



THE SCRIBLERIAN

Fall 2023 Edition

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The competition was planned and supervised by Chairs Thompson Scribner and Alisen Allen and judged by members Rene Cox, Will Mello, Lacey Cluff and Kylee Mauldin.

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Argumentative- English 1010

1st Place Winner: Ruby Wright "The Positive Effects of Daydreaming"

When we daydream, our minds slip into an unconscious state that takes us away from our current activity or task and into what could be future events, goals, aspirations, or relationships. When most people let their mind wander, oftentimes it is viewed as a negative or wasteful activity that has no given potential; however, that is not true. Daydreaming is a recurring activity that can take up to eight hours of our time per day, and because of this, it is important to know the positive effects daydreaming has on people and why it should be a continued practice. Daydreaming helps people achieve the best versions of themselves, and, to make the most use out of it, it needs to be experienced correctly and more often. Because of its rich abundance of positive results through countless research and studies, one must embrace the practice of daydreaming to achieve and maintain its positive effects and to become a more well-rounded and decorated individual through enhanced creativity and problem-solving, goal motivation, and social relationships.

Initially, daydreaming is vital to gaining the most perspective in a situation because of its relationship with creativity and the abundance of answers that come from letting the mind wander and work on a problem. Markus Baer and Erik Dane, graduates from Washington University in St. Louis, and Hector P. Madrid, a graduate from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, all focused on the mental studies of the brain and its effects, touching up on the concept of problem-oriented daydreaming. In their article, "Zoning Out or Breaking Through?", they found, "When daydreaming, new possibilities may emerge that cause individuals to further explore or refine these new possibilities to result in ideas that can ultimately address the problem" (12). Based on this research, the authors argue that when problems arise, letting the mind wander wherever it needs to for a time can help the mind connect ideas together, leading to a solution. To solve a problem, being able to view every perspective in the situation is extremely helpful, which can only be done when the mind can take a break from one viewpoint and wander to others. Creativity is also a byproduct of daydreaming as more ideas are able to flood together at one time, generating new solutions, instead of overanalyzing a problem and obsessing over a single direction or answer, which limits solutions. Daydreaming creates a more open-minded and inventive individual through the process of connecting far-out ideas and honing them back into the task at hand.

Furthermore, another main positive result of daydreaming is an abundance of motivation for and maintaining future goals. Thomas A. Langens, a professor at the University of Wuppertal, Germany, researched and published the article, "Daydreaming Mediates between Goal Commitment and Goal Attainment in Individuals High in Achievement Motivation." In his article, Langens reasons, "Goal commitment induces a tendency to daydream about goal attainment. Such daydreams may then strengthen the motivation for goal striving and may thus facilitate goal attainment" (13). According to Langens statement, goal commitment increases through the motivation that comes from daydreaming about said goals. Since the commitment to a goal sets off a tendency to daydream about goal attainment, it is important to learn and understand what to daydream about to have a desire for motivation and completion of the goal. When opening the mind to creativity and the positive outcomes of one's desire, more time and energy are being focused on finding a solution to achieving that desire and, thus, build the motivation to want to complete it. The tendency to carry out a goal and achieve it cannot be completed without daydreaming and imagining the goal being accomplished, further proving the importance and positive effects behind daydreaming.

Additionally, an achievement of greater positivity in a well-balanced social circle is something that can be easily established and maintained through the practice of daydreaming. Giulia Lara Poerio and Jonathan Smallwood, both professors at York University, underwent various research and co-wrote "Daydreaming to navigate the social world: What we know, what we don't know, and why it matters." In their article Poerio and Smallwood stated, "We argue that daydreaming is vital to maintaining social relationships, deep connections, and navigating social standards because it can facilitate the pursuit of social goals needed for social connection" (4). Based on their statement, Poerio and Smallwood both argued for the advancement of daydreaming in everyday life to maintain a well-balanced social relationship, something that cannot be achieved without daydreaming. Socializing is something that people go through every waking hour, whether it be with one's self, with other people, or through digital, written, or oral communication. Since socializing cannot be avoided, to make these vital connections, it is crucial to practice and become better at future interactions, which can be achieved with the help of daydreaming. Daydreaming helps people visualize their goals and interactions before they happen, as daydreaming usually looks into the future, which helps forthcoming interactions flow more smoothly. Also, looking in the past and analyzing past conversations helps people realize what they did wrong and how to adjust those mistakes for future conversations. Daydreaming is an essential component to social standards and practices in everyday situations, creating a better balance in relationships and smoother flow in conversations.

On the other hand, when used out of context or in unpurposeful ways, daydreaming can negatively impact performance on a task at hand. Baer, Dane, and Madrid's work, although supporting the effects daydreaming can have on the mind, mention the negative impacts daydreaming can have on performance. In their article they mention, "In circumstances when creativity is entirely irrelevant to an employee's work, daydreaming may take time away from their job, while yielding few if any benefits" (17). According to this study, the authors note that when used in unconventional settings or reflecting on things irrelevant to the job or task, daydreaming produces few results and may consequently hurt and halter the performance of the individual. When allowing the mind to wander on irrelevant topics, focus on the present decreases dramatically, which negatively alters performance, especially if the task is continuous and ongoing. Additionally, for humans specifically, it is almost impossible to multitask, making daydreaming and active participation in something virtually impossible to do, which may decrease social relationships and association. When used in most daily tasks, daydreaming can negatively impact the results of those tasks and may create an overall decrease in performance.

However, daydreaming, when used in the correct social setting and environment, continues to further develop the mind's problem-solving tasks and social relationships. Letting the mind wander in safe and casual environments reduces the need for multitasking or paying attention, which, in return, does not negatively impact the performance of an individual. Furthermore, daydreaming about a goal or task relevant to a situation positively increases the execution of a chore or conversation, giving the individual experience and more knowledge. Daydreaming is not a process to be used constantly or overindulged in; it produces effective results when used specifically towards problem-solving, generating creativity, and in social relationships in the appropriate times to practice it. Overall, daydreaming is not a process to be avoided in the fear of failing a task, but rather should be welcomed and practiced to produce positive results for future interactions and chores.

Daydreaming is an ongoing process that cannot be avoided, so to utilize it to the fullest and become continually better, it is best to understand the positive effects daydreaming has on the mind and body and how to make use of it. Embracing the practice of daydreaming and studying its numerous positive effects, such as enhanced creativity and problem-solving, goal motivation, and beneficial social

relationships, can better help create more rounded and decorated individuals. Daydreaming is vital to finding the most perspective in a situation, which increases creativity and strengthens the mind's cognitive abilities. Additionally, letting the mind wander creates essential motivation to look for new goals and maintain and achieve current ones. Also, finding comfort and belonging in social events comes through the practice of daydreaming, paving the way for future interactions. Although daydreaming can create hazards and unproductivity if used in inappropriate environments, controlled and practiced daydreaming outweighs the hazards and creates greater benefits in the end. If people choose to practice and develop their wandering minds through daydreaming, stronger, more resilient, and versatile individuals can surface and create a healthier and well-balanced world.

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2nd Place Winner: Leslie A. Hacker "Racial Discrepancies Within the CJ System"

The United States encompasses only about four percent of the world's population, but with nearly twenty-two percent of all inmates around the world, the U.S. has the highest prison population above every other country. The incarceration rate alone is cause for concern, but when considering the imprisonment rates through a racial lens, it becomes even more alarming. In 2020, only about twelve percent of the country's population was African American, yet they made up nearly forty percent of all inmates in U.S. prisons, jails, and detention centers (Jensen et al.). This implies that Black Americans were and still continue to be incarcerated at a rate that is three or more times their share of the United States adult population. This represents the unequal rates in which minorities are incarcerated by the ever-increasing push towards further mass incarceration rather than alternatives for rehabilitation. The influx of mass incarceration has contributed to unequal racial disparities over the last few decades, caused by seemingly race-neutral policies, the war on drugs, and sentencing discrepancies.

During the 70's and 80's, there was a major push for politicians to be 'tough on crime' that led to a disproportionate number of arrests in contrast to the crime rate that had actually been decreasing since the following decade. This shift in political agenda led to the creation of a series of laws and policies that contributed to the unproportionate rate of Black Americans being arrested and convicted. One policy that came from this shift was the implementation of broken window policing, which states that "the perception of lack of ownership, lack of control, lack of maintenance... [will create a] situation [that] will cause more crime...[and] irregularity of the physical environment causes the perception that society is not taken care [of] and that people who are prone to crime turn these irregularities into opportunities and turn to crime" (Sakar 2). Broken window policies meant making arrests for smaller petty crimes, such as loitering, public drinking, and graffiti, in densely populated and poverty-ridden neighborhoods where it was thought that these actions would encourage additional criminal activity. These types of policies created an environment that encouraged discriminatory police practices, such as disproportionate enforcement of laws based upon racial profiling and biases, which were further worsened by the commencement of the 'crack-cocaine epidemic'.

