

Untold

UVU's Honors Program Journal

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Forward

Words possess an immutable power: a catalyst for positive change. They spark inspiration, transcend borders, and forge countless connections. Most importantly, they are how we express ourselves – building a bridge between ourselves and the world. When nothing else could ever suffice, words come to our aid.

Words wield their power through countless forms. Essays shed light on new, vital opinions, while poetry effortlessly exudes emotions and universal experiences. Even artwork and photography foster unspoken words expressed in an array of vibrant colors and shapes.

Untold provides a home for the words of Honors Program students. As a multimedia journal, Untold thrives on all forms of expression. It aims to encapsulate the thoughts, feelings, and ideas of the student body it proudly represents.

Now, for some words of my own:

Thank you to our volunteers who lent their time and talents to make this addition possible, and to Brendan McCarthy, our staff advisor, who motivated us through his guidance and wit. My special thanks and recognition to our leadership staff, James, Milo, Spencer, and Jeremy, for your steadfast support, innovation, and dedication. Untold would not exist without you. It has been a privilege to work alongside you all.

Last but certainly not least, thank you to our contributors. Without them, Untold would house no words at all. While you look through the journal, I hope you find your catalyst for change: your spark for expression, just as they did. All the best,

Elizabeth Holman,

Editor-in-Chief

Roaming

Voyager

Life Imitates Art

Pseudo Third Culture Kid

The Universe is Standing Still

Observational Study of Local Religious Congregations and Churches in Utah

Someone is Watching

Voyager

By: Abigail Pitts

I look back,	Against the night.
With my silver sun-slicked	I am bound,
Single eye	Towards some unknown, unwanted station
To a pale blue dot,	At the soul of the galaxy twenty-seven thousand light
A sole period ending	years away,
Some unspoken, unbroken line of radio light,	A distance so vast
From here to my home, insignificant,	Time is greater than miles.
In the open question of space.	I look back and wonder:
Do they think of me?	Who will be left,
Shade their eyes against	Waiting for my light's return?
The sun's consuming glare?	
Look back to the sky	
Then walk away?	
They don't know	
I gaze upon them, too.	
How could they know?	
I am too small.	
My light lies lost	
In the vast span between planets,	
A stretch so insubstantial	

Life Imitates Art

By: Isabel May Wilson



Artist Statement:

“Life Imitates Art” depicts an unstaged moment in conversation in a dramatized and classically inspired style. The inspiration for this piece came from a trip I went on with my family. While sitting around a table, my cousins began to stack plastic tableware on their heads. The picture I took was meant to be a funny one, but although I laughed out loud at the look on his face, I knew I had to reframe the narrative of this image. This digital painting is the first in a series I’ve now started where I try to freeze the frame on our modern lives and contextualize these little moments into something that appears to fit within the realm of classical fine art despite the modern medium and unmodeled subjects.

Psuedo Third Culture Kid

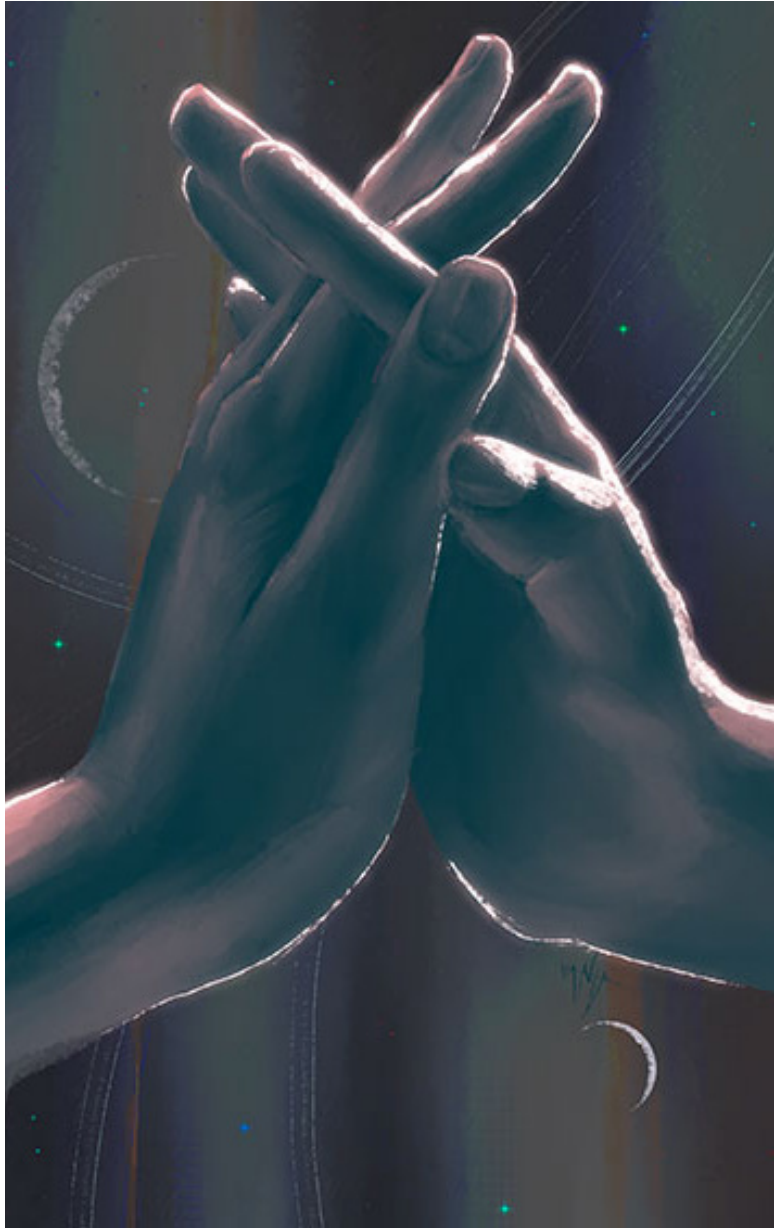
By: Tegan Blanchard

Prompt: Tell us about an aspect of your identity or a life experience that has shaped you into who you are today. Be sure to include details so that we can understand your history, heritage, or life path, but we're not therapists, so please avoid discussing specific personal traumas.

I've never liked tradition. Whether I was pushing against common sports or gender stereotypes, I've always felt drawn toward the road less traveled. I believe that my unconventional life path played (and continues to play) a significant role in that trait of mine. Whether it was the plethora of exchange students who stayed in our home, the prevalence of the Spanish language spoken in my Caucasian-dominant household, or the simple fact that I moved from the United States-Mexico border to Costa Rica to Ecuador, I have had ample opportunity to learn from people different than me. A natural byproduct of such a familiarity with Latin America was my learning Spanish, which flows just about as naturally as English does nowadays, with the French language on its way. But even more impactful has been the character traits adopted from my immersion in international culture. Whether it is my love of language learning, passion for global politics and culture, or a deep desire to work in the foreign service, my global experience has helped forge me into who I am today. Learning from and interacting with people different from me has proven to be one of the most incredible experiences, allowing me to cultivate empathy, grit, and mediating skills that have proven incredibly valuable as I have engaged in peer mediation, Model United Nations, and the most recent interpersonal demands of living and serving in Buenos Aires, my Argentine home. Having just returned to the United States three months ago, I am building upon these traits and experiences through UVU's National Security program and plan to earn a Master's Degree at Georgetown University, setting me up to work in diplomacy and global security. I am confident that I will be able to excel thanks to many opportunities granted me here at UVU, including being a part of the UVU Honors Program. It has aligned me with like-minded people who are driven to excel academically, get involved in service, and expand their worldview. A prime breeding ground for the educational experience I have been looking for.

The Universe is Standing Still

By: Sydney Holt



Artist Statement:

This piece started as a simple hand study, but I ended up loving it so much that I decided to add some scenery to it. I've been trying to pin down a more surreal yet authentic style for a while now and I feel like I accomplished that in this work. One thing I really love in a work of art is something that seems like it shouldn't work but, in the context of the art, fits perfectly. Blue and pink hands, green stars, and beige skies aren't things that sound particularly appealing, but they work well together here. There's a semblance of realism, but just enough non-realism that it makes you think a little harder and truly consider what you're seeing.

Observational Study of Local Religious Congregations and Churches in Utah

By: Aaron Williams

Introduction:

Utah State is well known for its population being predominantly identified with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (also commonly known as the LDS Church or Mormons), given its history of its early members migrating across the country to escape persecution and to gather in what they referred to as Zion.¹ However, as time has progressed, it has become much more diverse with various ethnic and national origins and religious identities, even becoming less religious by some.² This research paper will observe four religious groups: a local LDS Church congregation, two non-LDS Christian denominations – a Catholic church and a Lutheran denomination – and a Jewish synagogue during their respective weekend services. The observations were conducted on March 15th and March 24th, 2024. This observational study aims to compare and contrast doctrines and teachings used in the respective worship services (grace, personal growth, a greater power/being, etc.) and what sources are used (ancient scripture, quotes from leaders, academic studies, etc.). The aim is also to observe who is leading the respective congregations and groups in the service, whether it is an individual who leads these services professionally or if they are a volunteer, and to see where the source of leadership is, whether it is vested in a single individual, a group, or with the congregation.

Literature Review:

What is unique to the four selected congregations are that they are grouped into a much larger group known as the Abrahamic Religions, which includes Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, since they each claim their religious heritage from Abraham (or Abram).³ However, each of these eventually split into numerous churches, denominations, and sects throughout thousands of years, especially as there became divisions over that time in regard to core doctrines, interpretation of scripture, and disputes of succession.

The Jewish denomination that was observed for this study was a conservative congregation, which means they affirm Adonai's (also frequently mentioned as God) existence, that Jewish theology is keenly tied with Jewish culture, and insist on traditional Jewish beliefs. Interestingly, while it believes in the Torah and Talmud having divine origin, it also allows for modern historical discoveries and analysis to critique interpretation of scriptures and practices for modern times, thus connecting the past with the present.⁴ It appears that adherents to this denomination of Judaism will hold firmly to traditional values and beliefs, but allows for some adjustments.

1 Roy W. Doxey, "Doctrine and Covenants: Overview," in *Latter-day Saint Essentials: Readings from the Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. John W. Welch and Devan Jensen (Provo, UT: , Brigham Young University, 2002), 66–70.

2 Pew Research Center. "Adults in Utah - Religion in America: U.S. Religious Data, Demographics and Statistics." Pew Research Center. Accessed March 14, 2024. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/state/utah/>; Kemsley, T. "Most Utahns Don't Identify as LDS. Here's Why." *The Salt Lake Tribune*, December 28, 2023. <https://www.sltrib.com/religion/2023/12/28/most-utahns-dont-identify-as-lds-here-s-why/>; PRRI Staff, "2020 PRRI Census of American Religion: County-Level Data on Religious Identity and Diversity," PRRI, July 8, 2021, <https://www.prri.org/research/2020-census-of-american-religion/>.

3 Bharati, A., W. Johnston, and the Editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Monasticism - Abrahamic, Faiths, Celibacy." *Britannica*, December 17, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/monasticism/The-Abrahamic-religions>; The Editors of *Islamic Spain*. "Shared Beliefs of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam." *Islamic Spain*. Accessed March 24, 2024. <https://www.islamicSpain.tv/interfaith-coexistence/beliefs-and-common-stories/>.

