

The Future of the Test-Optional Policy at Notre Dame

Class of 2028 most competitive to date

WILL GRANNIS
Staff Writer

Notre Dame announced regular decision admissions for the Class of 2028 on Monday, March 18. The university admitted 1,600 students from a pool of 18,455 applications. Including restrictive early action decisions, the acceptance rate for the class was 11.1 percent, down slightly from 11.9 percent last year and almost half of the 22 percent acceptance rate for the Class of 2018.

The university's acceptance rate has fallen every year since the Class of 2022 cycle. A large factor in the plummeting acceptance rate is the increase in total applications. This year, 29,943 students applied for admission, an increase of almost 10,000 since the Class of 2022.

This admissions cycle marks the fourth year that the university did not require applicants to submit a standardized test score, and the university has announced that it will remain test-optional through at least the Class of 2029.

Other selective universities such as Yale, Dartmouth, and MIT have recently reversed their test-optional policies put in place during COVID and now require applicants to submit



Interior of the Golden Dome. Image by the Library of Congress

standardized test scores.

In Yale's press release on the matter, the university stated that, when reviewing the effects of the policy, they found it "frequently worked to the disadvantage of applicants from lower socio-economic backgrounds." The release also stated that "among all application components, test scores are the single greatest predictor of a student's future

Yale grades. This is true even after controlling for family income and other demographic variables."

Dartmouth similarly found that "high school grades paired with standardized testing are the most reliable indicators for success in Dartmouth's course of study. Test scores represent an especially valuable tool to identify high-achieving

applicants from low and middle-income backgrounds, who are first-generation college-bound, as well as students from urban and rural backgrounds."

In a June 2023 press release Micki Kidder, Vice President of Admissions at Notre Dame, spoke in favor of the policy: "A test-optional practice ensures that all high-potential students who have a desire to contribute

to the Notre Dame mission can apply and know that their applications will be reviewed in a comprehensive manner. Standardized test scores are just one of many important elements of a young person's application."

Kidder continued, "I am grateful that Notre Dame continues to review applications for growth in virtues and celebration for the many attributes of a young scholar, well beyond a single test score."

In comments to the *Observer* earlier this month, Kidder reported that while 56 percent of all applicants did not submit a score, this group comprised only about a third of admitted students. This suggests that a student chosen randomly from the pool that submitted scores would be more than twice as likely to be admitted as a student chosen randomly from the pool that did not submit scores.

The test-optional policy is not without detractors. David O'Connor, professor of philosophy at Notre Dame, stated that the university is no longer chiefly concerned with intellectual ability in its admissions decision process. Speaking to the *Rover*, he said that the primary task of the admissions department ought

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Student Government Hosts PrideFest 2024

Week-long celebration features panel on intersectionality, themed Acousticafé

MICHAEL CANADY
Campus Co-Editor

Notre Dame Student Government hosted PrideFest 2024, a week-long series of events beginning March 19, intended "to celebrate LGBTQ+ students and their place on campus." The week contained a "variety of programming to promote the right of each student to feel safe, welcomed and loved," according to the Student Government website. The week included three official events: a panel discussion on "intersectionality," an LGBTQ+ Acousticafé, and a "Pridefest Library Lawn Celebration."

This year's events marked the third annual celebration of

PrideFest, with current Student Body President Daniel Jung and Vice-President Aidan Rezner following in the footsteps of both the Lee-Stitt and Njomo-Bisner administrations in hosting and promoting the event. In previous years, programming included talks on LGBTQ+ history, a "Queer Joy" student panel, art showcases, and an "LGBTQ+ Remembrance Vigil."

After the week's conclusion, Jung told the *Rover*, "We thought that the PrideFest programming went well and successfully reached many students."

Jung told the *Rover*, "From the Student Government perspective, the goal of PrideFest was to support all Notre Dame students, but particularly those who identify as LGBTQ+.

Through programming like PrideFest, we hope students recognize that they are created in the *Imago Dei* and thus have immeasurable human dignity as children of God. We believe we were successful in this endeavor."

The incoming Kiser-Miller administration also included plans to "improve PrideFest efforts" in their campaign platform.

Dawson Kiser, president-elect of the student body, confirmed that his administration will host PrideFest again next year. He told the *Rover*, "We see the event as a way to ensure all Notre Dame students feel welcome on campus and an opportunity to foster the Spirit of Inclusion at Notre Dame."