As part of the implementation of broken window policing came laws such as stop and frisk in New York. Stop and frisk allowed police officers to conduct a stop and search on any individual on the streets that was reasonably suspected of criminal involvement without the burden of probable cause. According to Michael White and Henry Fradella, who are criminology professors at Arizona State University, "In 1999 the Office of the New York State Attorney General released a report that examined 175,000 stops and raised serious questions about their constitutionality (15 percent did not meet the reasonable suspicion threshold), as well as racial disparities in those who were subjected to [stop and frisk]" (3). The issue with this lies on the burden of proof relying on reasonable suspicion, which is the idea that something simply just doesn't look right or seems suspicious, rather than on probable cause, which is based upon facts and circumstances. Policies like these allow for extensive discretion to be used by the officers in the hopes that they will use it in a manner that better protects the community; however, all too often this discretion is manipulated to reflect biases and, in this case, allows for racial profiling and discrimination.

Another policy that came about during the time of broken window policing was the three strikes law in California. The three strikes law mandated that second felony convictions would result in a sentence of double the original length, and a third felony conviction would require a sentence of twenty-five years

to life without the possibility of parole regardless of what crime the felonies are attached to. A research study compiled by Steve Raphael, who is a professor of public policy, found that there are “inequities among racial groups... [t]he proportion [of] African Americans is very high among people who are serving time for a third-strike sentence” (Raphael). The issues with this law arises when low-level felonies, such as drug convictions, larceny, counterfeiting, and tax crimes, are disproportionately being applied to the policy, and individuals are receiving life sentences for otherwise non-violent crimes. However, out of all felonies, the most common that results in conviction are drug-related crimes. This is significant because despite drug crimes being similar across all races and ethnicities, African Americans are unequally being incarcerated for these crimes.

At the beginning of the 70's, President Richard Nixon officially declared that drugs were public enemy number one and formally began the war on drugs that unfairly targeted minorities and lower class individuals. This declaration created an exaggerated importance on how detrimental and widespread the impact of drugs actually has on society, but not long after this began, the focus turned to crack cocaine as the primary problem drug. According to Michelle Alexander, who is a lawyer and civil rights activist, “it is true that the publicity surrounding crack cocaine led to a dramatic increase in funding for the drug war (as well as to sentencing policies that greatly exacerbated racial disparities in incarceration rates)” (413). The relevance of racial imbalance within incarceration was notably expanded by the introductions of drug offenses taking place of much higher charges than previously before. For as long as history has recorded, drugs have unproportionally affected marginalized communities, where individuals often self-medicate to deal with bad living conditions or mental health issues that they could not afford to get properly treated, or to support themselves in the business-side of illicit drugs due to a lack of career opportunities. This ‘war’ was further problematic as policing would not focus time spent on calls for service. Instead, these communities were looking for easy arrests to meet unspoken quotas.

Lastly, the implementation of sentencing discrepancies, in part due to mandatory minimums, has further supported the gap of racial inequality within the criminal justice system. A study published by the Yale Law Journal and conducted by two university law professors concluded that, “[this study found] significant racial disparities in charge severity...The racial gaps were fairly moderate (less than 10%), but significant. But the disparities in mandatory minimums were much more dramatic...we found black men were still nearly twice as likely to be charged with an offense carrying a mandatory minimum sentence” (Starr and Marit 27). Sentencing discrepancies have been facilitated by the implementation of mandatory minimum sentences for certain crimes, including drug crimes, which means that little to no discretion is allotted to the judge or jury on sentencing regardless of any external circumstances of the case. These types of convictions allow for prosecutors to strongarm defendants into waiving rights or taking plea bargains despite proof of actual guilt and has been shown to affect minorities charged with drug crimes at a substantial rate.

Ultimately, as progressive as the United States has become over the last century, there are still racist undertones that allow for a disregard of equality within the current criminal justice system. Recognizing that true impartialness and fairness are yet to exist is the first step in working towards a system that is based upon equality for all; however, the majority often misconstrued this argument as a personal attack, which stunts the discussion and leads to little or no improvement. Understanding the flaws within the current justice system should have some priority to everyone within society, as disregarding some injustices can affect oneself and allows for the proliferation of further infringements and inequalities to take place. In order to create a community that is prided on equality and fairness, “[t]his new consensus must begin with dialogue, a conversation that fosters a critical consciousness, a key prerequisite to effective social action” (Alexander 422). Encompassing a type of empathy and genuine

concern for the betterment of all will ultimately lead to a more inclusive and fair society that all individuals could be proud to support.

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Expressive- English 1010

1st Place Winner: Merrideth Kiernan “The Importance of Optimism in Forty Minutes”

Mr. Greene’s room always felt oddly calm, floor-to-ceiling bookshelves lined the deep blue walls mixed between his eclectic collection of fencing equipment and movie posters. Knick-knacks adorned the higher shelves and an accumulation of student gifts, Shakespeare paraphernalia, and miscellaneous tools interlaced the stacks of assignments piled on his aged oak desk. It felt organic in a way, like how a forest decorates itself with fallen leaves, Mr. Greene’s room was littered with the essence of himself. Given his perpetually calm voice, the atmosphere alone could put any sleep-deprived high school student to bed.

Though this fact didn’t stop me from feeling like I was going to vibrate out of my skin. My anxiety transcended me to another plane as I stood nervously awaiting Mr. Greene, awkwardly lingering behind his desk as he debriefed his senior homeroom class for the day. Graciously he offered to edit a scholarship essay of mine a week prior, giving me his expertise on the topic and setting aside forty minutes of his time to piece apart my essay for the maximum money-making opportunity. Though now, after finishing my short essay, the reality of his offer was starting to set in.

My dread only compounded thinking over Mr. Greene’s almost mystic status on campus, as a teacher who commanded respect from his towering reputation alone. Funnily enough, he was even referred to as a wizard by students, partly for his immense literary knowledge and partly for the thin reading glasses he kept perpetually perched on the tip of his nose. Needless to say, taking criticism from Merlin reincarnate was intimidating. Even if I, not to brag, was in his good graces being one of his favorite freshman students.

Anxiety manifested, the air felt almost too thick to breathe as if the dry desert air and cheap perfume coagulated into one mass. Really I didn’t understand why I was feeling like this, writing an essay has always been my academic strong suit, and no matter how personal my scholarship essay turned out, I wasn’t ashamed of anything I wrote. Whatever the root of my neurotic fidgeting was, it wasn’t a lack of confidence, which oddly felt worse. Ironically, the essay was on the understanding of my mental health struggles, and how that understanding interested me in medical science, but I couldn’t even explain why my heart was beating a mile a minute. Unfamiliarity hanging in the back of my mind I regulated myself to staring at the floor, never before was dingy speckled 70s carpet so comforting.

long minute passed before the homeroom class returned to its habitual silence, Mr. Greene being done explaining any news for the day left only the soft clicking of Chromebook keys to linger in the air. His tall, gangly figure, hunched with age then turned to me, looking down through the thin glasses hung low on his nose, “Merrideth, Are you ready?”. Stilling on my feet, I muttered, “Uh, yeah”.

In measured steps Mr. Greene ambled over to his computer, weathered fingers clearing off a section of his cluttered desk motioning me to sit down. Now instead of staring at the carpet my small fidgety ministrations realized themselves as twisting back and forth on Mr. Greene’s small swivel chair, the matte black plastic wheels creaking showing off its antique character as did the carpet. Finally biting the bullet, I pulled up the essay, three paragraphs in a total of personal mental health details wrapped in a

guise of professional academic prose, and I waited as Mr. Greene looked down into his glasses, eyes flitting over the screen.

The room's silence now felt all-encompassing, the clicks of keyboards and faint whispering of students faded into nothingness. My ears seemed to turn off. Mr. Greene was attentively scrolling through my paper but unhelpfully my eyes seemed to glaze over in dissociation, the only thing registering in my mind was the movie posters in the back of the room. The artificial stillness of the classroom made the perfect soundtrack for the staring contest I had with Keanu Reeves, the 1993 movie *Much Ado About Nothing* serving as my visual fixation for the time.

Breaking my inattention Mr. Greene looked over to me, "In your opening sentence I believe there's a better choice of words to describe your hook. What are some of your ideas?"

At that moment it almost felt as if the last remnants of my consciousness caught on fire, anxiety devolving into a sudden panic. I only noticed the tears starting to stream down my face as my fidgeting fingertips wet with salty teardrops. Worse was I hadn't even comprehended the question Mr. Greene asked me, leaving the two of us in a stalemate, Mr. Greene looked concerned and I blankly looked back desperately trying to remember what he said.

"What did you say again?", I responded between sniffles.

