In this issue:

2011 Writing Center Writing Contest Winners

Creative Non-Fiction

1st Place - Starla Stanley................................................Memories
2nd Place - Julius Mayer......................................Story of My Life
Honorable Mention - Raquel Perea....Military Health Technician

Fiction

1st Place - Raquel Perea...........................................May Showers
2nd Place - Joey Kirkham.......................While the Elephant Slept
Honorable Mention - Isaac Akers........................Rodger Douglas

Poetry

1st Place - Melanie Walker.......................................Twilight Falls
2nd Place - Zachary Stickney.....................The Missing Silhouette
Honorable Mention - Starla Stanley.................A Smaller Picture

Scholarly Non-Fiction

1st - Debbie Bacon....................The Merry-Go-Round of Texting
2nd - Nathan Waugh..............................What on Earth Do You
Honorable Mention - Michelle Michelsen...The Development of
Call That Thing?
the Individual Woman

Best wishes from Claire Hughes and all the writing consultants at the Weber State University Writing Center/DELC.

Talented writers in all areas attend Weber State University, and we are glad that many of them submitted their work to the Writing Center’s annual writing contest last fall. We enjoyed reading them, and we look forward to another great round this fall. Keep your eyes out for the call for submissions flyers.

Because we had a lot of great submissions for the contest this year, our thirteen judges had some tough decisions to make. We extend our hearty “Thank You” to all those who submitted their work. We also thank the teams of judges who read, carefully weighed, and discussed each and every submission.

“The reason one writes isn’t the fact he wants to say something. He writes because he has something to say.”
F. Scott Fitzgerald

Thanks again! Write on!
--Eric W. Riddle, Editor

Managing Editor: Eric Riddle
Copy Editors: Devon Hoxer
Eladio Bobadilla
Graphic Designer: Rachel Rigley
Supervising Editor: Claire Hughes

Editors performed only minimal editing in order to preserve the authors’ original works.
I gasped, looking down at his face. He looked like giant puzzle pieces were dividing his face into dark red purple and pale yellow-colored sections. He had a tube taped in his mouth and a big needle hanging out of his neck. His beautiful brown hair laid framing his face and falling down on the pillow around the back of his neck. I reached down to touch his big hands, and his skin was cold and waxy feeling. I wanted to see his eyes. They were his soul. The light and charisma that came out of his big brown eyes charmed everyone. I lifted up his eyelids and looked down to see a glass ball that reminded me of a giant marble. Anatomy without life is empty.

“You’re cold, Sis,” was the last conversation we had.

“Funny I didn’t know I was until you woke me,” I answered him sarcastically.

The cold air sent shivers through my skin. I heard the creaking of the hall closet and knew instantly Brandon would be returning with all his energy. Moving my body over on my twin bed I propped myself up, preparing for one of my favorite rituals. My door squeaked and my brother walked back in shaking the blanket out over my bed. As he jumped onto my bed, the mattress formed to his weight, pushing me up higher. Our feet were in each other’s faces, with our heads propped up on the opposite ends of the bed. My body was five-foot ten-inches and slender, and his was six-foot-two and big. We barely fit on my twin bed together anymore. We had spent up on the opposite ends of the bed. My body was five-foot ten-inches and slender, and his was six-foot-two and big. We barely fit on my twin bed together anymore. We had spent up on the opposite ends of the bed. My body was five-foot ten-inches and slender, and his was six-foot-two and big. We barely fit on my twin bed together anymore. We had spent up on the opposite ends of the bed. My body was five-foot ten-inches and slender, and his was six-foot-two and big. We barely fit on my twin bed together anymore. We had spent up on the opposite ends of the bed. My body was five-foot ten-inches and slender, and his was six-foot-two and big. We barely fit on my twin bed together anymore. We had spent

...continued...
My father was born and raised in war torn Poland in the 1950s. One of the assets of the Soviet Union at the time, he wanted to escape. He turned thirty down in the street, he escaped and went to America with his wife. I was born two years later. My name is Sklawok Zagorskis, and I was raised American in a Polish fam-
ily. Father would not tell me about Poland while I was growing up. Whenever I asked about his country, he would just say, “You have a better life now. We are in America, the land of freedom and opportunity.” I could not understand why he despised his country of origin.

I realized America was my home and his new home, but I set myself a goal to make money and go to my country. We lived in the studio for a year. Every two to three years, he calls to tell me he loves me and is so sorry.

After leaving the hospital, my mother and I went back to our home on base. As we pulled up we saw my brothers and the woman who had been his wife for twenty one years. Mother turned to leave the room.

“I love you, Father,” I whispered as I turned to leave the room.

“Sissy, oh Sissy,” Looking up he stood and hugged me and started to cry. As I wrapped my arms around the grown man, the history major, the musician, the officer, the father, he fell to the ground like a noodle. I could not hold him. The military police came and caught him right before his head hit the floor and sat him back on the bed where he started rock-
ing again. For the next year, that is how I came to know my father. He was sent from psych ward to psych ward in different hospitals around the country. He doesn’t rock anymore, but he doesn’t live either. He left my mother a year after my brother’s death and went to Washington to live by himself. Every two or three years, he called to me he loves me and is so sorry.