4 The Editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Conservative Judaism | Modern Practices, Halakhic Decisions & Rituals." *Britannica*, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Conservative-Judaism>; The Editors of *Jewish Virtual Library*. "Background & Overview of Conservative Judaism." *Jewish Virtual Library*, January 29, 2024.

The first Christian church observed for this observation study was a Roman Catholic church in Orem, Utah, with its leadership being based in the Holy See, Vatican in the pope. This is typically the Christian church thought to be the earliest established, with the word catholic meaning all-encompassing or universal.⁵ This is certainly where most churches and denominations of Christianity (especially Protestant denominations) stem from as there became divisions and protests against specific beliefs and practices that the Catholic Church had developed. Some of the core beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church include the Ten Commandments, the Papacy originated from the Apostle Peter, and that the Holy Bible (including the Old Testament and New Testament, and the Apocrypha to an extent) is from divine origins; some beliefs and practices that had led to some divisions include the Trinity (God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit being one being of three entities), praying to saints (such as to the Virgin Mary), and non-immersive infant baptism.⁶

The second Christian congregation is one of the first denominations to break from the Roman Catholic Church, with its roots in the former Augustinian Monk Martin Luther (1483-1546). While maintaining similar beliefs with the Catholic Church, given its founder's connection and activity with Catholicism, it does also differ in that it places great emphasis on salvation coming from God's grace alone, rather than from ceremony and sacraments.⁷ Besides that core belief, its structure is significantly different, in that it has no centralization of power (such as the pope and the Vatican with the Catholic Church), but will either be grouped into larger synods, but can remain locally governed by their congregations— making this one of the earliest denominational and Congregationalists forms of Christianity.⁸

The fourth church observed was a local LDS Church congregation, usually referred to as a ward. Founded in New England in 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (which will be referred to as the LDS Church for brevity) is the dominant church in Utah and is headquartered in Salt Lake City, the state's capital. One of the more unique aspects of this church is that it was established in 1830, much later than the other churches and denominations – which were founded centuries or millennia earlier. Additionally, during the western expansion period in the United States, it was primarily settled by the early members of the LDS Church in the mid-1800s.⁹ This history likely led to Utah's demographic for nearly the last two centuries. They also have unique beliefs with a current prophet and twelve apostles (similar to the ones that Christ had called in the New Testament) who lead the entire church by revelation, that it is the restored church from when Christ lived, baptisms for the dead, and many more beliefs and practices.

Methodology:

The method of this study was for the sole researcher and author of this study to attend the respective services found on the congregations' respective websites, participate as appropriate (such as in singing and prayers but not in ceremonies that are exclusive in participation), then to write notes shortly after leaving the worship service. During the participation, attention was paid to what was discussed by the leader or teacher, the materials used (scripture, other texts, personal experiences, etc.), and the responses/interactions from the congregants with said materials and teachings. Notes were also taken for the similarities and differences between each congregation in the previously mentioned beliefs and sources used in worship services.

5 The Merriam-Webster Editors. "Catholic Definition & Meaning." Merriam-Webster. Accessed March 24, 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/catholic>.

6 The St. Thomas Apostle Catholic Church Editors. "Catholic Beliefs and Practices." St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church. Accessed March 24, 2024. <https://www.stapostle.org/explore-faith/catholic-beliefs-and-practices/>; The Editors of Diocese Lansing Michigan. "What Do Catholics Believe?" Diocese of Lansing Michigan. Accessed March 24, 2024. <https://dioceseoflansing.org/general/what-do-catholics-believe>.

7 Good News Lutheran Church. "Good News Lutheran." Good News Lutheran. Accessed March 18, 2024. <http://goodnewslehi.com/contact-us>.

8 M.Fairchild, "Overview of Lutheran Church Denominations." Learn Religions, March 5, 2019. <https://www.learnreligions.com/lutheran-church-denomination-700829>.

9 The Editors of the History Channel. "Utah - Salt Lake City, Mormons & Sundance Film Festival." History, August 21, 2018. <https://www.history.com/topics/us-states/utah>.

The schedule for the researcher was based on the times given on the respective websites when it was acceptable for visitors to attend the respective worship services, and what times did not conflict with the researcher's other responsibilities (work, school, family, etc.). This ended up being that the meetings attended were on March 16th at 9:30 AM for the Jewish Shabbat service, March 16th at 5:00 PM for Saturday evening Catholic Mass, March 17th at 9:00 AM for Lutheran worship service, and March 24th at 10:30 AM for an LDS Church sacrament meeting.

The Study:

The order of observation reports for each congregation and sect will be presented in the order they were ascertained, noting the doctrines taught, sources used, and the source of leadership within the respective congregations. Anything else that can contribute to such observations will also be included.

Jewish Shabbat. The specific synagogue that was visited for this study was the Kol Ami congregation in South Salt Lake City, Utah.¹⁰ Upon entering the synagogue, a greeter passed out a copy of the Torah and a psalter to be used in the meeting. The books contained both the original Hebrew writings and English translations and additional commentary. Reading from either book was the primary way that the service was done, with one or two readers at a time reading aloud from the books, usually speaking Hebrew and occasionally with a scripted response from the congregants in Hebrew. The language barrier did add another dimension of limitation to the study but access to the books did allow for any visitors to follow well enough along and to still learn the same principles, especially as the rabbi was giving page numbers in English frequently.

Common themes and doctrines presented throughout the service were teachings about the character of Adonai – the common Hebrew name for God or Jehovah. Frequently referring back to Moses and Israel's exodus from Ancient Egypt, the Torah, and psalms that were read mentioned Adonai's role as the one who has and will free His chosen people from bondage, usually using literal examples that led to metaphorical examples, such as from a world of darkness and sin. This was also closely connected to His character of being kind and benevolent to his chosen people, using examples of Israel's ancient exodus through the Sinai desert towards a promised land.

Another significant topic that was frequently brought up throughout the reading from the Torah and the psalter was of a coming Messiah who will accomplish the aforementioned liberating Adonai's chosen people or Israel. This was frequently tied back to the story of Ancient Israel's exodus from Ancient Egypt, using Moses as a messianic figure, who serves as an example of a future Messiah who is still yet to come. The topic of a coming Messiah was tied closely with the topic mentioned earlier about the character and attributes of Adonai, as it is Him who they said would be sending the Messiah.

Catholic Mass. The Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church of Orem has mass services throughout the week to allow members of the Catholic Church and visitors to attend when most convenient for them, rather than restricting services to only Sunday. The building's namesake comes from the founder of the Franciscan orders of the Friars Minor, Saint Francis of Assisi, Italy, though it can carry a feeling of being inspired from the early architecture of Spanish missions into Latin America and the Western United States.¹¹ The only materials available during the service were the hymnals, used at portions throughout the service; no scriptures were

10 Congregation Kol Ami. "Congregation Kol Ami." Congregation Kol Ami. Accessed March 18, 2024. <https://www.conkolami.org/>.

11 I. C. Brady, L. Cunningham, and The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Saint Francis of Assisi | Biography, Facts, Feast Day, Patron Saint Of, & Legacy." Britannica, March 4, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Francis-of-Assisi>; St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Orem, UT. "St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church." Accessed March 18, 2024. <https://www.oremstfrancis.org/>; R. Brooks, "Spanish Colonial Missions Architecture and Preservation - Spanish Missions/Misiones Españolas." U.S. National Park Service, April 15, 2016. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/travelspanishmissions/architecture-and-preservation.htm>

used by the congregants for the service but were read and cited by the priest and padre.

One noticeable topic that was repeatedly brought up throughout the service was the fallen condition of humans, their mortality, and the nature of sin. These seemed to have been tied to the concept of original sin, but never directly. The padre and priest had these concepts brought up in order to bring a sense of humility to the gathered members to lead to what was the central topic: Jesus Christ and his atonement to save those who follow his gospel. The iconography supported this topic, with murals, statues, and carvings relating several moments in the life of Christ, as presented in the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the New Testament. The focus of the life of Christ was consistently brought in with how his life and atonement are meant to save those who believe he is the savior (or Messiah) and keep his commandments. After the sermons from the padre and priest, the padre had called the congregants who wished to participate in the Eucharist, a symbolic ceremony meant to symbolize the Last Supper.

The service felt that it was not so much an experience to shame individuals into submission to Christ but a call to align themselves with him and to want to follow the gospel they teach. It appears that by discussing the fallen condition of people and how frail we can be, within a general sense, that the padre and priest try to guide their congregations without being forceful.

Lutheran Sabbath. The building the Lutheran service was located at was not a building specifically built for worship but appeared to have been rented for businesses located within downtown Lehi, Utah. Upon walking up to the building, the pastor welcomed everyone until the very moment when the service was to start that morning. There were pamphlets printed for that week's service as well and used throughout the service for singing, prayer, and scriptures. This service was taken during the final Sunday of Lent, which was a repeated theme throughout the Sabbath service but not the primary lesson from the pastor.

Much of the service was hymns meant to praise God or Christ in his role of redeeming his followers and absolving their sins. Several scriptures were read from the Old Testament that are cited to be prophecies of Christ's role (such as in the book of Isaiah) as well as from the New Testament of his apostles preaching that doctrine (such as Paul in the book of Romans). Most of this did not involve discussing required actions by anybody much beyond confessing faith in Christ and repenting of sins. It did not seem to go into great depth about this topic, but the Pastor did go through some of the history of Christ's life and Israel's time under Roman occupation.

However, his main lesson was on finding truth within a world that can have differing definitions of truth. This lesson started with discussing Kate Middleton, the Princess of Wales, and her sudden disappearance from public life bringing up conspiracies, especially with the doctored photo released on Mother's Day 2024.¹² This news story was used in that the conspiracies could certainly not be true, but it still was not clear at the time of the service. He went on to say that not everything that is shared is true. That something to help can all be true and that there must be one truth for everyone. Of course, that truth would come from the God of everyone and everything, so that even as everyone can and does, at times, go through life uncertain, they can be sure they may achieve a true sense of happiness by following Christ.

LDS Sacrament. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (also known as the LDS Church or Mormons) is the dominant church in Utah, with a large concentration in Utah County specifically. There was no shortage of local congregations to choose from, so the selection criteria was to observe the meeting that the researcher's own home would be designated to visit, which was the Timpanogos Park 2nd Ward, which was found using the church's website (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.). The meeting that was attended was on

12 A. Ahab, "Who Edited the Kate Middleton Photo? All the Mistakes, Explained by a Professional Photographer." Vox, March 12, 2024. <https://www.vox.com/culture/24098724/kate-middleton-editing-photo-explained>; L. Holmes, "What the Royal Family Doesn't Understand About PR in 2024." NPR, March 12, 2024. <https://www.npr.org/2024/03/12/1238045755/kate-middleton-photo>.

Sunday, March 24th, 10:30 AM.

It started with the bishop of the local ward welcoming everyone, giving announcements, and laying out the agenda for the meeting, followed by an opening hymn and announcing the three speakers for the service. All three of the speakers had given sermons on the same topic, patriarchal blessings, claiming its roots from when Jacob in the Old Testament had given a final blessing to his sons, who became the founders of the tribes of Israel. It seemed that the three speakers were selected based on one of them being called to give patriarchal blessings to the members of the area (called a patriarch), his wife, and a young woman who was about to receive her patriarchal blessing. The specifics they covered about patriarchal blessings were their origins (as noted previously), how they can bless individuals, and how they have received their respective blessings (or given them to other individuals, in the case of the patriarch). There was an emphasis on how those blessings are to guide individuals, such as to instruct them on what activities to pursue throughout their life, some obstacles or sins to avoid, and some characteristics that they should develop. While none of the speakers went into specific examples of what the blessings can say, they hold the claim that the blessings are specific to each individual they are given to, given by God himself, through the patriarch, in an act of love to His followers.