Surprisingly Mr. Greene seemed to read my mind, brushing off my tears with a glance and refocusing on the essay, continuing to work through my paper and patiently waiting for my teary feedback. Truly I wanted to completely ignore this entire mental break, even if I inevitably was getting weird stares from the other students in the class, Mr. Greene working through the tears provided an odd sense of comfort in that way. Yes tears were dripping down my face and the ever-mounting panic felt like it ate me whole, turning the most mundane sensations into something entirely overwhelming, but I was liberated from embarrassment.

Slowly the excruciating minutes started to fly by, Mr. Greene somehow engaged and guided me through his thought process as my composure seemed to continually leak out of my eyes. With the clock ticking down my apprehension I entered the room with seemed to wind away as well, the air started to feel less heavy, the unidentified dread lingering in the back of my mind eased, really I was finally feeling stable. Though, to my displeasure, the crying did not similarly ease itself even as my train of thought found its tracks. Nearing the end of the period, our forty-minute editing session drawing to a close, Mr. Greene paused.

"I think your essay would benefit from changing your tone to something more optimistic in your conclusion sentences", He explained evenly, drawing his finger along the screen to highlight sections of my essay. For a second I didn't know how to respond, his words rang in my mind but I couldn't formulate anything to say. I never thought of my mental health struggles as anything definitive, betting on them getting better with time wasn't a risk I would allow my heart to take rather I sought to manage my condition as it was. Mr. Greene expressing this small, unmeaning thought threw a wrench into that.

Looking intensely at the white screen I responded, "I'm not sure how to make my conclusion more optimistic, I don't really know if I'll get better".

Shifting his gaze from the screen, he glanced down at me through his glasses with a small smile and said, "I think you will" and typed his ideas into the margins of my Google doc. The statement was so casual, so

innocuous I would guess the rest of the students, even Mr. Greene himself might not recognize the unimaginable weight behind this statement. Those four words alone were paralyzing to me, a complete eclipse of the mind, to the point I couldn't even respond, only cry harder.

Noticing my increasingly teary state Mr. Greene fished a roll of sky-blue shop towels from his desk, something you'd find in an automotive store, and tore off a piece, handing me the scratchy towel before continuing the final touches of editing. The abrasive fabric mopping up my tears seemed to bring me back to reality, "I think you will" still ringing in my ears as the earth-shattering statement hung in my mind. Surprisingly, optimism now sounded a bit more realistic for my mental health future.

As Mr. Greene stopped his ministrations, the bell rang, and the previously silent students flooded out the door into the green locker-lined hallway. The editing was finished and at the time I could hardly parse what had changed within me, and how Mr. Greene's small words would affect me for years to come. As I returned the Chromebook and thanked Mr. Greene for his time I left the eclectic classroom being someone different to who I entered as, and not just because my essay won \$500.

2nd Place Winner: Mohamed Amine Faresse "My Venice Trip Review"

Many people have a deep love for Italy, and at the mention of this European country, two specific destinations often come to mind: Rome and Venice. While I had the opportunity to explore both cities, it was Venice that marked lasting impressions. This review will include my culinary experience, weather, navigation and memorable moments in the city.

In reality, this renowned city, known for its picturesque canals and charming small islands, offered me one of the most memorable yet challenging travel experiences of my life. At the age of twelve, on a very hot summer day, my family, including my beloved grandmother, made the decision to venture to Venice and had booked ourselves for a three-week organized trip.

Setting off on the Venetian cuisine was like staging a comedy show on an empty stomach. My belly, growling louder than a Lamborghini truck revving up, played the opening act. I confidently ordered a pizza with more cheese than a dairy farmer's wildest dreams and enough mushrooms to feed a whole deer family. As the pizza arrived, it looked like a masterpiece on a plate. I devoured it like I was auditioning for a leading role in an Italian food appreciation play. Feeling like a culinary genius, I decided to wrap up the gastronomic spectacle with a tiramisu, because, why not add a sweet twist to the drama? The first bites were a delight. But as the curtains closed on my meal, a few hours later, my stomach declared a plot twist. Pondering my life choices, I realized my stomach and guts weren't as thrilled with the grand finale as I was. Unfortunately, I had to stay in bed for two entire days.

Venice, in the summertime, is like standing too close to an overworked oven, undeniably beautiful but ready to roast you. You'd think the canals would provide a cooling breeze, but instead, they seem to exhale warm, humid air directly onto your sunburned face.

Water, the essence of life, becomes a luxury commodity in Venice. A bottle costs 2€, and if you're lucky, you might find a 'discounted' one for 1€. However, these bottles are more like travel-sized samples because the real trick lies in the inadequacy of one bottle for proper hydration. Personally, I needed a new bottle every five minutes of walking. At that rate, I could have funded the construction of a personal water pipeline from the Alps. Drinking fountains are as rare as a pasta dish without tomatoes, except for those adventurous souls willing to drink from public ones, like the Trevi Fountain, but they are less refreshing and more bacteria-infested.

And then there's the weather! Venice, on that beautiful day, hosted a colossal hailstorm that I had the displeasure of being in.

Our tour guide, armed with an umbrella that was clearly on its last stand, lost the battle against the storm, turning him into an unintentional Mary Poppins 2.0. Meanwhile, my mini-me brother, barely out of kindergarten, and I sought refuge behind the entrance of a building, like characters in a low-budget action movie trying to avoid the "Hailmageddon."

The hailstones were in a relentless competition to become the world champions of face-smacking. Some other hailstones had mastered the art of surprise attacks, coming at us from unexpected angles. It was literally trying to dodge a hailstorm and play a bizarre game of catch simultaneously. In the middle of this meteorological chaos, I found myself in a hero position, more like a human shield over my little brother. Forget sibling rivalry; we were in a battle against the elements, with me as the self-appointed Hail Defender. I was more afraid of him turning blind than me being squashed.

So, there I was, in a meteorological nightmare, part hero, wondering if this would be the story we'd tell at family gatherings: the day we challenged the Italian sky that left me with a lump on my head that resembled an unholy marriage between a unicorn horn and a macaroni gone wrong.

Navigating the city's alleys and bridges felt like playing with a hard Rubik's Cube blindfolded : confusing, frustrating, and occasionally making me question my life choices. Then, calamity decided we were having too much fun. On one of those beautiful bridges, I was desperately holding onto my \$45 hat like it's the last rest of food in an apocalypse. But, the Venetian wind had other plans. It grabbed my hat and sent it on a spontaneous canal dive, I lost the only item that prevented me from having sunburns on my face, recreating a scene of the Titanic, but instead of Rose losing Jack, It's me losing my precious and expensive hat.

There I stood again, hatless and slightly traumatized, shouting, "Hat, come back! We can work it out!" It was a sad moment for me but I'm pretty sure my hat's now living its best life, recounting its aquatic adventure to other canal accessories. I will never underestimate the wind in Venice again.

Despite the twists of my Venetian trip, an enduring love blossomed for the enchanting Venetian lagoons. Among my favorite memories, a beautiful cruise to Murano, Burano, and Torcello stood out like a charming gondola getting around the waterways.

These lagoons are a canvas painted with nature's finesse. The ancient architecture whispered stories of times long past, and the vibrant colors added beauty to the scene like a lively Brazilian carnival. The resplendent shades of colors not only stood out but danced with joy, reflecting the maintained embrace of the hot sun.

Speaking of beauty, the Venetian lagoons seemed to have mastered the art of catching sunlight and throwing it back with a radiant glow. It was a visual symphony where the architecture and the tints synchronized in a breathtaking way.

And then, I also want to talk about the culinary feast that awaited at every turn. The restaurants in this aquatic haven weren't just places to dine; they were portals to a gastronomic paradise. Each meal felt like a love letter written with local flavors, and the taste persisted on my palate like a lovely melody.

As I reflect on the chaos that defined my Venetian trip, I realize that it's the unexpected moments, the lost hat, the meteorological showdown, and the sad ending of the culinary delights that shape the

narrative of travel. Venice, with all its particularities, has left an indelible mark, a tale to be shared with laughter and an enduring affection for the city's unique charm. So, here's to Venice, a city that taught me that even in the middle of chaos, there's always room for a laugh, a touch of magic, and a whole lot of love.

Argumentative- English 2010

1st Place Winner: Miriam Ahlstrom “The Impact of Beavers on The Health of Ecosystems”

Abstract

Beavers can have an integral role in restoring the health of an ecosystem. Although beavers are often thought to be a pest and a nuisance, they are in fact ecosystem engineers. The species experienced a hit to their population numbers due to over exploitation throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, but have begun to make a comeback. The reintroduction of beavers into ecosystems can lead to an increase of biomass and biodiversity. Beaver activity also can lead to the restoration of incised streams. There are also ecosystem services that come directly from beaver activity that can be valued at millions of dollars. These services directly benefit humans and our needs. Although the reintroduction of beavers may not be the most popular and mainstream option in restoration, it can prove to be immensely beneficial. Restoration is necessary to care about during these times of high levels of anthropogenic activity. It should be considered our duty to restore the land we degrade and find means to do so, and beavers can be a great option when considering restoration plans.