Then he disconnects that number.

After leaving the hospital, my mother and I went back to our home on base. As we pulled up we saw my brothers and the woman who had been his wife for twenty one years. Mother turned to leave the room.

“I love you, Father,” I whispered as I turned to leave the room.

“Sissy, oh Sissy,” Looking up he stood and hugged me and started to cry. As I wrapped my arms around the grown man, the history major, the musician, the officer, the father, he fell to the ground like a noodle. I could not hold him. The military police came and caught him right before his head hit the floor and sat him back on the bed where he started rock-
ing again. For the next year, that is how I came to know my father. He was sent from psych ward to psych ward in different hospitals around the country. He doesn’t rock anymore, but he doesn’t live either. He left my mother a year after my brother’s death and went to Washington to live by himself. Every two or three years, he called to me he loves me and is so sorry.

Then he disconnects that number.
I try to make each person I meet with feel comfortable. Slouching low in my chair with a casual tone, like two friends conversing, I put them at ease. I even put the pen down when emotion rises and let empathy flood into my eyes.

Questions drum off my tongue with quick succession: “How old were you when your mother left?” “Have you ever been abused?” “Are you having any thoughts of suicide?” The words flow, floating their way into the atmosphere to meet a patient’s thinking pause. And no matter the content, no matter my heart-wrenched surprise, no answer ever gets an eyebrow raise. I walk the chow hall with a bucket full of others’ secrets.

As I wait in line, I watch Smith seated amongst clattering friends, absentmindedly stirring the mash potatoes on his plate. He relapsed last week, and I wonder if his lunching buddies have noticed his recent introversion. When it’s my turn in line, Davies, who’s going through a grueling divorce, serves me my order of pork chops dispassionately and forgets to offer a “Have a nice day” as I take the plate. Seems things have taken a turn for the worse. He’s been shuffled around like this: blood shot eyes, sagging expression, and wrinkled uniform for the last week.

At least Callaway is doing well today. I spot her nearby lightheartedly joking with her boyfriend. I had a feeling Lieutenant’s counseling style would work well with her. I’m glad I put them together. The cashier rings up my meal and hands me the receipt, my order of pork chops and details of their uniform for the last week.

I push through the 11 am lunch crowd, a field of friends conversing, I put them at ease. I even put the pen down when emotion rises and let empathy flood into my eyes. I try to make each person I meet with feel comfortable. Slouching low in my chair with a casual tone, like two friends conversing, I put them at ease. I even put the pen down when emotion rises and let empathy flood into my eyes.

I try to make each person I meet with feel comfortable. Slouching low in my chair with a casual tone, like two friends conversing, I put them at ease. I even put the pen down when emotion rises and let empathy flood into my eyes. I try to make each person I meet with feel comfortable. Slouching low in my chair with a casual tone, like two friends conversing, I put them at ease. I even put the pen down when emotion rises and let empathy flood into my eyes.
Oh, how Mr. Gibberwald hated waking up to the cock and the dodo, and even the doo of the chicken, or was it a rooster? Mr. Gibberwald contemplated this for some time but soon let the thought pass his mind. He especially hated the glare of the sun piercing through his window. This was much too bright for Mr. Gibberwald, and he hated it. He lazily reached for his glass of water but had not yet occurred to him that Mr. Gibberwald hated EVERYTHING, but Mr. Gibberwald was an old man. An old, grumpy man.

He would often start his day by sitting on his white rocking chair on his porch. The chair would go crick and crack and creak, and crack again. It was an old chair, and Mr. Gibberwald hated the creaking and cracking of the chair as he rocked back and forth. Every morning he would light his ol’ fashion lookin’ pipe and puff away. He would puff, puff, puff away as he cricked and creaked in his rocking chair. The smoke would billow up in its little nesting place and slowly creep out, floating up high, high and away, up into the sky. Mr. Gibberwald would do this day in and day out, rocking on his lonely chair out on his lonely porch, accompanied by none other than his lonely pipe. To children, he was a very scary man. They would always walk on the other side of the road when they approached his house in hopes of not getting yelled at. Nonetheless, Mr. Gibberwald would find a reason for yelling at the children. He didn’t particularly enjoy children. Oh, poor Mr. Gibberwald.

To adults, Mr. Gibberwald was a very sad man. Adults would often visit his home with a plate of brownies. To adults, Mr. Gibberwald was a very sad man.

There was one thing that gave Mr. Gibberwald joy. It was the green, rolly hills. He called them the green rolly polly hills. He imagined the rain clouds capturing the sun and holding him (he being the sun) prisoner. This was another joy of Mr. Gibberwald, creating little fantasies in his head about the day’s events.

He quickly made his way over to the bench, with pipe in mouth, as more smoke billowed out spreading upwards toward the dark skies. He sat down, sitting himself under the light and pulled out his bag of bread crumbs. The bread crumbs were for the little alligators. The pond, which resided at the Rolling Hills park, was full of baby alligators and several adult alligators. And we wouldn’t forget about the one giant hippo, which constantly slept in the middle of the pond. The ducks, alligators, and even the hippo had some sort of unwritten agreement in which they would respect each other’s living quarters while swimming in the pond. The alligators wouldn’t eat the ducks, and the ducks wouldn’t rest on the hippo’s back.