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Notre Dame Faculty Testify at the Senate

O. Carter Snead joins de Nicola Senior Fellow for hearing on abortion post-Dobbs

HALEY GARECHT
Staff Writer

O. Carter Snead, Charles E. Rice Professor of Law and Director of the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture, and Dr. Monique C. Wubbenhorst, de Nicola Center Senior Fellow, testified before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary last week.

At a hearing entitled "The Continued Assault on Reproductive Freedoms in a Post-Dobbs America," the two Notre Dame affiliates joined three pro-choice activists for a panel discussion on March 20. Both Professor Snead and Dr. Wubbenhorst spoke on

the importance of protecting unborn children in light of recent state activity governing IVF and abortion access.

Alabama and Texas were the primary focuses of the hearing after controversial rulings on the unborn in both states. In *LePage v. Center for Reproductive Medicine*, the Alabama Supreme Court decided in favor of IVF patients whose embryos were killed through the clinic's negligence. The decision prompted nearby IVF clinics to close for fear of similar lawsuits.

Democrat witness Jamie Heard testified about her experience with IVF. She detailed her experience when her

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Founded in 2003, the *Irish Rover* is an independent, Catholic newspaper published fortnightly by students of the University of Notre Dame du Lac, and, as such, it receives no funding or official recognition from the University. Indeed, the ideas presented herein are not necessarily those of the University, although they probably should be.

The *Rover* was established by Notre Dame students who desired a strong and organized conservative voice on campus with the primary purpose of keeping the University true to its founding mission as a Roman Catholic institution. The *Rover* seeks to facilitate part of what the University's mission statement desires in its community: "a forum where through free inquiry and open discussion the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity." To provide this forum, the *Rover* offers a distinctive kind of coverage that includes campus news, religion, politics, culture, history, humor and sports.

Out of civility, the *Rover* will not critically mention names of students, professors, or administrators, unless the person is either a well-known member of the community, or he or she has openly sought publicity. Unsigned editorials represent the majority opinion of the *Rover's* Editorial Board, while content in individual columns represents the views of each respective author and should not be construed as representing the views of the entire staff. All comments and questions regarding the *Rover's* policies and editorial content, as well as Letters to the Editor, may be directed to the Editor-in-Chief, Nico Schmitz, at NDIrishRover@gmail.com or PO Box 46 Notre Dame IN 46556. These letters may be printed anonymously, upon request. Also, please visit our website www.irishrover.net, where you can peruse archives and subscribe to the paper.

“Those who know Notre Dame, no explanation is necessary. Those who don’t, no explanation will suffice.” – Lou Holtz



Notre Dame's Defining Character

NICO SCHMITZ

Editor-in-Chief



The divorce of Catholic values from the truth that underlies them has corrupted the character of many formerly Catholic institutions. For three years as an editor for the *Irish Rover*, I have worked with a team passionately and charitably devoted to maintaining the spirit of Notre Dame, which drew us all to this university several years ago. The *Rover's* official mission statement attributes this spirit to the Catholic *identity* of Notre Dame.

As a paper, the *Rover* seeks to preserve both the Catholic mission of Notre Dame and the Catholic identity—that is, the Catholic practices that undergird this mission in the world. I wish to use my final editorial as an editor of the *Rover* to suggest that we transform the terms of this discussion. Rather than addressing the mission and identity of the school as distinct, a more helpful device is that of her Catholic *character*.

Character, in its most generic sense, is a reference to the unique personality and moral qualities of an individual. It is most fully expressed and understood in actions, rather than in theoretical ideas. Colloquially, there are two senses of the word that hint at its truest meaning. If one were to say that their friend “has good character,” they are alluding to his honesty, integrity, and virtue. If one were to describe a different friend as “a real character,” you are most likely referencing the friend's unique and attractive personality.

Both uses—one referring

to virtue and the other to panache—come together to form a fuller understanding of character. *Character* refers to the conglomeration of virtues, beliefs, and relationships that make up a distinguishable and consistent way of living. More than just an orienting founding *mission* or an abstract term like *identity*, this holistic integrity baked into the meaning of *character* implies inherent relationality and self-examination.