Beavers impact on the health of ecosystems

Beavers are a keystone species and have large roles in improving the health of ecosystems. Throughout recent years, there has been a significant increase in anthropogenic activity. This activity has direct effects on our ecosystems and their health. Human activity is a leading cause in the degradation of ecosystems. Unhealthy ecosystems cannot function at full capacity which will lead to an unbalanced habitat. This will affect all the species within, and can even lead to species extinction if there are no resources to support them. These consequences can reach all the way to the human population. Action is important and needed in the restoration of these areas. Beavers are ecosystem engineers. They have the unique ability to restore ecosystems to a higher functionality. They restore and increase the biodiversity of the area, restore incised streams to healthy standards, and provide ecosystem services that will directly benefit humans and human activity.

Humans will suffer as well as ecosystems if we do not restore the degraded land. Human activity will one day be halted if there are not significant efforts to restore the land that is being destroyed. Part of restoration is utilizing all the options available. Beavers are a great aid in restoring ecosystems to full functioning capacity and should be considered heavily in restoration and land management conversations. Increasing knowledge and awareness on the power of the beaver is what improves these conversations and brings positive long term change and solutions to our ecosystems.

Historical context

Throughout the 17th and 18th century the main problem beavers faced was the overexploitation of their species. Beaver pelts were prized for their warmth and water resistance. These pelts made for durable and sought after hats. Throughout North America and Europe beavers were hunted to the point of near extinction. This led to a significant drop in the species as a whole. Even modern day many habitats in Europe have so far changed from what they were originally prior to the exploitation, that when beavers were reintroduced into these areas, they became somewhat of an invasive species even though they were once a native species. (Osipov et al., 2018).

Beavers also have a unique feature called castoreum, which is a secretion from the castor sacs of a beaver. Castoreum is used by beavers to mark their territories through scent. Castoreum has peaked human interest as well and can fetch quite a high price. It is used in cosmetic products and even food. Whilst being hunted for pelts previously beavers were also hunted and killed for castoreum. Modern day advances in knowledge have led to the collection of castoreum without harming the animal. Although beavers are still at risk to be hunted and killed for their byproducts if seen as a nuisance in the area.

Misconceptions about beavers

Beaver products being sought after for byproducts is not the only issue in the reintroduction of the species. The modern day problem relates more to the cultural carrying capacity of the species. Culture carrying capacity can be defined as the amount of tolerance that humans have for a given species. For beavers that capacity is low, humans tend to not tolerate beavers well. With all the development taking place on public and private lands, beavers and their dams are seen as quite the nuisance to landowners (Goldfarb, 2018). Dams change the water patterns of an area quite significantly which when not anticipated by landowners leads to beavers being seen as a pest. This misinformation about beavers being pests decreases tolerance for the species. In order to increase tolerance/the cultural carrying capacity it is crucial that correct information about beavers and their services is readily available and more widely known.

Increasing biodiversity

The main focus of many studies on beavers and their impacts on ecosystems, is the increase of biodiversity that beavers and beaver engineered wetlands bring about. The increase of biodiversity is applicable to many species within the habitat. Animal and plant species alike all can benefit from the conditions that beavers make. The increase of plant diversity is directly linked to the restoration of incised streams as well.

In a recent study by Andersen et al. (2023) it was found that in comparison to the 10 moth species that were found at sites with no beaver activity, 42 moth species were found at beaver sites and nowhere else. Moths act as an indicator species. They are highly sensitive to change in their environment. If there is an unbalance within an ecosystem, moths will often disappear indicating the problems within (Tuskes, 2019). To find 42 species just within beaver sites indicates that there is a good balance of equilibrium within the system that allows for moths to flourish. This increase in species is an example of a healthy functioning ecosystem as well as an example of biodiversity increases. Moths in this instance experienced an overall increase in diversity. Increases in biomass of flying insects was noted as well in this study.

An increase in one trophic level can allow for an increase in all trophic levels if there is room for it to be supported. Animals that feed on insects will have an increased food source, thus allowing for the expansion of their species as well. If all trophic levels are supported this will decrease the chances of an unbalancing of the trophic cascade, and provide ample resources within the system.

Not only do beavers increase the biodiversity of animals and insects, but plant and vegetation species as well. Beaver ponds act as a sink for carbon and nitrogen (Thompson et al., 2021). Nitrogen and carbon are stored in these ponds and aid in plant growth. Vegetation is increased in these beaver ponds from the extra nutrients within. Ponds without beaver activity do not have the same increased levels of plant nutrients, making this unique to beaver ponds. Plants utilize these extra nutrients and are able to be supported in their growth, more so than ponds without dams.

Unhealthy stream ecosystems lack everything needed to amply support life. Without vegetation and species diversity, the ecosystem cannot function at its full capacity. There are several endangered

species throughout North America that have been found to thrive at beavers sites. The Hungerford's crawling water beetle rely on dams. Dams that are removed upstream of these beetles will be a threat to their livelihood. On the other hand, the Louisiana pearlshell mussel needs flowing waters and host fish. The presence of dams prevents fish from reaching these mussels (Rosell et al., 2005). It is impossible to say that all species will benefit equally from dams, but there is evidence that beavers can create ideal habitats for species that will not be found elsewhere. Certain species can also utilize abandoned beaver ponds as well. Crane flies are part of the ecosystem in beaver ponds that haven't been maintained for 10 years. Fruit flies require rotting bark to lay their eggs, and there is an abundance of rotting bark at beaver sites which in turn helps increase the fruit fly populations (Rosell et al., 2005).

Humans need biodiversity. Biodiversity is the part of the core of a healthy functioning planet. Life supports life, and if we continue to let biodiversity drop ecosystems will no longer be able to sustain themselves and will begin to fail. We will lose more species that we can never get back, that is why restoration and increasing biodiversity must take place before it is too late.

Restoration of incised streams

Healthy streams and channels have high water table levels and a sense of connectivity with the floodplains and other channels (Mikuś et al., 2021). Incised streams are the exact opposite. Erosion leads to the cutting of streams and a drop in water table levels. As previously stated this is an example of an unhealthy ecosystem which cannot function at max capacity and cannot support life within. Leading to the drop of biodiversity, which is a global problem we face today.

Incised streams do have the ability to restore themselves but this process can take on the upwards of centuries (Pollock et al., 2014). We cannot afford to wait centuries to restore these areas to their prime. Especially considering the rate at which anthropogenic activity degrades land. Restoration will be useless if we do not act with enough time for the land to recover properly. Luckily, beaver dams have proven to be a great way to speed up the restoration process. We know that beaver dams increase the vegetation of the area. Vegetation is a great way to reduce erosion. Plant roots hold onto the sediment and it is no longer as easily erodible. Reducing erosion is a great step in stopping further incision from taking place.

Another factor in the restoration focuses on sediment that is already eroded. Incised streams have an increased water velocity. This increased velocity increases the transport of sediment. When sediment is in a cycle of heavy transportation it lacks the chance to settle and rebuild the stream. Dams decrease velocity and increase the water table. As velocity of the stream slows, sediment has the opportunity to begin to settle allowing for the stream to start rebuilding to its more natural and healthier level.

Beavers are obviously quite integral in the restoration of these damaged ecosystems. In order to help facilitate restoration it is necessary for humans to do their part in removing stressors to the environment, such as beaver hunting. Allowing beavers to do their work and building dams is what facilitates change and as humans it is our role to let them do this work and find ways to adapt to it. Increased awareness of beavers' role in restoration processes will decrease human interference (Pollock et al., 2014). Utilizing beavers to restore streams is time effective and decreases the need for human led restoration projects that will take more money and labor.

Restoration is a part of modern day conservation efforts. As anthropogenic change leads to the degradation of ecosystems, it is our responsibility to restore those areas. There are many factors when it comes to restoration. One main factor being cost. There will be the cost of labor as well as cost of material. Stakeholders of a given area will all have to be in agreement for restoration to take place.

Expensive restoration projects often turn people away from seeing its necessity. Beavers greatly decrease this cost. It is in beaver nature to build dams. There is no labor or material cost included with natural dam making.

Dams will cycle through many phases. Construction, aggradation (sediment depositing) and then abandonment (Pollock et al., 2014). The construction of dams leads to the building up of streams back to natural states and an increase in vegetation. It might be a concern that abandoned dams would cause issues. There is potential that abandoned dams will fail and temporarily change water patterns, but if beavers build new dams in other areas of the channel that would be resolved. Abandoned beaver ponds actually have a high level of nutrients, still making them a suitable environment for biodiversity to flourish (Osipov et al., 2018). It is this cycle as a whole that increases the health of the ecosystem, showing that beavers and their dams are beneficial no matter what stage they are in. Beavers returning means spikes in vegetation and biodiversity which creates more resources for future beavers and species and so on and so forth.