While there was a specific bishop and councilors who were designated to serve over the local congregation, it must be noted that the speakers for that specific service were not chosen because they had specific training for any vocation but rather based on their callings in the area and their recent experiences. The sources they had chosen were primarily from their own experiences supplemented by scriptures they had cited from the Old Testament and from The Doctrine & Covenants, a set of scriptures from their founding prophet, Joseph Smith, which covers their early history.¹³ Though their respective sermons did not go into great depth about the topic of patriarchal blessings, the pace and language they used seem to indicate that having background knowledge on the subject was presumed from those listening.

Findings:

Notable findings from this study involve which doctrines each of the congregations and churches had taught in their respective services, with a distinctive outlier with the LDS Church in a few considerations. The first one is that during its worship service, the LDS Church covered a topic that is less likely to be familiar to visitors but well known by its regular members; the second is that while the service was led by the bishop, the individuals giving the sermon were from non-leadership positions. The other services differed on both accounts due to being led by the pastor, padre, or rabbi and having the lessons led by them as well, but may include congregants in small participatory roles. Additionally the topics for the services and lessons were of more general topics, discussing the character and nature of God and Adonai rather than delving into a specific topic that is unique to their respective beliefs.

Conclusion:

This paper covered the teachings that a local Jewish congregation, Catholic church, Lutheran congregation, and LDS ward will present in their respective worship services as well as who would lead the lessons in the worship services. While each of these religions have connected historical heritage it can be seen for what they focus on within similar topics and how it works within the respective services. Even within the local area, a few differences and similarities are shown, showing how diverse religious worship can be in a small area and with a similar heritage. While those differences may be what has driven the various schisms and divisions, there is still so much that can be shared between the various churches and congregations, especially since they look towards an incredibly similar god, if not the same god.

13 Roy W. Doxey, "Doctrine and Covenants: Overview," In *Latter-day Saint Essentials: Readings from the Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, edited by John W. Welch and Devan Jensen, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2002).

Appendix:

Ethics. Ethical considerations were taken very strongly into account in this research project due to the involvement of religion and religious worship in the study. Steps were taken to research what to expect (in a general sense) from attending the respective worship services, what the core tenets of their beliefs and doctrines are, and what is kosher or impolite during the respective services. This included but was not limited to, not participating in Catholic Eucharist, not taking notes during the services, participating in singing, and engaging with the congregants and leaders when appropriate. Furthermore, no names of members or leaders were put into this research paper to protect them, as no consent was given for any demographic or personal information that can be used to identify them.

Limitations. With only one researcher/author for the entire paper, it will have only their individual perspective(s) on any given topic within the scope of this study. The researcher will also be limited to their background knowledge of the observed congregations and sects and what can be learned before the observations. This limits the researcher's knowledge of what to observe, what might not be significant at face value, and any biases in personal religious beliefs that can affect the observation. Additionally, the researcher will have only observed one congregation or sect of each religious group at only one instance of observation, limiting what can be learned. While these limitations can not be done away with completely, it certainly is important to acknowledge such limitations for this research paper.

Someone is Watching

By: Korryn Narvaez



Artist Statement:

As autumn replaces summer, the night will continue to grow, and we will need to watch the dark more closely for those lurking.

Rippling

Harmony

Gunter!!

American Girl with a Korean Heart

Mirror of Infinity

Dancing with Elements: A Journey of Spiritual Awakening

Order Amongst Chaos

Harmony

By: Berehy Zabuttya

Inspired by H. P. Lovecraft and *Signalis* by rose-engine.

Escape from prison's sea he desires,

What felt so real is but a tale of liars.

The stars' oppressive conduct to him is clear,

A song that we all dance to, but few can hear.

The flight's arranged, he too shall play the tune.

Gunter!!

By: Sophie Jackson



Artist Statement:

The composition is an oil painting of a beloved cartoon character from the children's TV show Adventure Time. The purpose of this painting is to draw connections between your inner child and who you are today. In modern society, we are expected to forget or abandon the things that once filled us with joy. But this piece invites you to remember the small things you once loved. You can still be an adult, but always remember what makes you, You!

American Girl with a Korean Heart

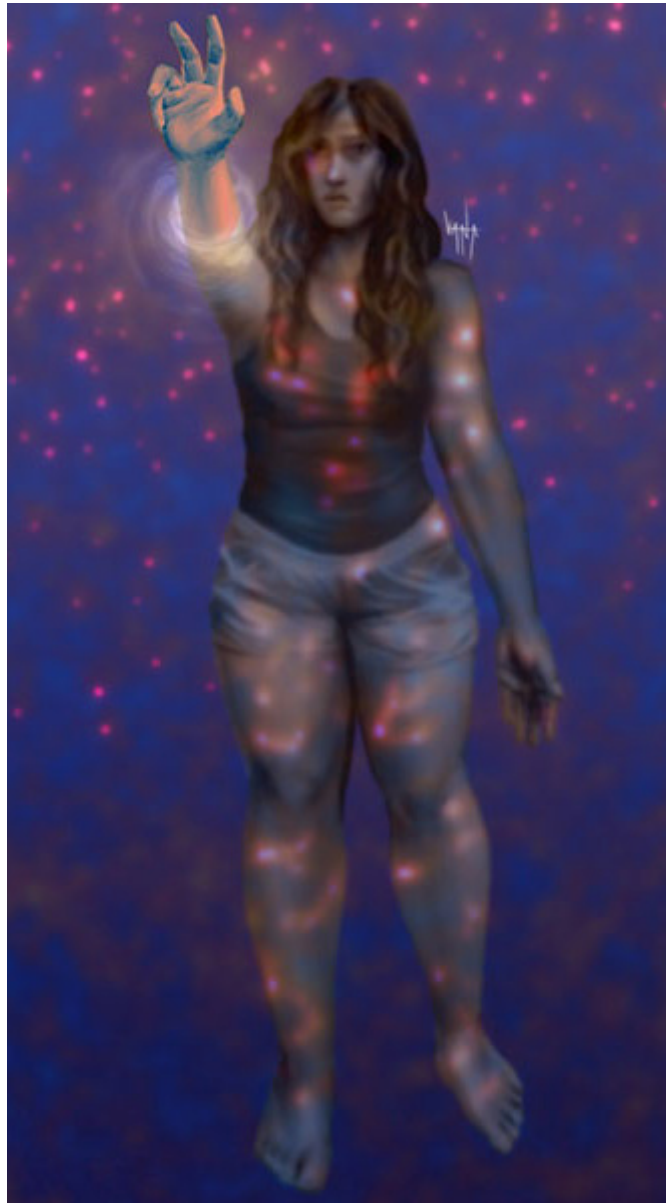
By: Lily Shin

Prompt: Tell us about an aspect of your identity or a life experience that has shaped you into who you are today. Be sure to include details so that we can understand your history, heritage, or life path, but we're not therapists, so please avoid discussing specific personal traumas.

I am half Korean. Being half Korean is a large part of my identity and how I live. Growing up in a largely Caucasian population in my hometown and school, I take pride in my diversity. My family has always celebrated our Korean heritage, and I enjoy sharing it with my peers. We are proud of who we are and don't apologize for our differences, but instead look at them as assets that make us stronger. We eat food that many consider "weird" or "gross", or seem to get too caught up in our love for school, and have an obsession with becoming doctors, but to me, the Korean culture is much more than that. Korean culture is disciplined and based on honor, love, and respect. My elders have taught me how to be a hard worker and to have a strong sense of morality. They came from a poor background in South Korea as pig farmers, with little opportunity to better their circumstances. With grit and determination, they decided to make a better path for their family by immigrating to the United States. They risked it all and left everything behind to pursue an education and create a better life. It was daunting to adjust to being in a new environment, speaking a new language, and learning a new culture. Despite the challenge, my grandparents have achieved a prestigious career, made lifelong memories with their six children and twelve grandchildren, and have had a positive impact on their community. To me, they are what Korean culture represents. In my life, I seek to follow in their footsteps of high achievement and dedication. Ultimately, my heritage has helped shape me into the young woman I am today.

Mirror of Infinity

By: Sydney Holt



Artist Statement:

This piece is something I've wanted to do for a while. The veil's texture comes from some digital manipulation of the temperature anisotropy map of the cosmic microwave background (CMB). The CMB is one of the most important wells of knowledge in cosmology. From analysis of the CMB, cosmologists have studied dark matter, dark energy, and the age, shape, contents, and structure of the universe. The CMB came into existence ~380,000 years after the Big Bang. Prior to this, the universe was opaque to light. This means that none of our study of the first 380,000 years of the universe can rely on light, which does make things difficult. Reaching 'through' the CMB is a manifestation of the desire to understand the universe's mysteries, even if the universe seems to want to protect its secrets.

Dancing with Elements: A Journey of Spiritual Awakening

By: Brooke Poll

A few years ago, during a difficult period in my life, my friend shared some advice during a conversation about self-care and healing. She said, “If you’re ever at a crystal shop, just walk around and buy a few that you feel drawn to, then go home and look up what they are good for, like anxiety, grief, cleansing, protection.” Her encouragement to explore holistic practices was a bit unconventional and intimidating at the time, but it ignited my curiosity. One afternoon while wandering through Gardner Village in South Jordan, Utah I stumbled upon a quaint little shop called The Crystal Fairy. The store was small and filled with all sorts of pretty things—wire-wrapped stone pendants, handmade feathered trinkets, wooden wands with crystals shimmering at their tips, and brown bags filled with various blends of homemade herbal tea. I was enveloped in a warm embrace of earthy scents, with the aroma of wood and herbs lingering in the air. Browsing the store, my gaze was naturally drawn to the crystals on display. As I looked over the array of crystals and stones, I felt drawn to a polished purple crescent-shaped crystal and an opaque pink and black stone. When I picked them up, they felt cool and smooth in my hands, grounding me in a way that was strangely comforting, as if they were imbued with a quiet, steady energy. The sensation felt almost trance-like, but as I snapped back to the present, I realized I was still holding the two stones. Without much more thought, I purchased them and went on my way.

When I looked up the items I had bought, I was touched by their meaning and their application to my life. The amethyst crescent symbolized calm and protection, qualities that seemed to shield me from the stress I’d been feeling, while rhodonite represented compassion and emotional healing, gently encouraging me to release old pain and traumas. Having recently been in a car accident, holding these two little pieces of earth made me feel both protected and empowered, like tangible reminders to trust myself and nurture my spirit. This moment opened my perspective to honoring the divinity and sacredness within ourselves and in nature.

I began researching crystals and stones and visited multiple metaphysical shops around the Salt Lake and Utah valleys. After a few weeks of immersing myself in the world of crystals, I found myself naturally gravitating towards the broader realm of witchcraft and Wicca, drawn in by their deep connection to nature. One day, I decided to ask a co-worker who was openly into witchcraft about her beliefs. I wasn’t offered much information, so I decided to experiment and find out for myself. Determined to learn more, I turned to the Apple Podcasts app and searched for ‘witchcraft.’ I stumbled upon a podcast called Seeking Witchcraft and began listening from the very first episode. The podcast unveiled a new world for me, and I eagerly started purchasing its recommended books—*The Truth About Witchcraft*, *‘Earth, Air, Fire, and Water’*, and *Wicca: For the Solitary Practitioner*, all by Scott Cunningham—each guiding me deeper into the practices and philosophies of witchcraft and Wicca, and helping me to further connect with the natural world around me.