Mr. Gibberwald began to toss the stale bread for the alligators and the ducks and the lonly hippo when something startled him, or someone. There stood a young boy no more than three feet tall. The boy pretended he was a duck, quack-quack and flapping his arms all wild like. It seemed that for a brief moment several large feathers sprouted out of his arms. “Hey boy, whatcha dancing for all child like?” asked Mr. Gibberwald.

“Well, I am a child,” said the boy. “I like to dance, just like the duckies.”

“You can’t please them?” asked Mr. Gibberwald. “-You are scar- ing away the ducks.”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“It’s the elephant’s fault that I’m dancing all crazy like,” replied the boy. “The big, green elephant.”

“Your elephant, old man! You’re telling me you don’t know about your elephant?”

“I guess I don’t,” said Mr. Gibberwald.

“Sure you have,” the boy said. The boy began to explain to Mr. Gibberwald about this mysterious elephant as he swung his arms back and forth with wide eyes, all excited like.

“We’re all born with an elephant. That’s what deter- mines your eye color. You, sir, clearly have a green elephant, for your eyes are green. The elephant lives in your spine. What do you think makes you dance, makes you run? Why, it is your elephant. The sad thing is, Mister, that when kids turn into angry old men such as yourself, ya all stop dancin’ and jumpin’ around.” The boy continued... “Ya see? When you stop dancin’ and jumpin’, and bein’ all crazy like, your little elephant gets bored and falls asleep. Old grumps like you always get mad at kids like me for running every which way, dancing all crazy like and swinging arms. I just blame it on my elephant. I figured that’s why old people are so cranky. Their elephants are asleep. Your elephant is what makes your life force as some people call it. Your elephant is what makes you laugh. It’s what makes you scream when you are supposed to be quiet. It’s what makes you burp really loud during church. It’s what makes you run when you should be walkin’. You know that popping sound your bones make when you pop them?” Mr. Gibberwald popped his knuckles.

“Yeah! Yeah! That’s the sound. That’s what putting your elephant to sleep. Your bones get all creaky and you stop dancing.”

The boy then demonstrated and began to dance around, jumping up and down, flailing his arms back and forth, kicking his legs in all sorts of directions. He began to chuck around like a chicken with his head cut off and moo like a cow. All these things were normal for a child to do, dance like a chicken and moo like a cow. Mr. Gibberwald did something he thought he forgot how to do: Laugh. Mr. Gibberwald laughed. He found this boy amusing. The boy’s imagination run off all crazy like. “That’s a cute little story, boy,” Mr. Gibberwald said. “I must get back to my crumb throwing, so if you could take your dancing and stories of miniature elephants with you and entertain someone else, that would be well appreciated. The boy then raised his arms into the air and jumped. Directly up in the air he went, as high as those little legs of his could take him, when POOF! There sat a bright blue elephant, no more than the size of a small compact car.

Mr. Gibberwald couldn’t believe his eyes. He blinked several times to make sure he was not dreaming. The boy was blue and was bopping up and crawling onto the soft ground. Bread crumbs exploded out of the bag and scattered everywhere. The blue elephant let out a rather large bellow with that snout of his, causing Mr. Gibberwald’s fallen bread crumbs to jump up and crawl over the elephant’s snout. There laid Mr. Gibberwald, that old man, watching his bread crumbs come to life, hopping over to a snout of a blue elephant, with a dancing child in the background. The elephant, seeing Mr. Gibberwald on the ground, quickly ap- proached him and extended his blue snout. Mr. Gibberwald awkwardly took a hold of it, and was instantly pulled back up. The boy began to clap as the blue elephant hurried over to his owner. “This must be your elephant,” said the old man.

“Yes, sir, I got blue eyes. Hahaha.”

The elephant was running in circles, like a hyper puppy waiting for some bone to be thrown. The boy then jumped on his elephant and off they went. Mr. Gibberwald stood motionless and watched the boy riding on the back of his blue elephant over the rolly polly jolly green hills. Both the boy and the elephant laughed and screamed, jumping and kicking as they chased ducks around the lone pond.

For the first time in many, many years, Mr. Gibberwald remembered what it was like to be a child, and he missed it. He thought back to what the boy said: we’re all born with an elephant. Mr. Gibberwald began to feel his back, rubbing his spine up and down. His hopes were that he would perhaps feel an elephant sleeping in his spine. He felt silly for search- ing for an elephant, but the words of the boy rang deep through his ears; we’re all born with an elephant.

“Hey, old man! You’re not going to find your elephant doing that!” It was the boy again. He was busy doing handstands on the elephant’s back, while it ran up and down those rolly polly jolly green hills. Now the old man felt embarrassed, but even more curious as to the supposed whereabouts of his green elephant.

“Well, then how am I supposed to find it?” Muttered the old man.

“You got to wake it up, of course! Jump in the air! Swing your arms! Let out a big, great howl in the air like a crazy animal.” Mr. Gibberwald did something that he hadn’t
While the Elephant Slept (cont.)