Any visitor, admitted student, or current student who walks on campus is impressed with a certain indescribable *spirit*. This spirit is more than football traditions or Collegiate Gothic architecture. Notre Dame does not have the most successful football team in America nor is it the most beautiful campus in the country. Instead, it is an intangible sense that integrally unites things such as football or architecture to a living, vivifying character that holds a place of universal, one might say Catholic, importance. The *Rover*, in everything that it prints, articulates the character of Notre Dame.

This character is one informed and reflective of a distinctively Catholic university. Albeit uncommon, an honest read of the *Rover* highlights lectures, clubs, people, and more that reflect an earnest consideration of the questions that arise from a university—and its students—being Catholic.

The *Rover* politics section raises the important questions about political society that uniquely arise in the Catholic worldview. If we are members of a magisterial Church, how do we deal with earthly authority? If we are made to be citizens of heaven, how do we approach being citizens on earth? How do we deal with democratic principles of liberty in a religion defined by denial of self? All too often the university fails to force these rich questions of Catholicism and politics—questions that can only be asked at high-caliber Catholic universities such as Notre Dame that attract world-

renowned political theorists and curious, intelligent students.

The culture section combines analysis of the arts, events, and people that define the Notre Dame community. Notre Dame consciously produces architecture, music, and student performances that point towards the most authentic questions of what it means to be human and towards beauty in its fullest sense. It is this Catholic character that impels Notre Dame to hire in such a way that brings longtime South Dining Hall employee Dee Dolores together with her granddaughter. In her own words as reported by the *Rover*, Notre Dame uniquely “hires family.” The environment created by Notre Dame led to Forbes recently naming Notre Dame the best employer among large education institutions, and the number 20 large employer overall.

Whether discussing Notre Dame's world-renowned theology department and faculty in the religion section, or covering student groups that work to build a culture of life on campus, in the campus section the *Rover* is committed to articulating what it means to have a Catholic character. Instead of simply accepting Notre Dame as a public school within a Catholic neighborhood, this publication does the work that the university too often fails to do: promoting what questions and solutions *truly* arise from being a Catholic university.

There is no *character*, and hence no *Catholic* character, without integrity. Holding incoherent and clashing values on an institutional level fundamentally violates this principle of integrity. An institution cannot form its members if it does not itself demonstrate what it claims to instill in others.

Discarding truth, conflating Catholic values with relativistic secular agendas, and refusing to take courage in the face of violations of the faith erodes the character of the university that everyone holds so dearly. For example, no one believes that a university-sanctioned drag show

is an essential academic endeavor just as nobody really thought walking around in groups of 10 people rather than 11 helped stop COVID when we began as freshmen four years ago.

If we all want so desperately to admit that Notre Dame is an institution that can form people into not just good people but holy people, then we must admit that a weak, cowardly Notre Dame could equally form people in the opposite direction. While so many complain of the disruption the *Rover* may cause to the peaceful, collegial atmosphere of Notre Dame, I respond that there is no collegial atmosphere without the work done by the *Rover*. Without proper care for its *character*—for its honesty, integrity, and proper virtues—the good fruits we all reap from this collegial atmosphere, whether it's the architecture, academics, or relationships, are bound to rot.

There is no separating the values that may stem from Catholicism from the religion itself. There is no such thing as truth removed from the faith. And the faith cannot be watered down to mean open dialogue or *niceness*. Instead, in times of great discernment for the modern Catholic university we must be guided by an understanding of Catholic *character*.

Instead of Catholicism “informing our discussion” about bipartisanship and how Republicans are destroying the free-world, let Notre Dame guide the rest of the world by its Catholic political philosophy. Instead of installing campus sculptures composed of a jumble of shapes and letters, let Notre Dame highlight art that reminds those entering campus of beauty, tradition, and their Divine Creator. Developing character takes hardwork and courage. Most importantly, it takes having a conscience—a role that the *Rover* seeks to fill in all its endeavors.

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The Marriage of Joseph and Mary

Recognizing the ordinary amid the extraordinary

JOHN CAVADINI

The juxtaposition of the two solemnities of the Annunciation (though deferred) and the feast of St. Joseph suggests an opportunity to meditate on the Holy Family. We more naturally associate the Holy Family with Christmastime, but these two closely coordinated celebrations focus the lens a little differently, less towards the Nativity itself and more towards the marriage of Mary and Joseph.