As I first started looking into witchcraft and Wicca, I felt a nagging fear come over me, as though something awful was going to happen if I stepped too far. Every page I turned, every crystal I wire-wrapped, every leaf I held sacredly felt like a quiet defiance against everything I had been taught. A lifetime of warnings—that witchcraft was inherently evil—echoed in my head. I felt a tightening in my chest, as part of me was waiting

for God to descend from the heavens to smite me, that my life would take a turn for the worse, somehow. Yet, nothing happened—no smiting, no angry spirits. Over time, I realized this fear was a product of ingrained teachings rather than a spiritual warning; this fear wasn't coming from anything real, but from ideas I'd accepted without question. Realizing that the fear surrounding witchcraft was a product of my upbringing rather than a spiritual intervention was incredibly liberating. I felt an overwhelming sense of relief as if I'd been hauling a backpack filled with bricks—weight I didn't even know I was carrying—that suddenly slipped off my shoulders and left me feeling lighter than ever. The world of spirituality was my oyster, and I had just begun my journey. It brought a sense of happiness and fulfillment I had never experienced before. Although I harbored concerns about the validity of witchcraft, I arrived at a point where I decided I no longer cared. I began to see that joy and fulfillment could be reasons enough to believe, even if I didn't have all the answers. I had spent my whole life invested in a bunch of other far-fetched ideals; if embracing new-age spirituality brought me joy and a sense of fulfillment, then why should I let doubts hold me back? It was a deeply freeing realization: I didn't need anyone's permission to find meaning in something I loved. This highlighted the importance of questioning and examining our beliefs, especially when they limit our exploration of new possibilities. It showed me the wisdom of 'never say never'—a lesson I never imagined would resonate with me, especially after promising my father I would never leave Christianity. Embracing this new path enveloped me in a warm, nurturing curiosity for the natural world, awakening a thirst I hadn't even known was there. Each moment spent in nature quenched a longing deep within me, it made me feel authentically alive. I knew then that there was no turning back.

After getting past my initial hesitations, I delved into witchcraft and spirituality, and I found myself awakening to the profound connection between humans and the natural world. I became invested in collecting natural ingredients for rituals, drying flowers from bouquets, collecting pretty rocks, picking up interesting leaves, and appreciating nature more. Each flower I collected, each stone I held, felt like a bridge between me and the earth. The textures and the scents—rich and grounding—confirmed that I was becoming part of something greater. Before picking the flowers or leaves from trees, I would 'ask' the flowers and trees if I could do so—seeking permission from the spirits that dwell within, acknowledging their inherent sanctity. I remember picking my first leaf from an aspen tree on a hike in early autumn; I felt an unfamiliar reverence as if the leaves were speaking to me in the breeze, inviting me to truly see it—and myself—in a new way. I felt a tangible bond form between myself and the tree—a silent acknowledgment of mutual respect and interconnection.

After that, nature became a sanctuary where the divine was perceived in the gentle sway of branches in the breeze, in the rustle of leaves, and shimmered in the radiant sun, moon, and stars. Without realizing it, I had embraced a Pantheistic perspective in which I began to acknowledge a vague definition of divinity within the world around me. In collecting flowers, leaves, and rocks, I felt more connected with that vague divine presence. It was through this lens that I came to understand the true essence of divinity. In embracing the elemental wisdom of the Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, I was finding a powerful source of self-acceptance—transforming fears and doubts into a belief that was mine alone. In ritual, I found I didn't need external validation. The act of connecting with the natural world was a language I was learning to speak on my own terms, giving me the confidence to claim it as my truth. I embraced witchcraft and nature as sources of empowerment and self-discovery, rather than threats or taboos.

A year after starting this journey, I find myself standing before the wooden tray I've repurposed as an altar, positioned on the floor facing northeast, in my dining room. The room is dark save for a candle burning on the altar. Each corner of the altar points toward a cardinal direction: the top left points north, the top right points east, the bottom right points south, and the bottom left points west. On its surface rests a woven black and white placemat with varying items resting on it, including a smooth piece of tumbled rose quartz and a selenite palm stone which lay in the northernmost corner. In the eastern corner rests a large feather, while a white chime candle flickers in the southern point. Positioned in the west point is a small silver-colored bowl with water. In the center of the altar sits dried rose petals and sage-colored leaves resting in a small copper

bowl, ready to be burned. The smell of 'King of Frankincense' hangs in the air, the smoke hugging me in its protective scent. Through a window several feet in front of me, I can see the faint stars in the dark sky which seem to almost shimmer, as though they question if they should be shining at all. The Moon is full and glowing triumphantly—lighting up most of the night sky. I look back down at the altar, I breathe in slowly, counting to four, hold the breath, counting to four, then breathe out, counting to four; I repeat this several times. I am ready. As I face cardinal north, I point my athame toward the ground, pushing as much energy as I can muster from inside me, from the Earth and from the full moon. I visualize the energy flowing out the tip of my athame, like a ribbon, flowing to wherever I point. As quietly as I can, I say, "I call upon the guardians of the North and the Spirits of Earth—To Keep Silent." Still mustering as much energy as I can, I continue pointing my athame toward the ground and slowly turn in a circle, clockwise, until I face cardinal East. Once again, I say, "I call upon the guardians of the East and the Spirits of Air—To Know." I slowly turn clockwise to face cardinal south. While still pointing my athame at the ground, I say "I call upon the guardians of the South and the Spirits of Fire—To Will." I slowly turn clockwise, to face cardinal west; still pointing with my athame, I say "I call upon the guardians of the West and the Spirits of Water—To Dare." One more time, I turn clockwise to face cardinal north again, my athame pointing back to where I started, closing the hypothetical circular ribbon of energy that now surrounds the altar and myself. "I call upon the Spirits of the Elements and request their presence, to protect me and help me with my workings," I state quietly, then sit down. I visualize the circular ribbon I 'drew' on the floor, stretching up, creating a wall of energy that rounds out into a dome above me, a hemisphere of energy that both protects me above ground, but also another hemisphere that goes underground as well, encasing me in a whole, protective, sphere of energy. As I sit within the protective sphere of energy, it settles in me that real spirituality is a journey of exploration, growth, and understanding. In honoring the divinity within ourselves and the world around us, we find the courage to embrace our authenticity and live our truth, whatever that may be.

Order Amongst Chaos

By: Jake Allen



Artist Statement:

Tranquility and motion all blended together in a state of Zen.

Rousing

The Machine State
Sun Tunnel
Social Clock
Fallen Angel
Architecture of Design
The Unengaged Navigator

The Machine State

By: Austen Miller

Our culture loves to produce fantasies of dystopia, such as *1984*, *Brave New World*, and *Fahrenheit 451*. To decide whether any of our fabulously bleak dystopias have already come to pass, it is an important first step to define dystopia. Dystopia is a slippery thing. It is a type of state, or maybe a place, but also a literary genre typified by that kind of state/place. If a work fails to match every point of the definitions here, that does not necessarily preclude it from being dystopia. Although, as an ideal term, there is no such thing as a true dystopia. The next goal of this paper is nevertheless to define an ideal dystopia, which I refer to as “the machine-state”. The machine-state will then be used as a measuring stick to analyze what is dystopic in our own world, while drawing on controversial, yet often insightful thinkers such as Karl Marx and Ted Kaczynski. I want to do this because I believe that we may already be in a dystopia, but perhaps that is not so bleak a prospect as it sounds.

I will be using the term the “machine-state” to describe the perfect dystopia. This conception is mainly informed by the seminal dystopian works *1984* by George Orwell, *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, *The Machine Stops* by E.M. Forester, and the film *Brazil* directed by Terry Gilliam, as well as many others. These works will be referenced throughout this paper in passing. Intimate knowledge of their details is not required. What does need to be known is that these works are unified by themes of totalitarian or authoritarian governments, technological dehumanization, alienation, individual resentment, and futility.

Dystopia as Machine-State

First, what do we mean when we use the term “dystopia” in general? Merriam-Webster’s first definition is “an imagined world or society in which people lead wretched, dehumanized, fearful lives.”¹ That seems apt, if a little simple. Merriam-Webster’s second definition of “Anti-utopia” helps contextualize it a little as being in opposition to a utopia.² A barren nuclear wasteland may be an imagined world or society in which people lead wretched, dehumanized, fearful lives, but it is not the opposite of a utopia the same way that the kind of twisted society in the following paragraphs would be.

Expanding on the above dictionary definitions we might say, based on general trends of dystopic literature, that dystopian governments are typically enabled in their oppression by new technology, power structures, and exaggerated ideological and cultural forces. They often involve elements of post-apocalypse or global catastrophes of various kinds. The characters of dystopic fiction are often people who have resigned themselves to their place in their oppressive society to some extent but may still harbor some resentment. The setting may be so hopeless that those characters’ journeys were doomed from the start, creating feelings of despair and fatalism throughout the genre. Typically, if the heroes do survive, or even succeed, they, and their world, are going to pay quite dearly for it. For example, the protagonists of *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins survive but have their lives irrevocably altered as the old world is destroyed. The protagonist of the film *Brazil* directed by Terry Gilliam has the ultimate bait-and-switch of

1 “Dystopia,” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, accessed April 12, 2024, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dystopia>.

2 “Dystopia.”

imagined success for a reality in which he is literally and physically trapped in the machine but unaware of his state as fantasies of freedom are projected directly into his mind.

I will be using the term “machine-state” to refer to an ideal perfect dystopia. Though no dystopian fiction (or reality) adheres perfectly to this term, I suspect that proximity to this kind of state or societal system is the main trait that makes a work feel dystopian. The idea is stated most directly at the end of *1984* in this speech by the villainous member of the tyrannical inner party and servant of Big Brother, O’Brian:

There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy. There will be no art, no literature, no science. When we are omnipotent, we shall have no more need of science. There will be no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life. All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always -- do not forget this, Winston -- always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face -- forever.³

A machine-state is an automated and self-propagating state. A kind of social construct that has become utterly entrenched in people’s minds and automated in the real world through technology and power structures. It has such a life of its own that it would keep going on even without the will of the humans who administer it. At the very minimum, it would require concerted effort by all of society at once to stop the machine. This kind of system is so stable as to be considered perpetual. It may have originated in chaos but has been refined for decades, if not generations. This system does not have major existential threats, or they are far away, or they are entirely imagined by the state. This machine is the new God, and having such threats nearby would call into question the machine’s omnipotence and omniscience. The humans living in a machine-state have absolutely no influence over the machine-state. Thus, the machine-state is totalitarian rather than authoritarian, but its totalitarianism has been refined into a high art of control over every aspect of people’s lives. If it is a truly well-made machine-state, then the way it oppresses people will be as close to arbitrary as possible. To be oppressed as part of a group creates group identity and can even be an engine of cultural production. True dehumanization destroys as much identity as it can. The machine-state is so dedicated to this dehumanization that it might not even be merciful enough to kill you when it destroys you, such as for the protagonists of *Brazil*, *Brave New World*, and *1984* who continue living as broken wretches of the system after their failed struggles.