As the blue and green elephants drugged him to the
ground, he exclaimed, “My elephant has awakened! And it’s
green!” He quickly stood up and jumped on the back of his
elephant. “Hahaha!” shouted the boy.

“Where are we going now, old man?”

“Wherever our elephants take us,” answered Mr. Gibberwald.

Both Mr. Gibberwald and the boy set off on what
seemed to be the greatest adventure of their lives. They
ran through the park in what seemed like circles. They
laughed and screamed while their elephants belled out even louder
sounds from their snouts. They visited the farthest ocean,
climbed the highest mountain, swam under the deepest ocean,
and visited each and every creature, both discovered and un-
discovered, all on the backs of their green and blue elephants.

Mr. Gibberwald never forgot that one day at the park,
that one day when he discovered he had his own elephant.
Eager to wake up and get out into the world once again. He
sat on his porch, with no pipe in mouth. He wanted to
enjoy his last days without all that smoke in the air. Children
walked by his house not bothering to cross the street. He
gave them a big smile and threw his hand in the air. The children
waved back with even bigger smiles and sped away on their
bikes. The neighbors would often visit with a plate of eager
brownies. Mr. Gibberwald invited them in his house and
shared a few with them. He remembered how it was like to eat brownies as a child. His green elephant helped him remember.

As the sun was setting, about to be swallowed up behind the
mountains, Mr. Gibberwald heard a voice calling to him from
within his house. “Ah, of course. Our dinner party,” muttered Mr. Gibberwald to himself. He sat up, along with his green
elephant rolled his eyes in the direction of Mr. Gibberwald.
Mr. Gibberwald noticed that his old dusty dinner table had finally been put to use. There lay, draped upon it, a rather large tablecloth. Surrounding the dinner table sat all the children of the neighborhood, each one with his and her own elephant, all
suites to the color of their eyes.

Mr. Gibberwald found the only empty seat remain-
ning and sat down right next to the boy with the blue elephant. There lay on the table a large plate of cookies and several cups
of milk. Each boy and girl grabbed a cup of milk and began to
dip the cookies in their cups. Mr. Gibberwald took his cookie,
and upon placing it in his cup, he took in all of his surround-
ings. Oh, how Mr. Gibberwald loved his green elephant. He
saw the joy of the children’s faces, along with their elephants
as they galloped. He smiled at what a closed world the day’s
events. Oh how Mr. Gibberwald loved each passing day. He
looked outside and noticed the last bit of the sun, slowly de-
scending into its deep slumber. Oh how Mr. Gibberwald
saw the sun. Oh how Mr. Gibberwald would love to be a child
again. Luckily for him, he had his green elephant to help him
remember.

Mr. Gibberwald grabbed on to the tail of the blue
elephant as he was yelling “yeahah!” over and over.
The elephant picked up speed. As the elephant picked up speed, the
rainclouds started spitting out rain. Heaps and heaps of rain
shot out from the skies and drenched the old man, along with
the standing hippo, the ducks, and even the alligators. Mr. Gibber-
wald noticed that his old dusty dinner table had finally
done in over 70 years. He did something childish. He cupped
his hands over his mouth and let out a great big howl, like some
crazy animal. But his lungs came forth with a large sound, so large
it filled the dark skies. So loud it scared the people nearby.

Surrounding children with their mothers plugged their ears
and gave an odd look towards him. He stopped and looked at
the boy. The boy started to laugh wildly, along with the blue
elephant, which had a large grin across its face.

“HaHa! There you go!” said the boy, “Come old man. Follow me.” The boy jumped on the elephant’s back and took off
galloping. When the old man screamed, he vividly remem-
bered the joy he had as a child. He remembered what it was like
to be a child. No cares in the world. Being able to run and jump
and kick through the mud. That is exactly what Mr. Gibberwald
did on that cloud filled night at the rolly polly jolly green hill
pond. He wanted to have his own elephant, just like the boy.
Except his was green.

Mr. Gibberwald grabbed on to the tail of the blue
elephant as he was yelling “yeahah!” over and over.
The elephant picked up speed. As the elephant picked up speed, the
rainclouds started spitting out rain. Heaps and heaps of rain
shot out from the skies and drenched the old man, along with
the standing hippo, the ducks, and even the alligators. Mr. Gibber-
wald noticed that his old dusty dinner table had finally
Jerry Bartholomew had once entered Rodger’s life when we were younger with intentions to help him but always tried to influence him not to be around me. Never had Rodger and I fought, yet this boy had suggested that we shatter the bonds of a friendship. I tried to not hold it against him, and, in time, I had forgotten completely about the situation. Seeing his face coming towards us down the path, though, brought all the memories back. Why of all places was he right here at this moment? All day the faces of our peers seared into our heads with the fluctuating burdens of the souls I carried and now he, too, was here. His judgmental gaze fixated on Rodger like always, as if to say Rodger deserved a better friend than me.