Another form of incised stream restoration related to beavers is the BDA, beaver dam analogues. These are man made structures that act in a similar nature to beaver dams. Those wary of beavers and considering the current cultural carrying capacity of beavers might be more inclined to the implementation of BDAs. Natural beaver dams are most effective in the restoration of incised streams during phase two of the degradation of streams. There are four phases total, so this means there are many times in the process when beavers would have a difficult time keeping dams up and running. This is another appeal of BDAs. Man made structures can be made to enforce a more calculated and planned outcome. These structures would be temporary until proper restoration has occurred and equilibrium is restored. (Pollock et al., 2014)

In the study by Wolf and Hammill. (2023) it was found that it is likely that BDAs increase the resilience of ecosystems by increasing the number of days that an area has standing water or is at normal moisture levels. Utilizing BDAs is a viable option for areas where beavers might not be supported ecologically or where there is a low cultural carrying capacity that is unlikely to change. Although BDAs are not utilizing the full capacity of beaver activity patterns they still have the means to aid in restoration.

Ecosystem health will only decline further if degradation continues with no attempts at restoring it. Since many of the negative changes that bring down the health of ecosystems are caused by humans it needs to be prioritized as something we need to fix.

Ecosystem services

An ecosystem service is a service that is naturally provided by a habitat, these services often benefit humans. Ecosystem services are given monetary values to help conceptualize them, and utilize during the making of land management policy. It is these values that can then be utilized when it comes to policy making. Thompsons et al. (2021) study was used to start understanding and assigning monetary values to ecosystem services specifically provided by beavers. There was a wide range of services provided, such as moderation of natural events, increasing biodiversity, water purification, and recreation opportunities. If the information of these services was more widely recognized there would likely be an increase in the cultural carrying capacity of the beaver species. Utilizing the knowledge of these services could then be taken into account and land management policy might begin to start utilizing beavers and their abilities more often.

The storage of greenhouse gasses is very prevalent in our day and age with all the emissions occurring daily. Dams act as a sink for carbon, nitrogen, and other chemicals (Thomson et al., 2021). These sinks take greenhouse gasses and trap them instead of allowing them to enter the atmosphere. This is a service of sequestering greenhouse gasses. It goes even further as the vegetation utilizes these chemicals to enhance growth and support species growth and biodiversity. The woody vegetation that is brought into ponds to create dams acts as a filter. Sediment and water pollutants are released at a slower rate. This decreases the amount of treatment that needs to take place on our end. This service is estimated at being worth 28 million dollars per year. (Thompson et al., 2021).

Although it is often interpreted that beavers cause floods in actuality they can mitigate the severity of natural flooding. The previously mentioned slower rate of water release and capacity to hold more water decreases severe floods downstream that would cause extreme damage. Property downstream would be paying less in damage costs if there were to be floods since they would occur at a much less severe level.

As well as these consumptive services, there are also non consumptive services. Ecosystem services can also go as far as being something that improves well-being and life satisfaction. Beauty of natural land is something that beavers improve. Restoring ecosystems to their natural states and the increase of biodiversity that is associated with that allows for the enjoyment of sightseeing and tourism. Wetlands and healthy streams can be used as places of relaxation. Recreation can even take place at these sites, canoeing and fishing can be enjoyed. These services can be estimated to be worth 43 million dollars per year (Thompson et al., 2021). These values are large in scale and there is a smaller workload for humans with beavers doing the heavy lifting. These million dollars of services is money saved on our end. Less money will be spent in restoration costs as well as saving money that would be spent to artificially manufacture these services.

The reintroduction of beavers

Although some would argue that beavers are a pest, the information and literature exists to prove that beavers play an integral role in ecosystems and their restoration. In order to reintroduce beavers further there will need to be a balance between the conflicts of interest.

Beavers and humans can peacefully coexist if there are proper measures in place. Some options include compensation for any beaver related damage. The implementation of water flow devices that can manage water levels altered by beavers, and the relocation of beavers in unwanted areas (Auster et al., 2021). If management of beavers is improved and focuses less on the hunting of beavers when seen as an unwanted pest, we can shift to these techniques to better utilize beavers and their activity.

When all the information gone over is taken into account there are clear advantages to making more effort when it comes to reintroducing beavers. If the factual evidence about beaver activity becomes more widespread there can be opportunities to change policy and more beavers can be reintroduced to suffering landscapes through different restoration agencies and groups. When beavers are reintroduced and there is proper management in place this allows for all parties to benefit and reap the rewards of beaver activity. This idea is all well and good, but it should be realistically expected that conflict will arise if the reintroduction of beaver becomes more recognized and mainstream. It is going to take time to break down stereotypes for beavers, but it can be possible. Even if push back occurs at the implementation of beavers, this can be seen as an opportunity to further research on beaver activity, and find ways to increase their cultural carrying capacity. Beavers can once again flourish and aid in our restoration efforts, but there is effort on our behalf that needs to take place to allow this.

Conclusion

In our day and age it is not likely that human activity will decline. This means that we will only further land degradation. Natural resources will decline to the point that there is nothing left to use. To avoid this it is crucial that we prioritize the restoration of land. Beavers are a great resource to utilize in this restoration. Research can help understand that through the reintroduction of beavers into an area and the construction of dams multitudes of benefits can be reaped.

Overall, biodiversity and mass of ecosystems can begin to increase, and by doing so begin to restore the ecosystem to peak functionality and health. Habitats are also created that can provide sanctuary to endangered species and aid the rehabilitation of their species. Degraded ecosystems such as incised streams can experience an expedited recovery process through the function of dams whether that be natural beaver constructed dams or man made BDAs. The services provided through beavers are beneficial to humans and not just plants and animals saving us millions of dollars per year in the aid of land management.

It is in hopes that beavers can begin to be more heavily considered and implemented into land management and restoration practices that this research and knowledge can be taken and expanded further. By fully understanding the function of beavers we can start to implement them into restoration. Money can be saved through implementing beavers as well as saving the land we use.

As humans, change is hard to accept. Beaver wetlands might appear to be messy and disorganized and have no benefit. It is only by putting our desires for conformity and perfection aside that we can see the large scale benefits of nature's natural chaos. Natural resources are limited and it is unrealistic to use them without prioritizing the replenishing and restoration of these resources. For many people, river health seems like something that will never affect them, but one day it will and if not you, future generations. Humans have made significant impact on Earth on such a scale that without pausing to reflect and act there will be no resources left. This is why finding restoration solutions is crucial. Beavers can enact powerful change that is worth acknowledging and utilizing. It is this sort of powerful change that might be the make or break in maintaining our planet, and therefore it should be recognized.

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2nd Place Winner: Calvin Curtis Hadley “How Tourism has Negatively Affected Hawaii’s Environment, Economy, and Culture”

Abstract

Many people around the world naively believe that tourism benefits the Hawaiian Islands. To better educate the general population, the impact tourists have on Hawaii’s environment, economy, and culture is analyzed within this paper. Tourism has positively affected Hawaii by increasing the native people’s environmental awareness and by using a low amount of their natural resources. However, tourism has also negatively impacted the environment by increasing the amount of pollution and litter left behind by tourists. Tourism has helped Hawaii’s economy by providing the Hawaiian people with jobs. Unfortunately, many of these jobs are low-level service sector positions. Tourism has also negatively affected Hawaii’s economy by allowing foreign-owned businesses to send a large amount of tourist-generated revenue off the island. Lastly, tourism has positively affected Hawaii’s culture by reviving some of Hawaii’s cultural practices and encouraging the native people to share their culture with tourists. Unfortunately, tourism has also exploited Hawaiian culture, used it as a marketing tool, and made sacred practices very common making it difficult for the true Hawaiian culture to be lived by the native people. By comparing the positive and negative effects included in each section it becomes more apparent that tourism is harming Hawaii much more than it is helping it.

Key Words: Hawaii, Tourism, Impact, Environment, Economy, Culture

How Tourism Has Negatively Affected Hawaii’s Environment, Economy, and Culture

Hawaii is a dream vacation for millions of people throughout the world. According to Trask (1999), Hawaii is only a 5-hour plane ride from California, but thanks to all the movies, songs, and advertisements that have been published about Hawaii over the years, it is a million miles away in fantasy. The idea of escaping the “real world” and coming to Hawaii for a brief vacation has turned Hawaii into a tourist magnet, drawing millions of tourists to the Hawaiian Islands every year. This continuous flow of tourists into the Hawaiian Islands has created a thriving tourist industry, which to the outside world, seems like a very good thing for the Hawaiian people. However, the negative effects that tourism has on Hawaii’s environment, economy, and culture have been so great that they outweigh any positive effects tourism has had in those same areas, making tourism have an overall negative impact on the Hawaiian Islands.