The machine is a vast engine that generates human suffering as exhaust. To quote *1984*, “The purpose of persecution is persecution. The purpose of torture is torture”.⁴ The machine-state’s purpose is not to make some people great at others’ expense, though it may also do that if convenient to the machine’s goals . The human desire for self-aggrandizement may have helped to originally create the machine-state, but human lives are completely incidental to it. It deals with socio-economic classes, not individual lives. The machine-state is a dystopia beyond the petty interests of the “great men” of human history. Human oligarchs and dictators are puppets if they exist in the system at all. The oppression of the ideal dystopia is not just systematic, but of systems. It is not just using established structures as mechanisms to operate through, but creating new structures whose very existence is oppressive.

Because this state-run hell is stable and perpetual, the machine-state is highly invested in controlling innovation. This is somewhat paradoxical given the machine-state’s basis in automated systems and power structures, but advancement creates change. Invention is a creative and highly human activity which is well

3 George Orwell, *1984* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), 267.

4 Orwell, *1984*, 266

known to destabilize existing systems. This is illustrated by the cases of gunpowder, the printing press, and the birth control pill, all of which rapidly altered the societies into which they were introduced. Because dystopias must control and suppress societal shifts, if any advancement happens within the machine, it will be incredibly slow and entirely controlled.

The all-consuming machine-state is an ideal in the Platonic sense, and as such, it is only more or less captured by various dystopic fictions; it is the proximity to this ideal that makes a work more or less dystopic. This says nothing about the work's quality. The extent to which dystopias match the machine-state ideal can often be attributed to where in their history the story takes place. Aldous Huxley addresses this directly in a letter to George Orwell where they discuss which of their stories is the more likely future. Huxley speculated that the brutal society of *1984* would slowly shift towards something more like the hedonistic automation of *Brave New World* as the generations went by.⁵ The states in *Fahrenheit 451* and most young-adult dystopian fiction might be thought to be early in their dystopian development, as they are often still in the process of transitioning from authoritarian to totalitarian. They cannot yet be described as full machine-states but are rapidly progressing in that direction.

History

The dystopian concept comes to authors largely from specific historical societies, which I will address in a moment, but the point of dystopia is that it is an ideal which has never been reached. Human history may be a gushing geyser of blood and suffering, but if we start labeling historical societies as dystopias, then what are the criteria for a society that is not a dystopia? Genghis Kahn slaughtering his way across Eurasia was quite brutal, but it does not call to mind “dystopic.” Historical conquerors were feeding machines, but they were feeding the machine of the warband, or a state made of interest groups (vassals, creditors, churches, etc.). In contrast to the conquerors, settled states tended more towards using depersonalized and abstract incentives (status, prestige, honor, piety, wealth, etc.). But inequality and injustice alone do not make a dystopia, nor a machine-state. Is a society dystopic specifically because it exploits its people or treats them unfairly? There is a serious problem if the answer is “yes.” Every historical society has exploited its people and treated them unfairly in some way. The variety of ways humans have invented to do this is immense. We can point at something in virtually every past system and label it dystopic.

For example, The Jim Crow South was an awful place but only held a few dystopic tendencies. It was governed by a system that was wildly inefficient and fragile. It was always hampered by the racist policies it clung to. Cutting out a huge portion of the population from the labor pool based on their skin's melanin content cripples meritocracy, and therefore efficiency. The Jim Crow system was at all times under threat by the mere existence of the North and other countries that were doing perfectly fine without those racist policies. The oppression in the segregated South was done to create distinct groups of whites and blacks that would not mix. From a historical perspective, that is not so much a machine-state as it is run-of-the-mill human cruelty and prejudice used as tools to elevate some people above others. Terrible, but relatively dissimilar from a machine-state. It was far too inefficient, unautomated, and the dehumanization, though thorough, was targeted instead of arbitrary. Similar problems come from attempting to analyze other cruel and unequal societies, such as Imperial Rome or the Aztec Empire, as dystopias. Most historical societies, especially pre-industrial ones, were too wrapped up in particular human incentives to get close to the machine-state.

These historical problems are why the concept of the machine-state is useful as a dystopic measuring stick. So where did Orwell, Huxley, and Gilliam get their ideas? Totalitarian societies like Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Maoist China are perhaps the closest humanity ever came to the machine-state historically, but these were not true dystopias either. That is no defense of their actions. These were places that attempted

5 Aldous Huxley to George Orwell, October 21, 1949, letter to George Orwell, Open Culture, <https://www.openculture.com/2018/08/aldous-huxley-george-orwell-hellish-vision-future-better-1949.html>.

total war and total state control of language, beliefs, etc. Fascists and communists would certainly have made machine-states if they could. Having thrown out God, their new idol was the security and order of the state through a Thousand Year Reich, or a Dictatorship of the Proletariat, or whatever other nonsense their ideologies demanded. But there is not actually such a thing as a perfectly totalitarian society. Such regimes face constant stability problems and external threats. The Nazis did not last two decades. The Soviets only made it about seven. China eventually “reformed,” though perhaps “restructured” is more accurate given current Chinese policies.⁶

No historical society was a true representation of the “boot stamping on a human face forever” because the world is too large and chaotic for such a system to exist indefinitely. But one thing the 20th Century totalitarians did prove is that the human spirit is in fact quite domitable. If you have industrial technology and are willing to exert enough violence, you absolutely can oppress millions of people for decades on end. Dystopia would not be disturbing if it were implausible. If every time a dictator took power they were immediately lynched by an angry mob, no one would fear dictators.

Then what could create the circumstances to bring about the machine-state? Often, dystopic writers set their worlds in a post-apocalyptic state. In these cases, the apocalypse is used as an excuse for why it is believable that society would turn in a direction that might otherwise not make much sense, and the cataclysm itself tends not to be very relevant to the work. However, many dystopic fictions do not make use of this trope or use it in an ambiguous way. After all, the world ending does not mean that it necessarily will become a dystopia; the world can simply end. Furthermore, post-apocalyptic societies are not necessarily dystopic themselves, even in cases where the government becomes tyrannical as a reaction to the catastrophe. In many fictional cases, the post-apocalyptic state becomes brutal, but without the total control of the situation required for a machine state.

Another common trope in post-apocalyptic fiction that is sometimes labeled dystopian is the radical cult. But a violent cult with a deranged leader does not a soul-crushing dystopian state make. You can escape from a cult. A cult is small enough to be existentially threatened by other groups. A cult’s power structures are not necessarily automated, or even formalized. A cult may spontaneously dissolve when its leader dies, and the cult of personality loses its personality. Cultish behavior can, however, certainly be incorporated into a totalitarian state. As an example, *1984*’s cult of personality around the figure of Big Brother is fixed in place by the state and deeply entrenched. It does not matter at all if there is, or ever was, a real Big Brother. The totalitarian state of Oceania in *1984* will likely never fall and is not truly threatened by the other totalitarian powers (if they even exist) in their endless overseas proxy wars.⁷ Does that sound familiar?

Acceleration

So, we might say in general that apocalypse is not necessary to dystopia but would probably help things along in a society that was already on its way or even just had the right underlying tendencies. So... does ours? Have aspects of the fictional dystopias we have been reading already come to pass in Western civilization? Are they coming soon?

Yes, yes, and yes.

Contrary to popular belief our society is a very pleasant place to live. Relative to anywhere in the past, and most places in the present, it is truly incredible. Yet everyone incessantly complains, and we are certainly not acting like people living at the utter pinnacle of human history. How strange. Of course, much of that can

6 “Who Are the Uyghurs and Why Is China Being Accused of Genocide?” BBC News, May 24, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-22278037>.

7 Orwell, 1984, 164-167.

be chalked up to the indomitable human capacity for whining. But the question remains, why are people so dissatisfied with our society when quality of life is orders of magnitude better than it was just a century or two ago?

I am not about to make the claim that America is a machine-state like what I have previously described. The government is not dedicated to dehumanization for its own sake. The police and military are usually trying to get something out of the people they torture. I am instead making the claim that we are in something very similar to the machine-state I previously described, but without the inefficiencies of sadism. Not a benevolent state by any means, and not lacking inequality and violence, but closer to ambivalent than malevolent.

This is largely due to inevitable historical forces around effects of technology including globalism, industrialization, the nuclear bomb, and the information age. Many voices call capitalism a dystopia or claim we must never give an inch to communism as that would be a dystopia. Phrases like “X wants 1984!” and “Y will lead us into a *Brave New World!*” get bandied around so much in party politics as to make them almost meaningless. These perspectives miss the point that what is currently making the world dystopic is the circumstances of modernity in general, not the actions of a particular group. There are of course “immoral” and exploitative people and groups, but that is always the case in every place and time. Why are those people’s actions now creating dystopia?

An important part of this is because, in a sense, we are at the end of history.⁸ The United Nations (UN), globalization, and more than anything, the atomic bomb, have frozen the recurring great power conflicts of history. Until the last four generations or so, war was not one or more great powers influencing a conflict in a weaker nation. War was the great powers of the world destroying entire generations of each other’s young men every 30 years or so. The state of mutually assured destruction brought about by the bomb, and the diplomacy built on top of that foundation, is what changed things. Now, despite many modern nations having been quite poorly defined at their creation, the general international consensus is that, for the foreseeable future, everyone needs to stay in their assigned seats. We label the countries that do not as the “bad guys” because they are either trying to go back to, or restart history.⁹ That sounds an awful lot like the stability and lack of existential threats of the machine-state.

The ideologies of these stable great powers interact with technology in a particular way. During the Cold War, communism and capitalism’s claims of superiority over each other were often based on being the greater industrializer and better at advancing technology. There is a reason NASA’s greatest levels of funding were during the Space Race.¹⁰ Both ideologies were founded on technological accelerationism. Both were dedicated to automation and efficiency as virtues. They both worked under the assumption that a more connected and technologically sophisticated world would be a better place. The irony of two states who almost destroyed the world multiple times, enabled by modern technology, believing that technology would improve the world is incredible.

The ideology of these states does not truly matter. A system with a more or less socialist economy or that is somewhat more or less respectful of civil liberties does not fundamentally change the bigger picture of our century. How much do domestic policies truly matter when supposedly diametrically opposed ideologies engage in the same forever wars abroad, have the same goals, and measure success in the same way?

Alienation

8 Fukuyama, Francis. “The End of History?” *The National Interest*, no. 16 (1989): 3–18. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24027184>; Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2009).

9 Peter Dickinson, “Putin’s History Lecture Reveals His Dreams of a New Russian Empire,” *Atlantic Council*, February 13, 2024, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/putins-history-lecture-reveals-his-dreams-of-a-new-russian-empire>.

10 “History of the NASA Budget,” *Aerospace Security Project - CSIS*, September 1, 2022, <https://aerospace.csis.org/data/history-nasa-budget-csis>.

Industrialized society is broadly stable and technologically advanced. So what? Is that not a good thing? Well, industrialized society is also extremely alienating and dehumanizing. This is not a recent development. Marx pointed out aspects of this in the mid-1800s with his Theory of Alienation. Marx got a lot of things wrong (like advocating mass murder), but his theory of alienation was accurate, though incomplete. Workers feel alienated from their labor because they “... had less control over their work, were often unskilled, and were often just part of a production line.”¹¹ Basically, workers make products they do not control for people they do not know, for a benefit they do not personally derive. Or in Marx’s own words:

The worker puts his life into the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object. Hence, the greater this activity, the more the worker lacks objects. Whatever the product of his labor is, he is not. Therefore, the greater this product, the less is he himself. The *alienation* of the worker in his product means not only that his labor becomes an object, an *external* existence, but that it exists *outside him*, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him. It means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien.¹²

What Marx implied, but many of our dystopian writers picked up on directly, especially E. M. Forester’s hyper-automated world in *The Machine Stops*, is that industrialization alienates us from everything around us, not just our labor.