We read in Luke that the angel Gabriel was specifically “sent from God ... to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David” (Lk. 1.26-27). It is easy to forget, but St. Joseph is included in the narrative of the Annunciation. The angel, “sent from God,” revealed God’s design not only that His Son be conceived virginally but, equally, that He be conceived in a marriage, in a family—uniquely so, but nevertheless so. Not only Mary but her marriage with Joseph was predestined, from all eternity, to receive, on behalf of all humanity, the miracle of the Incarnation.

In the corresponding story in Matthew, we read “the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 1.18). It specifically notes that the conception by the Holy Spirit was in Mary who *had been* already betrothed to Joseph. Mary and Joseph are inseparably introduced in both Gospels. God could have chosen a different way. He could have been a little more respectably dazzling. After all, it was the conception of an eternal Person with all divine power at His disposal! Why not find some famous virgin and rent out the Circus Maximus in Rome and sell tickets to the miraculous virginal conception and, maybe an hour later, the birth of this super-prestigious baby? Gosh, why choose an ordinary marriage of impoverished and dispossessed nobility (the worst kind) where no one could possibly know about it? No razzle-dazzle? How disappointing.

At least, that is the devil’s considered opinion. Could this unbelievably ordinary family have produced the Son of God? The devil tempts Jesus later on to produce some appropriate dazzle: Jump off this building; make these stones bread! That is the devil’s idea of what a respectable Son of God should be.

But, “How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!” to a family of husband and wife—so ordinary, so unremarkable, so pedestrian, and so difficult. Working out the

custody of this shared miraculous gift is the sum and substance of Mary and Joseph’s marriage.

Of course, we know that Mary and Joseph were both uniquely prepared to be married to each other in this unique circumstance. Mary is “full of grace.” Origen of Alexandria comments that Mary is troubled because she knows that this designation has never been used

have insisted at very least on a personal audience. Nevertheless he gives himself to Mary, utterly and without reserve, in marriage, trusting in God’s word. In this, as Bishop Flores of Brownsville has noted, he is foreshadowing the gift of his Son to His Bride, the Church, a marriage consummated by the supreme self-gift of His blood.

God could have chosen any

paternity cost him everything. We fathers in the Church can learn from him how to love! Are we looking to dazzle anyone by our illustrious careers? Are we even willing to be as ordinary as becoming a father? Are we invested in the very non-dazzling self-giving love which is the true vocation of husband and father?

Mary, for her part, “full of grace,” did not lead a charmed

complete with that piercing word, “Father,” pointedly tailored to His Mother’s complaint and intentionally *not* meaning Joseph. We must imagine a difficult, wholly non-dazzling but very interior marital intimacy as Mary “pondered these things in her heart,” patient with Her Son, and the family heads back to Nazareth where Jesus was “obedient to them” (Lk. 2.3). “Son though He was, He learned obedience” (Heb. 5.8). “How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!”

Joseph disappears from view. His paternity is consummated having brought Jesus up until his “hour” had come. Mary’s hour is yet to come. We find her next in Luke seemingly rebuffed by Jesus: “Your mother and your brethren are standing outside, desiring to see you!” But He said in reply, “My mother and my brethren are those who hear the word of God and do it” (Lk. 8.20). Ouch! “And I thought I was special!” Mary could have thought. And yet—precisely we have seen, in this very Gospel, how, “full of grace,” Mary “heard the word of God” and did it. The crowd is not impressed—just another pushy mother wanting a little of her son’s fame to brush off on her (they thought)—but what should Jesus do? Blow the humility that His Father willed from all eternity? No. She is seemingly as ordinary as any mother in any crowd, anxious and powerless to reach her son. But we know she never left His side. Even on purely Lukan terms, she sticks with the Apostles after the death of Jesus, which would seem to have dashed all her hopes.

We see her at the foot of the Cross in the Fourth Gospel. Her “hour” has come. Jesus refers to her as “Mother” only once in John—as He gives her away. She is asked to give up the one thing she thought she had, her one claim to fame, her special relationship to her special Son. John seems hardly a substitute. She is willing. And in this final gift, her maternity is expanded. Or rather she comes to see what it had always been. Her self-gift was to Christ, yes, but to “the whole Christ.” In accepting her maternity of the Head, she was all along accepting her maternity of His whole Body. Her burning charity, full of grace, always included us all. And with her at that moment on Good Friday, we come to realize the full meaning of the Holy Family as we too, in the person of St. John, are received into it.