Tourism’s Impact on Hawaii’s Environment

One of the main reasons why many tourists are interested in visiting the Hawaiian Islands is because of the spectacular scenery Hawaii has to offer, which includes its beautiful beaches, thick jungles, large waterfalls, spectacular coral reefs, and tall volcanoes. These unique features are unlike anything many Americans, or other foreign people, have ever experienced and contribute to the growing number of tourists visiting the islands every year. As more people get out and experience Hawaii’s beauty for themselves, the impact they have on these areas also grows and affects Hawaii’s environment in positive and negative ways.

The Positive Effect Tourism Has on Hawaii’s Environment

Before Hawaii became a popular tourist destination, agriculture was the main source of revenue for the Hawaiian Islands. To control the noxious weeds growing in their fields, farmers would spread Arsenical herbicides on their crops. These herbicides were successful in killing the weeds but were also successful

in polluting Hawaii's soil with high concentrations of arsenic (Cutler et al., 2013). This problem, along with many other environmental problems caused by farming, which include: deforestation, a significant amount of water use, and the introduction of foreign plants wreaked havoc on Hawaii's environment (Takeguchi et al., 1999). Thankfully, when tourists began visiting the Hawaiian Islands, many people developed a greater interest in maintaining and protecting the Islands' ecosystems. They put a stop to many of the harmful agricultural practices that were damaging the environment so that Hawaii's beauty could be preserved and enjoyed by future generations of locals and tourists.

In addition to the environmental protection that tourism has offered the Hawaiian Islands, Tourism has also had a very small impact on Hawaii's natural resources. A man named Saito (2013) performed a study to determine how much of Hawaii's water and energy was used by the tourist industry, and how much trash the tourists contributed to landfills. He performed this study to set a benchmark for the tourists' use of these resources so that they could be better managed in the future. To accomplish this task, he gathered information from five different service sectors including accommodations, restaurants, golf courses, tours, and rental cars. He found that tourists only use 21.7% of the islands' energy, 44.7% of the islands' freshwater, and produce only 10.7% of the islands' waste. It should also be noted that a majority of the water that makes up 44.7% of the water used by tourists goes to water Hawaii's golf courses (Saito, 2013). This study shows that despite what you might think, tourists only use a small portion of Hawaii's natural resources, thereby leaving plenty of energy, water, and landfill area available to the local population.

The Negative Effect Tourism Has on Hawaii's Environment

Hawaii has become more concerned about protecting and preserving its environment, but many of the tourists visiting these beautiful places fail to have a similar level of appreciation and care. The Napali Coast on the island of Kauai is an example of this. The Napali Coast is located on the side of a shield volcano. Over time water from heavy rains has run down the sides of this volcano, carving deep canyons and valleys into the spectacular 3,000-foot cliffs. The lush canyons and valleys below these cliffs have rivers and streams running through them which create large waterfalls and spectacular scenery (Bourne, 2008,). These large cliffs and deep canyons make the Napali Coast a very remote and popular location that is difficult for park services to maintain and regulate, due to a lack of funding (Bourne, 2008,). These features make the Napali Coast the perfect place to examine the effects tourists have on an area that is not frequently maintained or cared for by the Hawaiian people.

In Bourne (2008)'s article, he explains that when he visited the Napali coast, he saw dozens of campers spread out in the trees, some of them were long-term campers that had long overstayed their 5-day camping permits; he could hear people blaring music in the distance; and even saw a woman with bright red hair shaving her legs in one of the valley's beautiful waterfalls. Mixed in with these scenes were piles of garbage, abandoned coolers, and forgotten tents. This example shows that when there is no one to regulate or clean up a popular tourist destination, and the responsibility to care for the environment is put on the shoulders of the tourists themselves, the environment often does not get taken care of and the results can be devastating.

After his experience, Bourne (2008) talked to one of the park rangers, the ranger said that a lot of the trash left behind by tourists has to be flown out of the Napali Valley with a helicopter which is very hard for the cash-strapped park. He also said that if people could pack out what they brought in it would be a much more enjoyable experience for everyone. The Napali Coast is an extreme example of the damage tourists can do. Not all of Hawaii looks like the Napali Coast, but things just like this happen all over

Hawaii. Large amounts of trash are left behind by tourists all over the island, certain types of sunscreen or other chemicals (shaving cream) tourists put in the water damage coral reefs (Downs et al., 2022), and loud music or obnoxious behavior can pollute a peaceful experience for people trying to enjoy nature. With almost 10,000,000 tourists a year (Ulusemre & Lam, 2023) these behaviors can add up to have devastating effects on Hawaii's environment.

Tourism's Impact on Hawaii's Economy

Tourism became a booming industry in Hawaii shortly after it became a state in 1959 (Mokuau & Matsuoka, 1995). Today, millions of tourists visit the Hawaiian Islands every year creating a high demand for hotels, restaurants, resorts, and other tourist-based businesses. This along with a lack of alternative business opportunities has made tourism the backbone of Hawaii's economy (Ulusemre & Lam, 2023). A tourist-based economy can have many benefits to small islands in the Pacific, but because of Hawaii's unique history, tourism has also had many negative effects on Hawaii's economy.

The Positive Effect Tourism Has on Hawaii's Economy

The tourist industry in Hawaii has positively affected the economy by providing many Hawaiian people with work. According to a study of the hotel industry in Hawaii by Ulusemre and Lam (2023), labor captures the largest portion of the money earned by hotels. This is because hotels need a very large staff of employees to care for the rooms, and to ensure that the guests have a pleasant stay. The demand for labor is so high in Hawaii that the unemployment rate is only 2.1%, one of the lowest in America (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Because the need for good hotel workers in Hawaii is very high, and the cost of switching who you work for is so low unions of workers have been formed in Hawaii which are among the strongest in America (Unionstats, 2019) this enabled the Hawaiian people to gain bargaining power and advocate for higher wages which they previously were not able to achieve.

The Negative Effect of Foreign Business in Hawaii

While tourism does provide Hawaiians with work, most of the high-paying jobs are filled by foreign businessmen. This is because back in 1848, foreign businessmen approached the Hawaiian king, King Kamehameha III, and convinced him to update the way Hawaiian land was distributed. The new method of distributing land was called the Great Mahele. The Great Mahele changed traditional ways of dividing the land between the Hawaiian people and set up a new way that allowed foreign people to get a share (Saito, 2013). This resulted in wealthy foreigners out-competing the local people and eventually owning a majority of Hawaii's non-government land (Mokuau & Matsuoka, 1995). Since then foreign corporations operating in Hawaii have been able to use Hawaii's resources to make money and then send that money back to their home countries, which does not benefit the Hawaiian people at all. Ulusemre and Lam (2023) recently performed a study to figure out how many hotels on the Big Island of Hawaii are owned by the local Hawaiian people. The table below shows that 10 hotels are owned by local Hawaiians, 29 hotels are owned by Americans, and 9 hotels are owned by other foreign countries (See Table 1). The results of this study show that for every one hotel owned by a local Hawaiian, there are almost 4 hotels owned by people living outside of Hawaii.

Table 1

	Hawaiian-owned	American-owned	Foreign-owned
Number of full service hotels	8	24	8

Number of limited service hotels	2	5	1
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Because a majority of the hotels in Hawaii are under foreign ownership, a majority of the high-paying jobs are filled by foreign businessmen. This leaves only the lower-level jobs available to the Hawaiian people, so even though labor captures a large portion of the money earned by hotels, and strong unions have been formed to advocate for higher wages these jobs still only pay low salaries because they require very low skill levels.

Another problem with a tourist-based economy is the quality of life for many of the people working there. According to Mokuau and Matsuoka (1995), a healthy community is one where there is a stable economy that provides its people with a sense of self-worth. The tourist industry does not provide the island of Hawaii with a very stable economy, after all when the Coronavirus happened the number of visitors in Hawaii fell from over 10,000,000 in 2019 to 2,000,000 in 2020 (Ulusemre & Lam, 2023). In addition to this, the type of work one does can be the basis of one's cultural identity (Mokuau & Matsuoka, 1995), and the type of work currently available to a majority of the Hawaiian people is low-level service sector work which does very little to build their self-worth or support their culture.

Tourism's Impact on Hawaii's Culture

Culture is a very important thing to many Native Hawaiians, but what is culture? According to Allison (2017), An organization's culture is the thing that motivates them to make the right decisions. A person's culture makes them want to give more of themselves, work harder, and try harder. In essence, Culture is "the way we do it here", "it is what matters to us", and "it gives us a template for behavior"(Allison, 2017). In Hawaii Family relationships are a very important part of traditional Hawaiian culture.