We do not notice this alienation and dehumanization because we were born into it, molded by it. To us this is just the way the world is, but we can train ourselves to notice it again. Look around the room you are in right now. Do you know the origin of a single object within view? Not the store where it was bought, but where it was made? What percentage of the objects you own were made by someone you have met? When was the last time you ate something grown by someone whose name you knew? We are dependent on a lot of technology. How well do you understand the systems of plumbing, architecture, engineering, electricity, infrastructure, computation, and networking which you use every single day? The point is not that being specialized and out-sourcing is necessarily a bad thing, industrialization happened for a reason, but living in such a detached world is alienating, nonetheless.

The fact that life is quantitatively better on almost every metric since the Industrial Revolution is the most important part of the technological trap of our state-machine. How could anyone advocate regressing technology and de-development? “I don’t want to feel alienated, therefore you can not have your smallpox vaccine or your tumor MRI,” is a completely insane and indefensible statement. That said, some people, such as the infamous Ted Kaczynski (AKA The Unabomber) have advocated exactly that position.¹³ Like Marx, Kaczynski was wrong about many things (like advocating mass murder), but he represents one genocidal extreme end of a discourse between primitivism and technological accelerationism. On the side of accelerationism is techno-capital (the state and business interests pushing forward technological development) and its unfettered dehumanization for the sake of profit. Managing our relationship with techno-capital is perhaps the most broadly important issue of the 21st century.

Current party politics are totally oblivious to this discourse and appear generally uninterested in addressing techno-capital, perhaps this is a function of techno-capital. Except for when the Left occasionally remembers that climate change exists and the Right conveniently notices the erosion of social values, our unending progress is seen as an unambiguous good. Consciously addressing techno-capital and finding a way forward

11 “Marx’s Theory of Alienation in Sociology,” Simply Psychology, February 13, 2024, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/marx-alienation.html>.

12 Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. Martin Milligan (1932; repr., Marxists Internet Archive, 2024), <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm>.

13 Ted Kaczynski, *Technological Slavery* (Port Townsend, WA: Feral House, 2010).

away from both extremes ought to be the dominant theme of societal discussion. Fortunately, new generations appear to see these themes somewhat more clearly.

In terms of technology and automation, the machine-state has already won. All of society is based around technological advancement. Just like in a machine-state, the technology and the power structures supporting the machine have been almost completely automated to propagate themselves. No Kaczynskian anti-technology mass movement will ever be able to effectively fight the forces of techno-capital because they will always have worse technology. There is also the problem of trying to convince most of the population to give up their cell phones, hospitals, and mass-produced agriculture. It would take apocalyptic events to alter the course the world is on.

Quite unlike a truly dystopian machine-state, our system is based on ever increasing acceleration. Though this is perhaps the main feature distinguishing our society from the perpetuity of a machine-state, such unchecked progress could eventually steer into the mouth of a true dystopia. Our system does not stymie change unless it directly conflicts with its interests. It is entirely foreseeable that humans could eventually begin space colonization and bring the machine-state along with us.

We cannot uninvent the combustion engine, condom, or the internet, despite the massive, often negative, but always chaotic effects these things have had. Who would want to? These things may have disrupted previous ways of life, but they were adopted because they confer incredibly useful advantages. History has proven that we can at best regulate some kinds of advanced research. A great example is that of the greenhouse effect and global warming. It was already known in the 1800s by multiple scientists that this could become a problem.¹⁴ Society was not even based on the combustion engine yet, but nothing was done to stop or regulate it at all until relatively recently. No one has a choice in living in a world impacted by carbon emissions. Reduce your carbon footprint to zero and you still have to breathe the exact same pollution as before. You have no incentive besides principle to stop polluting. Humanity is going to advance because technological progress is one massive tragedy of the commons. Pausing is not a realistic option and going back even less so. Techno-capital will never allow it, but more importantly, we will never let ourselves.

Hell's Silver Lining

We did not choose to be born into these circumstances, but here we are. To not accept that humans have the incredible technological power we have achieved is to ignore the world's thrown state. If we pretend that we are not holding a gun, because guns are frightening, then we can never holster it. While we exist within our machine-state, we will need to adopt new attitudes to move forward and perhaps avoid dystopia.

The conundrum of intervention and technology when it comes to the environment is typical of the modern world. The eventual solution will have to be moderate. Completely removing human impact is impossible, unless you are willing to adopt the genocidal attitude of a Kaczynski. Even magically eliminating human impact would not remove the impacts we have already had anyway. Completely fixing the situation through more technology is impossible, even assuming we could create technology to stop all the present harm. Moderation and conscious management are the only semi-realistic solutions.

That all sounds quite negative, but it is not cause for total despair. Our machine-state is very different from those of Orwell and Forester. As stated, our technological advancement brought us into this position, but that progress also keeps our society chaotic and creative. Humans may struggle to keep up, but so does the state.

14 Charles C. Mann, "Meet the Amateur Scientist Who Discovered Climate Change," WIRED, January 23, 2018, <https://www.wired.com/story/meet-the-amateur-scientist-who-discovered-climate-change>; Elisabeth Crawford, "Svante Arrhenius," Encyclopedia Britannica, February 15, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Svante-Arrhenius>, accessed April 13, 2024.

In many ways modern states are far more responsive to the wants of their citizens. The state is quite good at keeping people from violent revolt and generally distracted with the meaningless issues of party politics. Mass surveillance and a bloated military allow the state to go after particular groups and individuals, typically through overseas forever wars or the prison-industrial complex. Yet, despite the general perception, when the public cares a lot about something, the political machine sometimes changes its behavior. How few casualties in one of our forever wars does it take to make the news and cause controversy? Single digits.¹⁵ Compare that with the massive wars of centuries past in which the public had virtually no say. How many police departments reformed after BLM protests? How quickly do such protests organize after a new viral story? How long did people accept January 6? It seems like that kind of coup attempt would have been far more likely to succeed a century or two ago. In the past Epstein Island might have been only known through vague rumors and never exposed, like Capri under the Roman emperors.¹⁶

Perhaps it feels like democracy has become a performative farce. That is likely because it was always a performative farce and is only now revealed as such by the information age. But also, thanks to the information age, the surveillance state can be a little bit bidirectional. Entire populations can create a consensus opinion and generate unrest within hours of events happening. Public figures are scrutinized as never before. One effect of the complete loss of personal privacy is a state aware of its denizens in a way no state has ever been before. With social media this does not even require active purposeful tracking. People will go out of their way to let the public forum know exactly what they think and want. Though systemic revolution is now impossible, democracy might be the least farcical it has ever been. Reforms are usually meaningless, but not always. Incremental change is change.

We are frightened by the inevitability of technology and the way it is creating an unsettling level of interconnectedness. This is a rational reaction. This change has never happened before and things that have not happened before are often dangerous. The techno-capital interests of the world are pushing as hard as they possibly can through social media and now AI. There are many negative consequences of this, and some people worry about the potential for singularity and hiveminds.

This may be a strange position, but I propose that humanity has always been a sort of hivemind, just a very slow one. In a way, the fact that culture exists at all is a hivemind. Humans can transfer ideas, archetypes, and memes across our large neural network (culture) from node to node (our individual brains) through speaking and writing. We can even do it across generations. We are so accustomed to this that we do not notice it happening most of the time. Consider how incredible that ability is and that we are the only species that can do it. From a very broad view, the whole planet is a brain with individual humans acting as neurons. Through the internet, culture is now processing ideas and themes that would have once taken generations in just years. That was once a bizarre idea, but the rise of a global internet culture has brought it close to a reality. That is a very different reality from what we know, but perhaps not an intrinsically hellish one.

The previous paragraphs will not assuage most people's fears. They probably shouldn't. In this paper I have attempted to define the perfect utopia and found our state to be distressingly similar. Perhaps this state of affairs was inevitable. The future is going to get much worse in a variety of ways. It is also going to get better in some, and maybe many ways. If we refuse to acknowledge our situation, then we can do nothing and a sadistic machine-state in the style of Orwell, Forester, and Huxley is inevitable. But we can adapt to our circumstances. We cannot completely change or destroy the machine. We may not even wish to. Living in a world with neither world wars nor atomic apocalypse is not the worst possible outcome, so long as we can keep that balance. Although we may not be able to escape the machine, perhaps we can learn to adjust it. Perhaps the boot stomping on a human face forever in 1984 does not have to stomp the same way forever. Perhaps it can

15 Juliana Kim, "U.S. Identifies the 3 Service Members Who Were Killed in Drone Strike in Jordan," NPR, January 30, 2024, <https://www.npr.org/2024/01/28/1227464410/3-us-troops-killed-25-wounded-drone-strike-jordan-syria-mideast>.

16 Jakub Jasiński, "Perversions of Emperor Tiberius on Capri," IMPERIUM ROMANUM, January 8, 2024, <https://imperiumromani.pl/en/curiosities/perversions-of-emperor-tiberius-on-capri>.

become a boot stomping the ground as it walks forward instead.¹⁷

17 I would like to thank my friend, as well as my Untold editors, for all their help in reviewing and editing this paper.

Sun Tunnel

By: Jake Allen



Artist Statement:

I think there is something inherently beautiful in simple shapes. In simple shapes there is no obscuring the light and shadow. Nor any flashy tricks. There is only simple values and gradients surrounding their thresholds.

Social Clock

By: Emma Moultrie

Sweep, clean, swap

Wash, fold, swap

Sweep, clean, swap

Wash, fold, swap.

And endless cycling routine

Still, away I run and run

desiring an open door.

Again, I'm caught

—With no escape

Dragged unto a lifeless chore.

Sweep, clean, swap

Run, run, run

Wash, fold, swap

Run, run, run

A shell of what once was.

Captive to humanity's pressure

Yet, I yearn to be set free

From this prison's social clock.

Fallen Angel

By: Tegan Blanchard



Artist Statement:

After using oil paints for the first time, I realized the incredible potential that the medium has. Its ability to blend is unmatched, and its slow-to-dry nature allows for adjustments regardless of breaks between painting. That's when I decided to paint "fallen angel". I wanted to challenge myself to do a piece that was more detailed than anything I had ever done before. In addition, I wanted to create a piece that juxtaposes itself, having deeper meaning than what meets the eye. The angel, a mythologically divine being, is surrounded by blood that isn't his own, and his wings have been tainted by sin. What he has done, however, is up to the viewer, because I believe that in every piece of art it is the right of the onlooker to develop their own interpretation.

Architecture of Design

By: Merynn Anholt

In this essay, I will delve into the article *In Defense of Design*, written by Mark Foster Gage. The article focuses on how art has gone from simplicity to interpretation. He mentions that a line is no longer allowed to be a “mere line” and, in turn, must have a story or a “rationale” for its “straight-laced life.”¹ The article also focuses on architectural design as a way of problem-solving.