The Holy Family by Juan Simón Gutiérrez

before by anyone in Scripture. Its uniqueness is reflected in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

But Joseph, too, is given a special qualifier: “Her husband Joseph, being a just man” was unwilling to put his inexplicably pregnant wife to shame. He resolved to “send her away quietly” (Mt. 1.19). It’s only one word, “just,” but it sums up perfection according to the Law and thus as Matthew, who proclaims Jesus as the new Moses, understands it. What is this justice? Matthew reveals it in the first Beatitude: “Blessed are the poor in spirit!” (Mt. 5.3). Jesus fulfills the Law in the perfection of poverty of spirit, in His love. His predestined earthly (though not natural) Dad is pre-configured to this perfection. Matthew shows us what this means. Joseph without hesitation bends to the will of God as soon as he knows it, even though relayed in dreams by an angel. Perhaps he could

number of ways to house the Incarnate Word. He didn’t need St. Joseph, he didn’t need a family. God is omnipotent. He has a lot of options. But God “emptied Himself” (Phil. 2.7). He reaffirmed the loving commitment to us that Creation was in the first place, humbling Himself, contouring Himself to the dimensions of the creature, to the family He had created, content to be someone’s baby and to utter humiliating (for God, anyway) wailings like any newborn. St. Joseph never tried to dazzle anyone by revealing who this kid was and (like I would) selling tickets for a glimpse. His paternity is a holocaust, a whole burnt offering, without even the ability to give an account to anyone as to his identity. His love, his poverty of spirit, weaves a cloak of invisibility around his family. The devil does not believe in love. It blocks his vision. Looking to be dazzled, he has contempt for St. Joseph and his insufferably dull family. Joseph’s

life. Grace isn’t magic. She may have been tempted to wonder why, apart from the Annunciation itself, God communicated to Joseph all the time. Why were all directions relayed to him? But her largeness of heart, full of grace, does not admit these thoughts. Working out these kinds of things is the stuff of intimacy in a real marriage, as opposed to the air-brushed variety we are inclined to assign Mary and Joseph. Being “full of grace” did not exempt Mary from struggle and growth but actually impelled it.

On one level, this means growth in her relationship with St. Joseph. At the finding of the boy Jesus in the Temple, Mary explains to her divine Son that he hurt both his parents’ feelings and caused a lot of hassle by staying behind: “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously!” (Lk. 2.49). Neither of them understood their Son’s seemingly uncaring reply,

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Yoram Hazony Addresses Anti-Semitism on College Campuses

Israeli political theorist considers limits on free speech

LUCY SPENCE

Staff Writer

Notre Dame's Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government (CCCG) hosted American-Israeli philosopher, biblical scholar, and political theorist Yoram Hazony on February 26. In the wake of heated debates regarding free speech and anti-Semitism on college campuses, his visit is part of Notre Dame's ongoing effort to promote open academic discussions.

Hazony's lecture, titled "Judaism and Free Speech on Campus Post-October 7, 2023," addressed the politically hostile atmospheres on college campuses surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict. Hazony also examined the role universities play in using free speech as a weapon to silence differing viewpoints.

After the October 7, 2023 Hamas terrorist attack—the single bloodiest day for Jews since the Holocaust—leading American universities began to issue public declarations of support for either Gaza or Israel. These statements sparked debate and protests between administrators and students on campuses across the country.

Professor Philip Muñoz, director of the CCCG and a professor of political science and law, introduced Hazony. Muñoz remarked briefly on American educational mores: "What happened on America's college campuses after 10/7/2023 was shocking. The events on campus brought into question the moral health of our universities, brought into question the role of free speech at our universities—what it should be and what it

limits ought to be."

Hazony argued that elite American universities have been taken over by neo-Marxists, pointing to the congressional testimony of three Ivy League presidents who refused to unequivocally denounce calls on their campuses for the genocide of Jews.

Hazony said that he disagreed with the response championed by intellectuals such as Robert P. George, Jonathan Haidt, and Stephen Pinker. George recently argued that individuals at universities should be free to "examine and defend or criticize any idea, including ideas we judge to be extreme and even evil."

Hazony denounced this view of free speech: "The substance of the arguments that are circulating is that what would be best ... is to just allow everybody to call for the extermination of everybody else. And then let's bring out the best arguments on all sides and see the truth win out."

He continued, "I think this is naive. What we are watching is the conquest of the most prestigious idea-producing institutions in America by a group of people who have no interest in participating in a legitimate debate of free speech. ... Rather, they express their views in the context of a broader strategy of employing threats, aggression, deception, and a wide variety of forms of abuse in order to intimidate and silence anyone who dissents."