According to Trask (1999). The Hawaiian people believe that mo'olelo and wakea are sky father and earth mother and are the parents of the Hawaiian Islands. Their children are Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, Kauai, and Niihau. The Taro plant is the offspring of the Hawaiian Islands and the Hawaiian people are the offspring of the Taro plant. This belief shows that the Hawaiian people have a familial relationship with their islands.

Trask (1999) goes on to explain the dynamic of a traditional family In Hawaii. She says that younger siblings are to honor and respect their older siblings who in return will watch over, and provide for them, so the Hawaiian people must honor and respect their island because it is the eldest member of their family. If they do this the land will in return care for and provide for them.

The word for family in the Hawaiian language is Ohana. Ohana is loosely translated to mean family, but in reality, it means a group of both closely and distantly related people that share everything they have from land and food to children and status (Trask, 1999). These beliefs and practices make up the basis of Hawaiian culture and used to be the guiding force that helped the native people make good decisions.

The Positive Impact Tourism Has on Hawaii's Culture

Over the past 200 years, Traditional Hawaiian culture has been severely damaged. In the 1820s, missionaries from New England arrived and began to educate the Hawaiian people and teach them about religion. During their lessons, they put a stop to the cultural practices in Hawaii that went against

Christian beliefs along with various art forms including the Hula, and speaking the Hawaiian language. (Mokuau & Matsuoka, 1995). The early missionaries stopped the native people's cultural practices from being handed down from one generation to the next by focusing their message on the Hawaiian children. This initiated the decline of Hawaiian culture.

Eventually, the descendants of the first missionaries lost interest in religion and began seeking out business opportunities. To accomplish their pursuits they met with the Hawaiian king, King Kamehameha III, and convinced him to adopt the Great Mahele (Saito, 2013). As mentioned before, this enabled foreigners to own a majority of the land in Hawaii. When the Hawaiian peoples' land was taken from them and turned into sugar cane plantations (Mokuau & Matsuoka, 1995), it broke the familial connection they had with mo'olelo and wakea (the mother and father of the Hawaiian Islands) which escalated the decline of Hawaiian culture.

When Hawaii became a state, and more tourists started to visit the Hawaiian Islands, a newfound interest in Hawaiian culture began to develop. The Hawaiian people were given the opportunity to share their cultural practices with the foreigners, who for once had an interest in the way they did things there. Today the Hawaiian people are encouraged to speak their language, dance the Hula, and are given opportunities to teach tourists about their various art forms and cultural practices. If it wasn't for tourism many of these traditional activities would have been lost and Hawaii's traditional cultural practices would be nothing more than a faint memory.

The Negative Impact Tourism has on Hawaiian Culture.

While tourism in Hawaii has helped Hawaiian cultural practices to rise from the ashes, it has also largely commercialized them. According to Scanlan (2017), the tourism industry has exploited Hawaiian culture by advertising and selling a Hawaiian experience to its tourists. When this happens, the Hawaiian culture is often misrepresented, and the deep traditional meanings are simplified or removed. These simplified and extremely common cultural activities designed to entertain tourists have taken the value and significance out of many Hawaiian customs, which makes it difficult for a Hawaiian person to connect those activities with the feelings and beliefs that used to be an integral part of their culture.

Borja-Quichocho-Calvo (2023) explains the difference between a culture being lived and a culture being put on display. She says that it is not enough to go through the motions dancing the hula or going to a Hawaiian language class once a week. For a culture to thrive it needs to be lived, it needs to become who its people are. A person's culture is not what they do, it is what they believe in, and how those beliefs guide their life. So while tourism has helped reinstate many of Hawaii's cultural practices. The excessive repetition of these activities amongst tourists, along with the advertisements and money-making schemes that go along with them has damaged Hawaii's sacred cultural practices.

In addition to the commercialization of their culture, tourists can sometimes outnumber the local population 30 to 1 (Scanlan, 2017), which causes the native population to feel small and out of place on their island. These feelings also make it much harder for Hawaiians to develop a cultural identity when they are surrounded by tourists that live a life that is vastly different from their own.

Tourism has positively and negatively affected Hawaii's environment, economy, and culture. Tourism has helped Hawaii's environment by increasing its environmental awareness, and by conserving its natural resources. However, tourism has harmed Hawaii's environment by increasing the amount of pollution and litter in Hawaii's ecosystems. Tourism has helped Hawaii's economy by providing jobs to

the local people. Unfortunately, most of these jobs are low-level service sector positions that pay a very low salary. Tourism has helped bring back some of Hawaii's cultural activities, but it has exploited and commercialized them to the point that they have lost a lot of their traditional meanings. Based on these positive and negative effects it can be concluded that tourism has an overall negative effect on the Hawaiian Islands. However, if tourists began to increase their environmental awareness, support local Hawaiian businesses, and have a greater level of respect toward Hawaii's people and their culture, some of these negative effects can begin to be reduced, thus making tourism have a better effect on the Hawaiian islands.

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Expressive- English 2010

1st Place Winner: Gracie Saunders “The Harm of Menstruation Misinformation”

Women’s health issues have been a source of misinformation and myth for centuries, particularly surrounding menstruation. Just saying the word “period” is enough to send many people running for the hills in disgust, and the taboos surrounding this topic often cause women to feel isolated and ashamed. Menstruation is a healthy and normal process, however there is an extreme lack of research surrounding the topic and this plays a major factor in the oppression of women as a whole. About half the population will experience menstruation at some point in their life, yet it wasn’t until the year 2023 that researchers used real blood in the testing of period products (Chery). Education on menstruation is important for everyone, not just for those who will experience it, as misconceptions about periods are harmful and often lead to women being treated unfairly.

In 1967, in Glacier National Park, two women, Julie Helgeson and Michelle Koon, tragically lost their lives to bear attacks. These violent deaths were the result of the careless manner in which the park service conducted the unnatural feedings of bears from human sources, however, there were many theories suggesting they had been killed due to the possibility they may have been menstruating at the time, and that had attracted the bears. It was concluded in the August 1968 report on the incident that both of the women had been on their periods due to menstrual products being found in their bags, however, as pointed out by Jordan Fisher Smith in his book *Engineering Eden*, the report had been written by a man “who may not have known that many women have menstrual supplies in their personal effects whether they are menstruating or not” (171). This slight shifting of the blame, saying that it was the smell of the young women’s things that had attracted the bears and killed them, making it their fault, rather than the parks mismanagement of a situation that had already caused other bear related deaths, is highly unfair and an large misrepresentation of the case as a whole.

Furthermore, this actively led to unfair treatment of women in the parks, with some female parks service employees being restricted from working in areas with possible bear activities if they were currently menstruating (Smith 171). This is a clear example of sexism and the harm that the misinformation surrounding periods causes. Women were being told that, despite no research or evidence connecting bear attacks to periods at this point, they couldn’t be in certain areas. While it may be true that in these cases attempts were being made to “protect” women, the lack of a choice given as to whether or not they could be in certain areas reveals that it was more about control. Considering that there is risk involved whenever a person is in a situation where they might encounter a bear, it feels targeted to say that a woman cannot assess the risk herself and make an informed decision, just like any other employee of the park, especially when there is no research to back up these supposed “risks” of menstruation in connection to bear attacks.

These misconceptions continued, and in 1972 a bear attacked Kenneth Bell and his sister Carol Blackwood in Yellowstone National Park. Later while being questioned by rangers they asked him whether or not Caroline had been on her period. When Kenneth asked if that made them attack, the response was “Not necessarily makes them attack, but it may be contributing” (Smith 245). This, again, was stated despite there being absolutely zero evidence of that being the case other than menstrual products being found in the personal effects of two women tragically killed 5 years previously, products that most women would carry on them all the time even if they weren’t on their period. In fact, “an exhaustive study of bear attacks by Stephen Herrero of the University of British Columbia failed to find

any correlation between menstruation and bear incidents” (Smith 171). Asking a woman who got attacked by a bear if she was on her period is, intentionally or not, placing blame on her for the attack. Suppose Caroline had been on her period during the time of the attack, now due to the line of reckless questioning by the park rangers, she may feel guilt for the incident, despite the fact that, according to research, her menstruating would have had nothing to do with it.

In 1991, 23 years after the 1968 report that listed menstruation as a possible cause for the deaths of Julie Helgeson and Michelle Koon and prompted brochures to circulate advising women to stay away from bear country while on their periods, research was done on the effects of menstruation on black bears by Lynn Rogers, Gregory Wilker, and Sally Scott, all of the U.S. Forest Service. They recorded the responses of 26 black bears to used tampons from 26 women in addition to the reaction of 20 black bears to 4 women on their periods, finding that odors from menstruation were ignored by all black bears regardless of sex and age class (Rogers et al 632). The results of this study go to show how important research on menstruation is and how necessary it is to have the facts before spreading misinformation. The misinformation spread in this case actively frightened and harmed women, going so far as to place blame on them for incidents out of their control.