“Evening, Rodger. I’m glad you called me when you did,” He spoke smoothly as he approached us. “You sounded a little nervous on the phone. Is there something you’d like to tell me?” Piercing uncertainty of Rodger’s intentions clenched at my throat as I looked between the two. Rodger was silent and still as the air lingered around us. Why would Rodger call Jeremy, a man who had hated me from the beginning? If my actions had caused Rodger to fear me enough to seek out Jeremy’s lies, then he would have gone far enough to tell everyone anything.

Continuing to search Rodger’s lack of motion for meaning, Jeremy pivoted back and forth on the balls of his feet to the sound of a cold autumn breeze. If Jeremy knew the memory, Jeremy pivoted back and forth on the balls on his feet to my fingertips was gone.

The blood of Jeremy Bartholomew that once ran from my wrists to my fingertips was gone. The blood of Jeremy Bartholomew that once ran from my blood stained hands pointing at me in disbelief. “Son, there’s no one there.” Rodger stood with his arms encircling the empty wind.

My best friend, Rodger Douglas was everywhere I was and every essence of myself.

Once the seal has been broken for anything, it becomes easier and easier, whether it is swearing, drinking, smoking or any other dissatisfactory habit. Brutal selection had become mine. Jerry Bartholomew no different from the rest. A simple spark of emotion and the lack of cognitive thought propelled me to take him into the care and hospitality I had demonstrated with Mark, Cassandra and several others. I owed it as a favor to Rodger now, as my duty to protect him and myself from the harm and malicious content of the world. Yet, as the voice of an officer approached us on this darkening path, I finally began to see for myself what I had done.

My blood stained hands trembled before my eyes. There was no stopping the inevitable from occurring. To escape meant to take the life of another, to kill a police officer. Looking down the dark path further into the woods, I could see no end. Our lives would never be the same, and now Rodger suffered the weight of the cold handcuffs around his wrist.

Through his cries and pleas to be heard, the weight of the souls I had taken finally crashed down upon me. “Wait officer, this boy is innocent! I’m the one you should be taking!”

“Wait officer, I’m innocent! He’s the one you should be taking!” Rodger cried after me.

“The officer turned to look at me with a final halt in his march. Slowly he searched me over with a look of disturbed bewilderment, but nothing changed as he looked me over. My trembling hands shook before his face like a white flag to free my friend but something was wrong. My hands were clean.

The blood of Jeremy Bartholomew that once ran from my wrists to my fingertips was gone. Son, there’s no one there.” Rodger stood with his blood stained hands pointing at me in disbelief.

My best friend, Rodger Douglas was everywhere I was and every essence of myself.
The Missing Silhouette

Walking alone,
I noticed a couple walking
Hand in hand at dusk.
I caught the woman’s eye, and glanced down, not wanting
to corrupt their moment
with my presence.
A streetlight over my shoulder
projected my shadow on
the pavement, illuminating
the missing silhouette,
casting a reminder of
the shadow I spent my own
loving moments with.
Casting a reminder of you.
You, who made mere summer
nights become poetry in motion.
You, who simultaneously
fill my heart to bursting
and leave me as lonesome
as a dove.
I’m not saddened or angry because
of this reminder, and I don’t feel used or betrayed.
No, this reminder is a kind much too
heavy, this reminder is the kind
that makes my heart heave
and sigh.

Our Sacred Pulse

They told us we were meant for
smaller things,
And our love conquered two continents
Tell me, then,
Why heed any words less wise
Than our shared and sacred
pulse?

An Encore

If I write you a poem,
kindly demand an encore
This performance was never
meant
to be portrayed in one act.

A Smaller Picture

It is not the big picture that makes one hold their breath
in awe
It is the finer details
The lines of character that depict life lived
Flakes that reflect color in the iris
The turned up lip
Heavy brows that frame the face
Webs weaved in intricate detail
Orchids with colored veins traveling each petal
Mosaics of dragonfly wings
Beauty is in the detail

Winter

Sky bluest against the fallen snow
Crystal reflected invigorated light
Crisp air forces a full awareness of breath
Sky bluest against the fallen snow
To live without winter is not to have lived
Civil war broke out in our home one summer day last year. Like all other epic moments in history, it began like any other day. This particular August day was sultry, hot, and humid, since we were waiting for the installation of central air conditioning. Because of the humidity, the swamp cooler was not working and all of the windows in the house had been opened to the early morning breeze, billowing the sheer, white valances hanging above them. That morning, after hearing the rumbling of the mail truck outside, I crossed the lawn to the mailbox to pick up the mail. Among the stack of various grocery advertisements was our monthly bill from T-Mobile. It was then that I opened the bill and saw the dollar amount in bold, black typeface. I cannot remember if I screamed or not.

To say that I possibly screamed is not an exaggeration. My daughter, while at the mall, had visited an independent dealer, changed our family plan, bought a new phone, and had forgotten to add unlimited text on the new plan. How this was all done without her father or me there is another matter entirely (The kiosk she visited was cheap, slimy and of ill repute; need I say more?). The result was a monthly bill for almost three thousand dollars, with over 8,000 texts sent from her phone alone, not including other texts from the rest of us. It took a long time for her to work off that phone bill, even with some contributions eventually from both of her parents out of pity and compassion. After that explosive summer day, texting was taken off from the family phone plan for a long time. It was astonishing how one small act created such enormous upheaval.