For Hazony, the solution is not to throw open the doors to any and all forms of expression, but rather to renew efforts to abide by the original aims of free speech: "An exchange of honors

is what makes free speech possible. Free speech can't help where speech is being used to destroy free speech. ... In a sphere of free speech there are always boundaries, there always were boundaries, there always will be. There's no such thing as absolute free speech."

Some students disagreed with Hazony. Junior Will Grannis argued, "Notre Dame hasn't had the same sort of trouble with extreme speech since October 7 as other elite universities, despite the fact that we are generally friendlier to all sorts of speech. It seems like genuine free dialogue constrains extremism far better than top-down pronouncements."

He added, "I don't think that the primary role of a university is to be a hub of free speech; it ought to be in the business of forming students. ... The best way to create intelligent, well-formed graduates is with free speech, but establishing free speech as an end in itself is putting the cart before the horse."

After the lecture, Hazony answered further questions in a conversation with political science professor Patrick Deneen, the organizer of the event. In the session, Hazony elaborated his position: "I think our only hope is to try to transcend whether someone feels insulted and move to some kind of objective standard of what kinds of things our students should be taught



Image by the CCCG

to avoid as part of participating in a society in which we need to coexist with other people."

During his visit, Hazony also attended a breakfast and discussion with the CCCG's undergraduate Tocqueville Fellows. Sophomore Alejandra Ricardo commented: "The Tocqueville breakfast with Dr. Hazony was an incredibly enriching experience. I was already sympathetic toward his views about anti-Semitism on college campuses, but his visit definitely strengthened my commitment to that position."

Fr. Bill Miscamble, C.S.C., professor of history at Notre Dame, reflected on Hazony's lecture and the role of the Catholic university in protecting and restricting speech: "A true Catholic university like Notre Dame should be a place in which genuine intellectual and political conversations occur within the framework of our Catholic intellectual tradition."

Fr. Miscamble continued, "Hazony noted persuasively that there are certain ideas which can be generally incorporated under the label of 'progressive wokeism' that deeply handicap a genuine pursuit of truth. It has been deeply worrying to see the extent of anti-Semitic activity on some campuses, and it is important that Notre Dame faculty and students grasp this reality and work to ensure that such thinking is rejected here."

Lucy Spence is a freshman from Northern Virginia studying piano performance and constitutional studies. Her depleted number of FlexPoints, a result of her exorbitant coffee intake, has recently prompted her to start a GoFundMe. Donate to the cause at lspence@nd.edu.

Admissions Policy *continued from front*

admissions department ought to be to "distinguish between people who are simply good at accumulating credentials from those who really display penetrating and creative intellectual talent."

O'Connor observed that the admissions department has instead begun to focus more on sociability: "To displace that primary task into a search for a certain kind of sociability is likely to both be ineffective and to diminish the intellectual quality of our best students, or to give us fewer students who have the highest level of intellectual quality. I see the elimination of the SAT as designed to give freer reign to the admissions department in the search for sociability rather than intellectual distinction."

Brian Mulholland, an assistant professor of mathematics with a research focus in math pedagogy, thinks that it is hard to disentangle the test-option-

al policy from other factors in evaluating potential academic shortcomings of the students. He told *Rover*, "Ultimately, I am supportive of viewing students holistically and not simply based on a single factor like the SAT. As for general student aptitude, the learning loss due to the COVID-19 response has markedly impacted mathematics education. Formative mathematics has demonstrated the least resilience in the recovery phase."

Mulholland continued, "Given that admissions policies were introduced during the COVID and post-COVID era, personally I believe there is insufficient data to conclusively determine the effects on overall student proficiency. To me it remains unclear whether the observed challenges in student aptitude are directly attributable to SAT admission policies or if they are residual impacts of the pandemic."

In a 2022 interview with the *Rover*, former Associate Vice President for Undergraduate

Enrollment Don Bishop expressed some concerns over the direction of the test-optional policy. He said, "If the trends we saw this year and last year [2021 and 2022] persist, and if the students applying to the most selective colleges seem to withhold their test scores if their scores are below the median score for enrolled students, then it is likely that many of the most selective colleges will elect to return to requiring the test."