In the second page of the paper, Gage mentions an article written by David Gissen, titled “Architecture’s Geographic Turns.” He mentions Gissen’s article as a bridge into architectural design as a way of problem solving, or more specifically, the “theoretical surge of research architecture.” Gissen goes on to explain that research architecture is an act of “architectural theory,” not one of design.² The boundaries between a theory and a practice of “research architecture” are disestablished. These boundaries are only capable of providing in restricted conditions, often less demanding. They force geographical design to lose its aspect of simplicity and turn into describing the circumstances around the buildings rather than the building itself.

Because of this change, there is an expectation that analysis is needed to show validity in architectural design. But just because something can be mapped does not mean that it can produce answers. Throughout the analyses made by research architecture, they are unchallenged and “mistakenly assumed to be efficient.”³ The practice of research architecture is no longer a practice; instead, it allows designers to accomplish said architecture without human will. It is rather robotic. Those in charge of architecture now focus on the masquerade of evidence with a regimen of diagrams filled with useless information.

Gage goes on to write that the new precedent of architectural design focuses on the wrong things. Current architects yearn for information, and shortcuts per se, rather than former architects who demanded knowledge and a full understanding of the historical lineage of architecture. Current architects are just simulating alternate routes of architectural design.

Architecture today is so immersed in the “why” as well as having a “foundation of ‘hard’ data,” all “to justify design.”⁴ Gage argues that current architecture is in no position to require such data as justification of design, regardless of credibility.

Gage also writes that people today are so obsessed with problem-solving to create a “repeatable working method” rather than face a “blank sheet of paper.” He questions his readers as to why this is the new criterion, asking if it is easier to teach repetitiveness rather than “precedent.” Those in research architecture are trying to avoid a legitimate rationale by using a continual replication of those before them. He explains that architecture needs freedom to have creativity and “not-always justifiable decisions.” This does not mean that architecture should be mindless, but it cannot primarily emerge from such incessant acts.⁵ Architecture commonly assumes intellection as a basis of production, discrediting intuition as a form of intelligence.

1 Mark Foster Gage, “In Defense of Design,” Log, no. 16 (2009): 39. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41765276>.

2 Gage, “Defense,” 40.

3 Gage, “Defense,” 41.

4 Gage, “Defense,” 43.

5 Gage, “Defense,” 45.

Rules should often face deviation in the world of design. Current regimens should be challenged and should not replace the ability to think instinctively. Architecture needs to consider “new things (rather) than problems.”⁶ Architecture needs speculation, allowing it to become more than a way of problem solving and repetition. Research architecture is truly a construct, something many will never understand. Research architecture takes away the art from architecture that is needed for creativity to thrive.

The Unengaged Navigator

By: Reagan Wirrick



Artist Statement:

I captured a moment on a boat in France that struck me. Our captain was calm as he navigated the waters, his steady hand stretched back and guided the vessel with confidence. In the captain's chair, his grandson sat absorbed in his phone, despite the surrounding beauty. This image made me contemplate: In this age of distraction, are we missing out on the life we have right in front of us? It seems that more value is placed on our engagement with videos, pictures, and ads than our engagement with reality. The most important decision we can make is how involved we want to be in our own lives.

Reeling

Autorama
Hidden Ocean
Just a Childhood Memory
SOL
Broken Heart

Autorama

By: Jake Allen



Artist Statement:

Just a giant head in a regular size world.

Hidden Ocean

By: Emma Moultrie

Sinking

All I feel is sinking

Thick water fills my lungs

When does it end?

Black ocean waves steal my soul All hope—all faith of being saved—lost

Smile.

My brain calls from beyond

Smile so they won't see the pain

Smile so they won't see the destruction

Smile so they won't see the mess YOU made

The mess I made?

The watery lies that drag me deeper

The false kelpies that taunt me

I fabricated my own demise

The sinking feeling of being alone, forgotten, speechless

Yet, no one will ever see

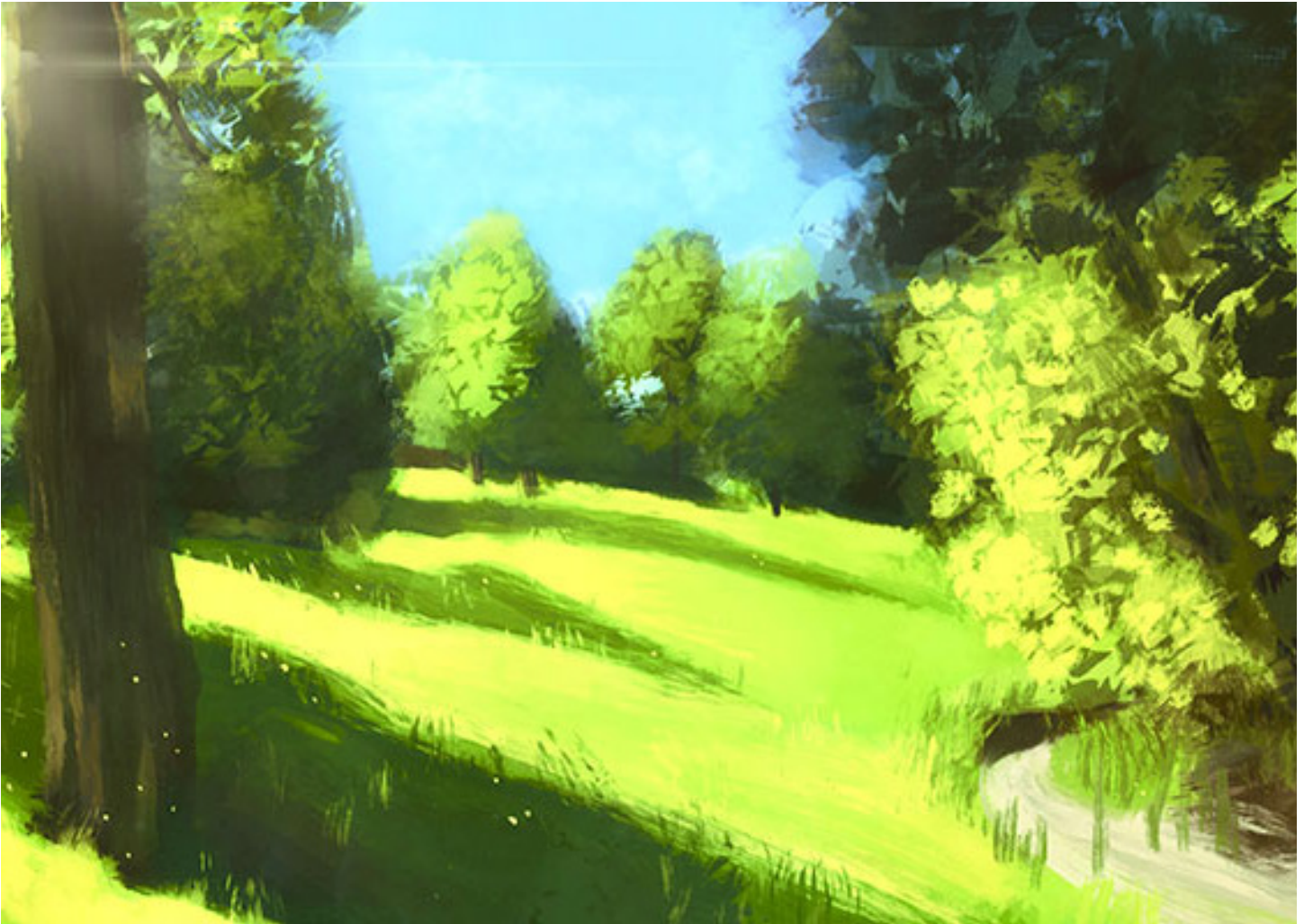
No one will ever know

These internal waters will forever be

A hidden ocean

Just a Childhood Memory

By: Korryn Narvaez

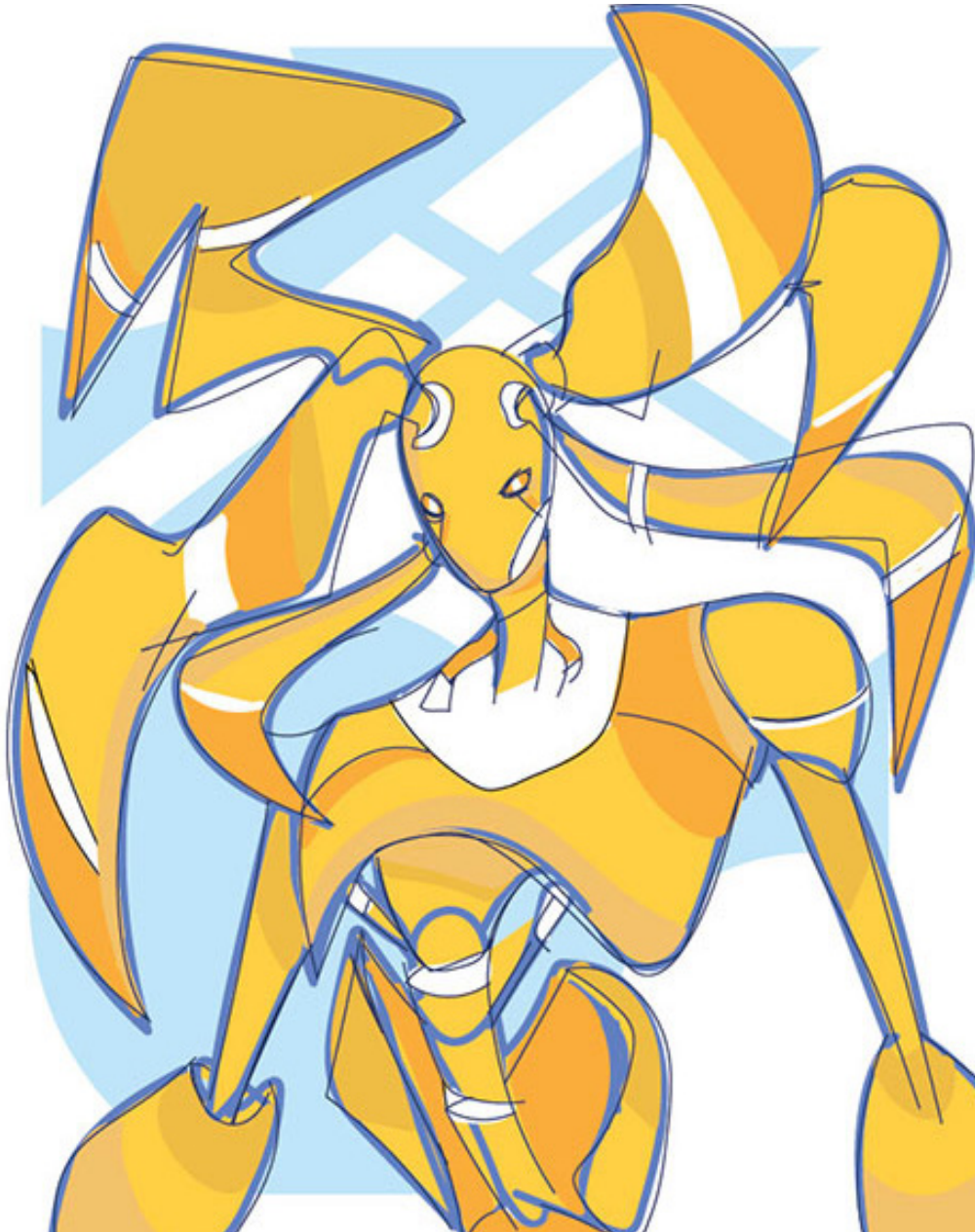


Artist Statement:

Three years ago, the park near my childhood home began to undergo construction. The paths were the first to go—ripped up in order to make way for a new pavilion. Orange barriers began to sprout in the grass as the towering oak whose roots I used to dribble soccer balls around was cut down to clear the way for grassy fields. This digital painting is a rendition of one of the only photos I've ever taken of the park as it used to be. I don't dislike what the park has become; the space has become more lively with visitors and children's laughter than ever in recent years. However, visiting the park comes with a feeling of melancholy to its change. Nothing lasts forever, and even though it's still a minute walk up the road, I can't ever visit my childhood park again. It's not disappeared but exists in my memory along with my countless memories of it.