As mentioned in the essay entitled “Disembodiment and Disenchantment: Disconnection and Society’s Problems” by author Young Heo, eloquently stated the following: “Tools and technology are everyday parts of our lives; we rely on them for our survival…but our greatest asset could easily be the cause of our downfall” (107). I mention this quote because it directly ties in with the topic at hand and also illustrates an awkward moment I experienced not long ago while studying for an exam in the library.

My discovery was an avalanche of research with analytical data and documented studies, published in peer reviewed medical journals, linking addiction with text messaging. I was nothing short of surprised. In fact, formal studies and reviews of medical journals, published in peer reviewed journals, discovered that initially, cell phone users text more often as a result of increased social activity and not because they were socially impaired. They found that using text messaging gratified the participants’ need for closeness and friendship. In fact, the greater amount of face-to-face interaction with others led to greater text usage in order to stay in contact with those individuals. It was also noted that wanting to send more text messages was based on affection and loneliness, and stemmed only from the desire to be included (611-612). Also, in agreement of this theory is psychotherapist Dr. Michael Hausner of Oakland, California, who also confirmed the need for acceptance and being included linked with text messaging.

In an interview with CBS, he stated, “Teenagers have a terrific interest in knowing what is going on in the lives of their peers, coupled with terrific anxiety about being out of the loop” (Hausner and Hardesty). Although they were momentarily in the loop, the longer their phones were silent, the more worried they became that they were missing out on something important. Also while worrying about when the next message would come, they were missing out on crucial social activity going on around them at that very moment.

For example, during the holidays, I was teaching my two daughters how to bake homemade rolls and pies for Christmas Eve. My oldest daughter was so consumed with texting that she was silent that she left the kitchen to go back to her room, panicking about why no one was texting her back. As a result, she continuously missed out on special occasions happening all around her. Just as mentioned in my argument, excessive texting with its myriad of anxious worrying is a vicious cycle: one worries about the silence of the phone to the degree that the texting individual cannot or will not participate fully in the social activities happening around them at that very moment.

Although it has been shown that texting fills a need for closeness, the results of the survey were not scientific, the results of the study were conclusive among those surveyed: those per- sons who regularly text, whether on the job, in the classroom, or in social situations are perceived more negatively than those who do not. For example, in social situations requiring attention or courteous acknowledgment, such as a movie the-
were then monitored carefully as they received and sent text messages. In each case, sleep disturbance and interruption was noted as they worried if they would receive a text while sleeping. All subjects reported lowering levels of belonging, self-esteem and meaningful relationships. In regards to actual physiological responses while sending text messages, their thumbs would stiffen and become rigid, while they held their breath during the sending process (53). As for what happened when receiving a text message, psychiatrist Dr. Gary Small noted that MRIs of texting brains were exactly the same as a brain receiving a hit of heroin (Small). It is a perfect storm, so to speak, for creating the perfect addiction: the brain was flooded with Dopamine in the pleasure centers each time a text came in to the cell phone, giving a sudden burst of arousal and excitement. Heart rates and respiration increased significantly while reading the new incoming text message. Due to the bathing of the brain in that chemical, the participant cannot wait for another text message to arrive. Another text message equals another burst of exhilaration, signaling to the brain the profound feeling of well-being. Levels dropped substantially each time it took longer to receive a text message, and the participants actually grew more anxious and depressed (Lin and Peper 54). It appears that speaking from a physiological standpoint, texting is a nerve wracking merry-go-round one cannot climb off easily without scraping his/her knees.

Besides the physiological aspects of constant worrying and wondering when the next text will come, increasing cases of patient histories are being documented for pre-teenaged children presenting with tendinitis in doctors’ offices as well as emergency rooms with painful, swollen thumbs. Typically an injury seen in older patients who have prolonged periods of time at night, due to watching for the little red light to blink, indicating a text message had come. Her grades were also slipping drastically due to the constant activity on her cell phone and fatigue from lack of sleep each time a text did not have the effect he had hoped for — the text messaging following the release of the article skyrocketed to 24,000 messages the next month from her newfound popularity in the newspaper. Needless to say, the phone was confiscated immediately and her grades, as well as sleeping ability, drastically improved (Hausauer and Hardesty).

Sure, texting can make one tired. But what does it do inside the actual brain in regards to learning that is affecting scholastic performance? In an interview with reporter John Tesh, Harvard Medical School Professor Dr. Michael Rich discussed studying MRI scans of participants while texting, and a notable discovery was made: texting literally re-wires the brain. Traditionally, our brains reward us chemically upon completion of one activity at a time. With increased levels of chemicals being spurted out each time we text, we are now re-wiring the connection with the way that we process information. Jumping sporadically from text to text, with surges of Dopamine flooding the pathways, rewards us for instantaneous, brief activities. With no rests from texting to store processed information, and no reward for diligent work on longer projects, such as school projects and homework, we limit our own ability to succeed scholastically. With constant, repetitive texting over prolonged periods of time, those same children will not have the ability to stay focused in school, work on projects that take more than five minutes to complete, or hold down a job without the physiological need to text again for that brief “high” (Rich). To me, it seems a shocking and ironic twist: the article of interest is lost, resulting in a child being pulled from the carousel of texting when it becomes a bit too much and one loses footing or ability to focus on the steadiness of the earth beneath. Eventually, one will find that even temporarily, there is life after texting. But do not worry – that carousel will still be waiting for next time.