Bishop also described how high schools are adjusting to the change in testing policy. He explained, "High schools increasingly are altering rank in class data to cluster many students to be ranked number one in the class. Some schools are ranking as many as one-fourth of all their students as number one."

The *Rover* report from 2022 also illuminated a drastic change in the number of waitlisted students. This 71 percent increase in the amount of waitlisted students from 2020 to 2022 was reflective

both of the increased difficulty in discerning the quality of student and of an explicit effort by the university to maintain their relationship with high schools.

Bishop explained, "When you have a jump in applications like we did, you expand the waitlist to protect the high school counselors. It shows them that they were close." He clarified that it often takes several years for people to adjust to a more selective acceptance rate, but the wait-list sends the message of "denied with honors" and protects the credibility of the high school.

Notre Dame has not shared the waitlist numbers for the last two admitted classes.

In addition to the test-optional policy precluding consideration of standardized, quantitative academic performance in college admissions, this year also marks the first time admissions counselors were prevented from considering race in their decisions.

After the end of the

admissions cycle in 2023, the Supreme Court case *Students For Fair Admissions v. Harvard* held that Harvard's use of race in admissions was unconstitutional. Notre Dame signed onto an amicus brief in support of race-conscious admissions, but it is unknown what changes, if any, the university has made in the wake of the ruling. No data is available on the racial composition of the incoming class, but more information should be released after accepted students enroll.

No data was available regarding what percentage of the admitted cohort is Catholic, although historically this number has held steady around 80 percent. Accepted students have until May 1 to confirm their enrollment.

Will Grannis is a junior pure mathematics and theology major living in Steds. Contact him at wgrannis@nd.edu.



Sorin Fellows Make Pilgrimage to the UK

Students explore the history of English conversion and martyrdom

MADELYN STOUT

Layout Manager

The de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC) organized a week-long pilgrimage over spring break for selected applicants of its Sorin Fellows cohort. Thirty students visited historical and holy sites across England, including Ramsgate, Canterbury, London, Stonor Park, Oxford, and Salisbury. They also attended seminars on Ss. Thomas More, Edmund Campion, Robert Southwell, and John Henry Newman, as well as authors G.K. Chesterton and C.S. Lewis.

David Younger, the dCEC Student Formation Program Manager, told the *Rover*, “With the richness of the Catholic intellectual and moral traditions, a pilgrimage to the UK with a focus on martyrs and converts fits with our programming rather well.”

He continued, “A pilgrimage can be often described as a journey, sometimes internationally, where one is in search of personal growth and, in the Catholic context, through a spiritual lens where one’s faith is explored and reflected upon for the purpose of deepening our relationship with

*Image by the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture*

God.”

Stories of martyrdom and conversion from the history of English Catholicism lay at the heart of excursions on the pilgrimage, and the pilgrimage began with a trip to a central site in the conversion of England. This first stop took pilgrims to the Shrine of St. Augustine of Canterbury in Ramsgate, which stands near the spot where St. Augustine landed after he

was sent to the island by Pope Gregory the Great in the sixth century to evangelize England.

The current shrine, built in the 19th century by Augustus Pugin—the famed architect of Parliament’s clock tower ‘Big Ben’ and a convert to Catholicism—replaced an original shrine to the apostle to England that stood further inland at Canterbury but was destroyed during the Protestant Reformation.

Father Bill Dailey, C.S.C. accompanied the students as chaplain and celebrated daily Mass throughout the pilgrimage at various shrines, oratories, and priories. When discussing the pilgrimage with the *Rover*, Fr. Dailey noted “how blessed we were to be able to walk and pray where great saints walked and prayed.”

“There’s something in the traveling, the walking, and in

being in the very place that moves the heart and shapes the imagination,” he concluded.

The pilgrimage continued to the site of St. Thomas Becket’s martyrdom at Canterbury Cathedral and the site of St. Thomas More’s imprisonment, death, and likely burial at the Tower of London.

Canterbury Cathedral originally housed the relics of St. Thomas Becket and was one of the most visited pilgrimage sites in Christendom, as seen in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. Fellows were unable to venerate the relics of Becket in Canterbury though, as they were either covertly transferred or destroyed during the English Reformation. The group revered a smaller relic of St. Augustine of Canterbury—whose relics suffered a similar fate as Becket’s during the Reformation—at the shrine in Ramsgate because a small portion of his bone was sent abroad to Europe in the decades preceding the Reformation.