Misconceptions around menstruation do not start nor end with these incidents in the parks and are still prevalent today. The importance of education surrounding this topic, not just for people who experience periods, but everyone, cannot be stressed enough. Equality is not possible if half the population is not being accurately represented in the medical field, and much of the other half refuses to learn the logistics of how a period actually works. The time for accurate and positive education on menstruation is now, in order to avoid further harm and misinformation.

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2nd Place Winner: Ali Beal “The Music of Me”

Snow gently falling outside the window. Eggs cooking on the frying pan. Bacon sizzling on the grill. Pancake batter dripping onto the counter from the mixing bowl. Dishes thudding on the scratched and dented table as it's set. The annual Christmas peppermint candle crackling. Trumpets blaring Christmas carols on the CD player with the broken antenna.

This is the exact picture I see in my mind's eye when I hear “Carol of the Bells” by Mannheim Steamroller. From the first measure of the song with the ringing of the bells, I can close my eyes and be transported back in time to this specific scene in my childhood home. Every year, I would wait in anticipation for the first Saturday of December, when my family would cook breakfast together and start playing the Mannheim Steamroller Christmas albums for the next month. After we finished eating, we would pull out all the decorations and cover the house with Christmas cheer. Although, the way I see these memories is probably very different from the reality of it, the music carries only the idyllic feelings and emotions. I'm carried off to a world of memories, where I had everything important in my life gathered together: time with my family, Christmas cheer, and the safety of my home. To me, “Carol of the Bells” is my first powerful association with true priorities in my life that contribute to who I am.

Looking back on my life, the music that has been most impactful to me is strongly associated with memories that play a part in who I am now. One of those experiences was in high school, and it revolved around a boy. I was leaving a birthday party for one of my friends, where the main topic of conversation was relationships and boys. As I started my car, I was reflecting on my love life, which included a breakup that happened two days before. On my drive home, I chose the album that I'd been listening to on repeat through the whole process leading up to the breakup: “Divinely Uninspired To A Hellish Extent” by Lewis Capaldi. The songs are all rich with bitterness and pain and loneliness, but the song that I connected to and re-listened to most was “Someone You Loved.” It was the most popular song of the album, so I heard it most often on the radio, which contributed to its impact on me, but it was also powerful because it seemed to encompass all the emotions I was being overwhelmed with.

Growing up, I thought there was only one emotion I should encourage myself to feel: happiness. So when I had my first heartbreak in high school, I didn't know how to process the other emotions of grief, betrayal, anger, and the pure pain of the experience. Music was crucial as I started on my journey of allowing myself to experience and be aware of all these complex and messy emotions. Lewis Capaldi creates such an emotional tone in all of his music, and listening to it forced me to sit in my own pain and actually feel it. It was a new concept to me, and there was a lot of discomfort because I didn't know how to express what was going on in my head.

Because I didn't know how to express my thoughts, “Someone You Loved” was powerful because I felt so understood by the lyrics of the song. When I listened, it sounded like my experience was being described so perfectly by someone else, and hearing it in words gave me power to work through it. I found validation, and that in itself was comforting. The sound of the song was also very comforting, because it's a very simple song musically. It is mostly composed of repeating piano intervals and vocals, which gives more focus and power to the lyrics because there aren't any distracting artistic choices with the sounds. I found peace in the calm tune, and I felt heard through the emotional lyrics. The beginning piano notes will always evoke such a strong emotional and physiological response from me because those notes hold very emotional memories. The first time I heard the song it helped me navigate the healing process, and I started truly prioritizing my emotional health because of what I went through. I

started learning how to process and grow from complex emotions, and music was a useful tool as I started on my emotional awareness journey.

“Someone You Loved” was a song that I immediately felt connected to, but that hasn’t always been the case with powerful music in my life. There are certain songs that I didn’t have a strong connection with initially, but they became more powerful as time went on. I’ll go through an experience, and then listen to a song again after processing what I went through and I’ll realize the full impact of it. I realize that a certain song had been a part of the whole process, even though it wasn’t a conscious association. One of those songs is “Clearly” by Grace Vaanderwal, and although it isn’t meant as a religious song, it became a crucial part of my religious journey.

I spent 18 months serving a mission for my church, and that whole experience was filled with so many growing joys and pains. As a missionary, my purpose was to focus on how I could help other people, and I started prioritizing meeting their needs above my own. There were certain standards that were expected of me, and with my perfectionist mindset, I had many unattainable standards that I set for myself. I was hundreds of miles away from my family, friends, and familiar scenery, so I lacked lots of the resources and tools I had used before to work through hard emotions.

The whole experience was challenging, but I had one particular area and time that were extremely difficult. I was in a small town in Georgia, and I hadn’t ever felt that isolated in my life. There were some very unsafe spots in the area, and I had a few experiences that left me with feelings of terror, fear, and a lack of safety. With the schedule and expectations of being a missionary, I didn’t have much time to mentally process those emotions, and I was limited on the resources I had to cope. I didn’t have access to all the music I used before, which had become a main tool of processing. I remember an especially tough day, where the missionary I was working with and I were both emotionally and physically exhausted. We were driving to the church to do some planning, and we had music playing as we were driving. We pulled into the parking lot and parked the car, but we both needed a minute to rest before getting out, so we stayed to finish the song we were listening to. But as the song ended and the next song started playing, neither one of us moved as the words filled the car. It was the song “Clearly.”

It was my friend’s music, and technically I don’t know if it was allowed for missionaries. Yet, with all the expectations I felt, I sat and listened to it and didn’t feel an ounce of guilt for breaking this rule about music. There was something in the music that pulled me to keep listening, and I was searching for some sort of peace in the song. We had recently gone through some traumatic experiences that left us grappling with a lot of complex, heavy emotions. As we listened to the song, we both were searching for hope, or comfort, or joy, or anything that could be a divine sign that God was aware of us. However, the song ended, and we didn’t get any huge inspiration or “aha” moments from it, so we got out of the car and kept going through the motions, feeling empty and unfulfilled after listening to the music.

As I stayed in that area, I continued to wrestle with understanding and feeling a loss of purpose. Over the next five weeks, I only heard that song a handful of times, and every time I heard it, I was reminded of the first time I listened to it in that church parking lot. It held a lot of my heaviest, most complex emotions, so hearing the song was like opening up that painful wound every time.

Some time after returning from my mission, I had a major faith crisis. I was angry about things I had to experience on my mission, and I felt abandoned and betrayed by God. I stopped doing things I felt like God expected me to do, and I stopped doing anything that reminded me of my mission. My music changed to be more angry and sad because I wanted to hear what I was feeling. I was searching for

more understanding in music because I felt so lost. Religion has always been a huge part of my life and a core part of my identity, so struggling with it made me question who I was.

Over the summer, I dedicated myself to emotionally processing the events of my mission. Through the help of my therapist, I worked through the collection of repressed emotions that built up over the 18 months, and I found healing. I came to understand how religion fit into my life again, and my spirituality once again became part of how I defined myself, but in a way more balanced way. Towards the end of this whole process, I heard “Clearly” again. I expected to feel all those bitter feelings, but they were missing this time. All I could feel was joy for the bond with my friend that came as a result of all the scary situations we were in and the calm we felt in all the small moments enjoying the sunsets. I felt the happiness of driving on a dirt road to an authentic southern home-cooked meal and the serenity of sitting on the front porch talking about life after dinner. I finally felt the hope that I’d been searching for since the first time listening to “Clearly”, and I realized I was on the other side of healing. Instead of carrying all painful memories, the song carried the joy of my growth.

To me, music has become a tool to process emotions I can’t put in my own words. It has become a piece of the framing of crucial life events and has become part of my self-identity journey. Music holds so much for me: memories of my past, emotions of younger versions of me, and present realizations of who I am becoming. Part of what makes up an identity is the priorities of the individual, and my priorities can be found in the music I choose to listen to.

Music frames not only who I was and who I am now, but who I am becoming. If music has such a real power in my life, what am I giving power to? What type of music am I listening to, and how is it affecting how I see myself? If I’m limiting the amount of music I’m listening to, does that mean I’m limiting the amount of self-discovering I could be having? What am I getting out of the music I’m choosing?

After all, isn’t that the purpose of music? To get something out of the experience; for the artist to express emotions or an idea, and for the listener to be changed in some way because of it? Music increases knowledge and awareness of the world and aids in the journey of how individuals fit into it. It has helped me find my place in the world through heartbreak, religious questioning, and all the other disappointments and pains of life. Through it all, I am becoming a person that I am happy to be. For the rest of my life, I will be on a journey of self-acceptance and self-improvement, and music will continue to be a crucial part of the experience.