In conclusion to my argument, is it possible to have an addiction to texting? Absolutely, yes. Texting plans are now free and unlimited, and it appears the disadvantages are as well. Although it is clear that technology provides us with such an increased ability for communication, the flip side is also a veritable bog of quicksand, very much like a merry go round in an amusement park or county fair. By its very nature, a merry-go-round does not advance the rider in any given direction of progress; it is a circular wheel in design that takes the rider around in circles, forever if possible, until the ticketed clutches in sweating fists run out, or the park closes at dusk. Riders dismount, tired and dizzy, but the music was entertaining, and it had bright, vivid colors with a bold variety of mystical creatures on which to ride. Similar to the merry-go-round, excessive texting gives brief, dizzying bursts of speed and adventure when we forget to focus on the small details rushing by in the wind. However, just like a young child, sometimes a caring parent will temporarily pull one off the carousel of texting when it becomes a bit too much and one loses footing or ability to focus on the steadiness of the earth beneath. Eventually, one will find that even temporarily, there is life after texting. But do not worry – that carousel will still be waiting for next time.
What on Earth Do You Call That Thing
by Nathan Waugh

“Everything about Great Salt Lake is exaggerated,” writes Terry Tempest Williams (1991, p. 5). “It is a landscape so surreal one can never know what it is for certain” (p. 3). People of all different kinds of cultures, lands, religions, traditions, and histories call the shores of that lake home. They have experienced its presence and its temperatures. Few of them would agree on many topics, but most agree on four: that the lake they live near is buggy, that it is salty, that it is hot, and that it is big (Trentelman, 2009). Perhaps this evaluation is fair; after all, those descriptions are all true.

Take the stench. Who in Utah’s northern reaches has not woken at some point to the sweet sound of rain and opened their windows eagerly, only to breathe in the rotten stench of Farmington Bay? As for the bugs, it is not possible to make a trip to Antelope Island and miss the swarms of flies, whether by the lake or the more equine variety, that flock around visitors during the long walk to the water’s edge. Finally, the adjective “big” and “salty” are promised, accurately enough, in the very name of the lake itself.

Yet one wonders whether there is not more to this much-maligned object. It seems there must be, or such a densely populated strip of cities would not have grown up all around it. One wonders, in fact, whether the dismissive attitude shown toward the lake by the millions of people living in its shadow might be but a tarnant—the product of ignorance, perhaps, of other, better features of the lake, which features for which most people might take more effort to contemplate than would a bad smell or a cloud of flies.

In the course of this paper, I will describe four less-considered aspects of the lake and attempt to shed light on why they matter. For in addition to being big, buggy, stinky, and salty, the Great Salt Lake is also an entity of enormous age, history, beauty and life. It may be that, were these not-quite-secrets of the lake to become more widely known, it would be easier to understand and appreciate a turtle that has lived for a thousand; why then do so many people tour windows eagerly, only to breathe in the rotten stench of this ancient lake? Perhaps they would not, if they had some idea of its history.

For the Great Salt Lake possesses not simply age, but memory. Its shores, wetlands, and surrounding rivers provided ancient Native Americans with food and drink for 10,000 years and water for crops for nearly 2,000 years (Simms & Stuart, 2002). It surely provided them with coolness, moisture, and comfort as well, as it does for us now. A lake in the middle of the desert is, after all, nothing if not a tremendous heat sink, moderating its surrounding environmental temperatures to limit the amount of fluctuation between high and low seasonal extremes.

The lake has also served as a center for environmental conservation efforts, commercial salt use, brine shrimp fisheries, and academic research in the natural sciences, as well as a headquarters for at least one major religion. The Winter Olympics were held a short drive on brine shrimp—something that might not have happened had not lake-effect snowstorms regularly packed the surrounding mountains with powdery snow. These events, each an important part of human history, all owe something to the presence of the Great Salt Lake.

Perhaps more than age or history, however, the Great Salt Lake possesses beauty. “Maybe it’s the expense of sky above and water below that soothes my soul,” writes Williams (1991) of the Bear River near where it enters the lake (p. 21). “Or maybe it’s the anticipation of seeing something new” (p. 21). For as long as people have set foot on the shores of the lake, they must have marveled at its beauty, at towering banks of blues. This contrast would not be possible without the destruction and color and shifting picture, our very minds breathe more freely and easily than they otherwise would.

Lastly, the Great Salt Lake is a source and shelter for life. The wildlife here has fed our predecessors for hundreds of generations and, so long as we take care of it, will feed those that follow after us for thousands more. Thus, in a very real way, the lake has been responsible not just for the lives of the plants and animals around us, but even for the lives of our ancestors, and in many ways our own. There is much to cherish about the Great Salt Lake. Call it what you will, but keep in mind that you have probably not even scratched the surface.
The Development of the Individual Woman
by Michelle Michelsen

Strong, independent, intelligent and stubborn — these adjectives when used to reference women, struck fear into the heart of the late nineteenth century man. During the early twentieth century, the modernist movement took off, giving both men and women a new sense of self. The reliance of societal norms shifted to a reliance on the individual. Women underwent an extreme change in the world and in self-perception. Women began to view themselves as unique and separate from the drone of nineteenth century patriarchal society, creating the perfect environment for an individualist and feminist movement to evolve.

