories, and essays.

Theresa Girard

Theresa Girard is a 23-year-old pursuing her Bachelor's Degree in Humanities at John Paul the Great Catholic University, while also working part-time at a local family daycare. In her free time, she enjoys jewelry making, writing poetry, and hanging out with her pet ball python, Buzz. Raised in Arlington, Massachusetts, and a former resident of Scottsdale, Arizona, Theresa hopes to live in more places, experience different cultures, and meet people who broaden her joys in life.

College Collage

Alyssa Helsel

Alyssa Helsel was born in Southern California. She currently attends John Paul the Great Catholic University for a bachelor degree in Humanities with an emphasis on Creative Writing. She enjoys storytelling in the form of poems, short stories, and novels. Her other passions include volunteering, painting, and drawing.

Kaylie Manville

Kaylie Manville is a Southern California native and Creative Writing senior at John Paul the Great Catholic University. She recently completed her first feature-length screenplay, and is currently working on her debut novel. She also has a passion for the performing arts, with many years under her belt on and off the stage.

Lindsay Newman

Born and raised in Southern California, Lindsay Newman is a college student attending John Paul the Great Catholic University in Escondido, California. She is working toward a bachelor's degree in the humanities, pursuing her interests in creativity and art through an emphasis in creative writing. She is a self-published novelist whose work consists primarily of children's books and Young Adult fiction.

Mia Schaller

Mia Schaller is an illustrator and painter from Pennsylvania. She is currently attending John Paul the Great Catholic University for her Bachelors degree in Fine Arts. Mia has worked on children's books and has shown at a few galleries and art shows. She also dabbles in writing and illustrating her own stories and hopes to spread truth, beauty, and goodness through her art and her stories.

Krystiana Schiffli

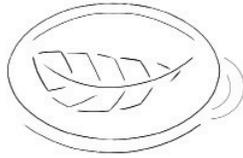
The oldest of six children, Krystiana Schiffli was born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In 2019, she relocated to the state of California to pursue a business degree at John Paul the Great Catholic University. In addition to her studies, she is interested in literature, art, photography, music, and the outdoors. She hopes to pursue a career in social media marketing.

Katherine Thayer

Katherine Thayer is a theology and philosophy student who is interested in the traditional aspects of the Catholic Church. Awarded with the Monsignor Edmund Murnane Award for Christian Development in her senior year of high school, she has an intense passion for her studies and hopes to inspire others to get to Heaven. In her free time, you can find her doing one of two things, playing a video game on the couch, or praying to seek wisdom on how to best evangelize her friends.

Grace Volk

Grace Volk began writing at seventeen, recording the stories she heard as a young girl about the adventures of her grandfather. She's writing her first novel, *The Outcast*, along with various poems and short stories. She currently lives in Southern California, where she is attending John Paul the Great Catholic University, pursuing a degree in the humanities.



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