SOL

By: Benati Louvouezo



Artist Statement:

I have always loved drawing and storytelling so I wanted to try and push myself with this illustration. I took a lot of inspiration from Todd Mcfarlane's "Spawn". More specifically the way in which he developed the character, using emotion and feeling as the base for the character, taking a more abstract approach. So I decided to use the same method in order to develop my own original piece. I then used some techniques I have been developing in my digital media Essentials class in order to construct the background and support the figures' presence as much as I could.

Broekn Heart

By: Emma Moultrie

Darkness falls upon an onyx sky

Charcoaled trunks and blackened branches

Thick pea soup layers the roots

Colossal thorns line the path

Growl

Creatures stalk the woodland floor

Guards kept up

Protecting the forest master

In the center stands a tree

—beating like a drum

Gnarled bark and twisted veins run along the ivy floor

Still, the tree is un-whole

Wooden chips scattered 'round

Pulsing branches slowly fallen

A broken heart

Untold

UVU's Honors Program Journal

Volume 3 Issue 2 Fall 2024

Thank you for reading our *Untold* Journal Archive for Fall
2024

If you would like to learn more about the authors or about
Untold, please keep reading

About Us

Untold is the multimedia, online journal for UVU's Honors Program. We seek to showcase and anthologize each semester of the Honors Program and its students. The website is run like a normal academic journal, being peer-reviewed, and updated every semester in the form of volumes. We have been running since Spring 2022 started by Justin Black. Our journal has always accepted all kinds of projects, from Lego ships to digital media portfolios to the typical academic essay. Each academic paper has been fact-checked, and we pride ourselves in the editing offered to each author that is accepted. Thank you for spending your time reading this journal and supporting the Honors Program students.

Untold Staff - Fall 2024

Elizabeth Holman

Editor-in-Chief

Elizabeth Holman is working towards a bachelors in English with an emphasis in Writing Studies. When she is not overwhelmed by a copious amount of essays, she enjoys reading obscenely long books, listening to music, and writing stories in her free time. She hopes to one day have enough money to permanently retire onto a cruise ship.

Jeremy Curle

Art and Design Editor

Jeremy Curle is a sophomore at UVU currently majoring in 'figuring out what to major in'. He likes to spend his free time hiking, reading, being bad at video games, and waiting until the last possible minute to do anything.

Spencer Madsen

Managing Editor

Spencer Madsen is dual majoring in History and English. When he's not writing poems about the bad things in life or reading dust encrusted tomes about long dead historical figures, he enjoys eating ice cream, rock climbing, and video games.

Milo Rowley

Marketing and Budgeting Head

Milo Rowley is in Applied Communications specializing in adventure and story development. When he's not getting buried in an avalanche or taming mountain lions, Milo is working to know and love everyone while teaching monism. His main interests are sunlight, blackholes, time travel, and everything. He once met someone studying soil science because they liked the taste of dirt! One day he will achieve metaphorical world domination.

James Cox

Web Design Editor

James Cox is a senior majoring in web design and development with an emphasis on interaction design. He loves books, music, gaming, rainy weather, hiking, and space. He can often be found zoning out, listening to music, and coming up with random stories correlating to some book he has recently read.

Untold Volunteers - Fall 2024

AJ Krieger

Editor

AJ Krieger is a freshman majoring in architecture. Most of her free time is spent with her horses or working on a new art project.

Lily Greenwood

Editor

Lily Greenwood is an art history major and a gender studies minor at Utah Valley University. She plans to attend law school after finishing her bachelor's degree where she hopes to build her career as an IP lawyer. She loves spending time with her friends and family, exploring the mountains, and taking long walks.

Mason Stowell

Editor

Mason Stowell is a senior studying biology and Russian studies with plans to attend medical school. Passionate about reading, the outdoors, and spending time with his wife, daughter, and dog, he always looks for opportunities for adventure.

Merynn Anholt

Editor

Merynn Anholt is a current sophomore at UVU studying psychology. She loves reading and writing and would love to become a therapist one day. She is a current RBT, a registered behavioral technician. She works with children with autism and provides therapy through ABA principles.

Daphne Allen

Editor

Daphne Allen is a senior at UVU working toward a degree in Political Science and Environmental Studies. When Daphne isn't working for Untold or on her senior thesis, she can be found reading--she's currently one book away from filling the fifth and final bookshelf in her house and will be visiting Ikea in the next week to purchase a sixth.

Abby Pitts

Editor

Abby Pitts has a poem published in Just Poetry's American High School Poets Anthology Fall 2024. She is working towards an associates degree in the humanities at UVU. She likes reading excessively large books.

Thatcher Longman

Editor

Thatcher Longman is an antiquated poet interested in the disordered mind. They're a sucker for weird romance novels and vintage fashion magazines. Currently, they are studying AAV vectors for use in gene therapy.

Victor Barraza

Editor

UVU Faculty and Staff - Fall 2024

Brendan McCarthy

Faculty Advisor

Brendan McCarthy is the faculty advisor for *Untold*. When he is not gently guiding the incredible student editors, he is thinking about ancient Rome or 20-year-old sitcoms.

Kim Soto

Web Developer - Start of Untold

Kim Soto is the Web Developer for Academic Affairs at UVU. She oversaw the creation of the *Untold* site and worked with the editors in charge of the Spring 2023 issue to ensure the site had everything they needed for the next digital versions of Untold to come. She enjoys collecting cute trinkets and likes to binge TV shows while knitting simultaneously.

Untold Authors - Spring 2024

Aaron Williams

Title of Work(s): Observational Study of Local Religious Congregations and Churches in Utah

Pronouns: (he/him)

Aaron Williams majored in sociology with a minor in Chinese studies, graduating spring 2024. When spending his little time away from school or work, he likes to spend time with his family, read, or play some of the nerdiest games. However, he does frequently bring his studies into what movies he watches, games he plays, or books he reads, causing much boredom for most of his family members except his equally nerdy wife.

Korryn Narvaez

Title of Work(s): Someone is Watching, Just a Childhood Memory

Pronouns: (she/her)

Korryn Narvaez is a physics student in the UVU Honors Program with a deep passion for art and storytelling. She loves to learn as well as write and illustrate stories in her free time.

Emma Joy Moultrie

Title of Work(s): Social Clock, Broken Heart, Hidden Ocean

Pronouns: (she/her)

Emma Moultrie is an aspiring author and elementary school teacher. She was a Utah FCCLA State Vice President of History and Public Relations during her senior year. She loves fencing, reading, and jump scaring her friends.

Berehy Zabuttya

Title of Work(s): Harmony

Pronouns: (he/him)

Berehy Zabuttya is studying Computer Science and Cognitive Neuroscience at UVU and is curious about the future role of technology in our lives, communities, and society in general. He appreciates arts and literature and holds them to be important since art is what makes us human.

Merynn Anholt

Title of Work(s): Architecture of Design

Pronouns: (she/her)

Merynn Anholt is a current sophomore at UVU studying Psychology. She loves reading and writing and would love to become a therapist one day. She is a current RBT, a registered behavioral technician. She works with children with autism and provides therapy through ABA principles.

Abigail Pitts

Title of Work(s): Voyager

Pronouns: (she/her)

Abby is a freshman who loves anything and everything to do with books. When she's not curled up with a massive fantasy tome, you can find her practicing the piano or playing video games. She takes her inspiration from the stars.

Tegan Zelano Blanchard

Title of Work(s): Fallen Angel, Pseudo-Third Culture Kid

Pronouns: (he/him)

Tegan Zelano Blanchard, or “Z” to his friends, is a first-year at UVU and is studying Political Science with an emphasis in Global Politics. He has a passion for languages and cultures and can often be found at whatever on-campus event is going on that day. If you see him in the hallway, he asks that you stop him and say hello!

Brooke Poll

Title of Work(s): Dancing with the Elements: A Journey of Spiritual Awakening

Pronouns: (she/her)

Brooke Poll is a Psychology major who loves to spend time with her cats. She also enjoys drawing, swimming, and snowboarding. She is currently working as a veterinary technician and aspires to become a therapist in the future.

Sophie Jackson

Title of Work(s): Gunter!!

Pronouns: (she/her)

Sophie Jackson is an outgoing but also introverted person. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, traveling, and drawing. The arts have always been an important hobby for her, and you will see her recreate famous works by Edvard Munch, Gustav Klimt, Picasso, and many more.

Sydney Holt

Title of Work(s): The Universe is Standing Still, Mirror of Infinity

Pronouns: (she/her)

Sydney Holt is a junior and a physics major. She does astrophysics research at UVU (and loves to tell people all about it). When not studying or researching, she loves weightlifting, reading, writing, painting, and practicing the guitar.

Benati Louvouezo

Title of Work(s): SOL

Pronouns: (he/him)

Benati Louvouezo is an aspiring 2D animator. He has always loved storytelling and movement. He utilizes his background in competing in national and international level parkour events to map out the dynamic poses and motions of forms in his art.

Austen Miller

Title of Work(s): The Machine-State

Pronouns: (he/him)

Austen is a Bioinformatics major in the UVU Honors program. He is currently researching the microbiome of Pando, the world’s largest tree, and has presented his work at the UCUR and NCUR conferences. Austen is passionate about exploring nature and culture. He enjoys hiking, skiing, literature, art, film, and also holds dual citizenship in Spain.

Isabel May Wilson

Title of Work(s): Life Imitates Art

Pronouns: (she/her)

Isabel Wilson is an aspiring illustration student. She loves any and all forms of storytelling and is currently working on her first comic. She spends her free time reading, writing, and drawing.

Jake Allen

Title of Work(s): Sun Tunnel, Autorama, Order Among Chaos

Pronouns: (he/him)

Jake Allen is a visual artist from Lehi, Utah. His favorite mediums are photography, graphic design, and experimental video. Jake hopes to one day attend law school and become an advocate for the arts.

Reagan Wirrick

Title of Work(s): The Unengaged Navigator

Pronouns: (she/her)

Reagan Wirrick is a Hospitality Management major who enjoys casual photography, travel, and Culinary Arts. She was gifted with the opportunity to do a Culinary Arts internship in France where she was able to grow because of the culture she experienced. She's passionate about living life and encourages others to do the same.

Lily Shin

Title of Work(s): American Girl with a Korean Heart

Pronouns: (she/her)

Lily Shin is a freshman at UVU from American Fork, UT. She is a member of the UVU women's golf team and is also a part of the Honors Program. She loves playing golf, music, fashion, and traveling.

Madeline Harris

Title of Work(s): Cools Will Make Them Pop

Pronouns: (she/her)

Madeline Harris loves tea parties, red lipstick, and sketching the world around her. She writes songs, reviews albums, and has fashion shows with her grandma in her free time. She is studying Creative Writing at UVU.

Untold

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