Two great examples of the change in society and women are represented in D.H. Lawrence’s “Odour of Chrysanthemums” and Virginia Woolf’s “A Room of One’s Own.” Lawrence depicts an unusual woman, a woman with thoughts, strengths, and weaknesses who is in every way separate from her husband. He explains how engulfed in title and expectations a person may become, how personal identity perishes. Woolf explains the fight women face to win respect and freedom. She details how women of the past did not reach their potential and outlines the tools necessary to transcend the societal norm. Through these texts, the reader gains an understanding of a somewhat complex modernist principle.

“Chrysanthemum” beautifully illustrates the transition from a person’s role in the collective to the role of an individual. In the first five and a half pages of the story, the female lead’s full name is used exactly once, “Elizabeth Bates,” her first name and married name together.

Our first names are the most personal parts of our identity. First names are what we emboss on jackets and love to hear said by friendly voices. Our last names represent our heritage, our family, and our origins. Bates is the name Elizabeth was given after she married. When a woman takes the name of her husband, she is laying aside her history for that of her husband. A married name is a part of a woman’s identity, but not in the way her maiden name is.

During the first part of the story we see Elizabeth referred to as the woman, the mother, the wife, and once as Mrs. Bates. The children both go by their first names; Annie and John. The children carry simply the identity of youth. Eliza switched to the more personal Elizabeth, then to Lizzie. Out of many women, she became one who was no longer defined by her societal role but as a singular and unique entity. Elizabeth said or did this or that, as opposed to Woman or Mother said or did.

The death of her husband represents the death of her social role. Because she is now a single parent, she will have to step forward and take control of her family. Elizabeth has just gained the position that was traditionally held by men. She can’t afford to be a title any more. Now she has to throw herself into life as the singular.

Every person will always embody certain roles: daughter, friend, wife, mother, brother, father. Some of these labels are lovable burdens. We enjoy having them, but living up to the expectation is sometimes very difficult. As the woman moves through the story and becomes Elizabeth, she demonstrates the modernist principal of the individual self being better or more reliable than the social group or expectation borne of labels. The growth of self assurance in all people, not just women, gave feminism the spark it needed.

It was during the modernist period that the feminist movement really caught fire. Women in England and America, as well as other places, started stepping into the spotlight as thinkers and contributors to literature and politics. For the first time women had a voice that could be heard above the din of social expectation. She still had to scream to be heard, but her voice carried. Today, with the respect and freedom I enjoy, it’s hard not to look back on the women of this period, both fictional and real, without feeling affection and gratitude. They yelled so I could whisper.

Virginia Woolf was one of the loudest of these voices. In “A Room of One’s Own” she fleshes out the importance of self assurance. “Life for both sexes…is arduous, difficult, a perpetual struggle. It calls for gigantic courage and strength… More than anything …it calls for confidence in one’s self” (Norton 2109). Life is difficult for everyone, and all people must push forward, depending on themselves for their own strength thinking independently.

Woolf is a great example of a woman who would not be stopped by a label or expectation. The suggestion that, because she was a woman, she didn’t deserve education or opportunity was outrageous to her. “Literature is open to everybody. I refuse to allow you… to turn me off the grass. Lock up your libraries if you like, but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind” (Norton 2131). This is an eloquent statement for the feminist and for the modernist movement. The individual is stronger than ancient values. You cannot hold people from their dreams because of what they are or the labels they carry. Woman, mother, sister, daughter — these individuals will not be muffled.

Our identity is no longer female, but individual. The woman is no longer Mrs. Bates but Elizabeth. Each person is the warrior of her own life. A woman does not need a man to fight for her; she needs a man to stand beside her so she can take her shot. Men and women have always had a tendency to block one another, but now women have the authority to tell men to move.

The modernist movement matters because people matter. It was the individual who moved through the story and became Elizabeth, she demonstrates the modernist principal of the individual self being better or more reliable than the social group or expectation borne of labels. The growth of self assurance in all people, not just women, gave feminism the spark it needed.

Virginia Woolf was one of the loudest of these voices. In “A Room of One’s Own” she fleshes out the importance of self assurance. “Life for both sexes…is arduous, difficult, a perpetual struggle. It calls for gigantic courage and strength… More than anything …it calls for confidence in one’s self” (Norton 2109). Life is difficult for everyone, and all people must push forward, depending on themselves for their own strength thinking independently.

Woolf is a great example of a woman who would not be stopped by a label or expectation. The suggestion that, because she was a woman, she didn’t deserve education or opportunity was outrageous to her. “Literature is open to everybody. I refuse to allow you… to turn me off the grass. Lock up your libraries if you like, but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind” (Norton 2131). This is an eloquent statement for the feminist and for the