While at the Tower of London, a few fellows were able to join Fr. Dailey in prayer in the cell where St. Thomas More was imprisoned. More, a faithful Catholic who served as Lord Chancellor of England, is

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PrideFest

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PrideFest 2024 opened with a panel discussion titled, “Connecting Through Conversation: A Discussion on Intersectionality at Notre Dame,” which featured three Notre Dame professors: Dianne Pinderhughes of Africana Studies and political science, Francisco Robles of English and gender studies, and Vanessa Miseres of Spanish.

Jung defined intersectionality for the *Rover* as “the way in which one’s own multiple identities come together and interact in unique ways.”

Greg Gehring, the Student Government Director of Gender Relations for LGBTQ+ Advocacy, stated that the panel’s purpose was “for students to develop a deeper understanding of how intersectionality acts at Notre Dame, and how different identities can react with each other at Notre Dame.” Among other topics, the panel reflected on the relationship between “LGBTQ+ issues” and Catholicism at Notre Dame.

Pinderhughes described the conflicts that surround “issues of gender and sexuality” at a Catholic school, noting, “We’re always fighting about them.” She also noted her concern about “the fact that the university presidency can only be held by a member of the Holy Cross order, a priest who’s been a member of the faculty here.”

Despite her general concerns with Notre Dame, Pinderhughes

praised Fr. Bob Dowd as “a very good selection” for the next university president. She referenced his work and interest “in foreign third-world countries” and that this makes him “a very different kind of president than we have had in the past.”

In response to a question regarding the university’s approach to “academic freedom,” Pinderhughes noted that the university should look at “a whole variety of ways of understanding ideas, philosophy, politics, the role of women, and the role of women in the church. ... They really need to be more open to women playing a variety of roles, whatever those roles are.”

Robles also spoke on the intersection of these issues with Notre Dame’s Catholicism: “Sometimes it feels like this institution, or some people at this institution, don’t want to find ways to reconcile with you or to understand what difference is. ... This question of *difference* is what makes us humans.”

Robles continued, “You can’t have a society where everyone is identical, where everyone is the same. We can’t have a church where everyone believes the same exact thing, or does the same exact thing. That’s not a church, that’s a single thing.”

In response to a question about “the LGBTQ+ issues at Notre Dame,” Robles stated, “The biggest issue is the enormous amount of separation between the freedom that students have, administrative staff has, and

*Image by the Irish Rover*

faculty has, in terms of being out of the closet. ... As a gay man, there are no impediments to my life here in South Bend, there just aren’t. I don’t know how else to put it. But I do know that that’s not the case for students. I do know that’s absolutely not the case for administrative staff.”

Jung reflected on the event to the *Rover*: “The panel was highly educational and enabled listeners to understand how the different and unique identities of our selected panelists shaped and molded their lived experiences.” 15 students attended the panel, including Student Government staff.

In collaboration with the Student Union Board (SUB), the Acousticafé was held in Hagerty Family Commons. One attendee reflected positively on the experience, telling the *Rover*,

“the performers were great.”

This event was a special iteration of the weekly Acousticafé hosted by SUB at 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays. The usual event is open to all student performers and musicians, but the PrideFest event specifically “highlight[ed] LGBTQ+ artists,” according to the Student Government announcement.

As the final event of the week, the PrideFest Library Lawn Celebration lasted for four hours. Food and entertainment were provided, including “free food trucks, photo booths, and LGBTQ+ related resources on how to be an ally.”

Those who attended the celebration praised the “good community of the week.” Ben Martin, Student Government Director of National Affairs and Political Engagement, told the

Rover, “It was really good, it was a lot of people out enjoying the good energy ... good people, good vibes.”

Another attendee stated, “I think the week went well and really spread good unity for everyone.”

In hosting PrideFest, Notre Dame followed a nationwide trend of other elite universities that also host similar Pride celebrations, including Princeton, Dartmouth, Yale, and Georgetown.

Michael Canady is a sophomore studying classics and constitutional studies. His current interests include the JFK Assassination and whether his last name’s etymology has evolved from Kennedy. He can be reached at mcanady2@nd.edu.

Liturgical Choir Performs Mozart's *Requiem*
Famous work sung in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart for the first time

MADELINE HUIE
Staff Writer

The Notre Dame Liturgical Choir performed Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem in D minor* in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart for the first time in the basilica's history on March 24, 2024.

The *Requiem*, popularized in recent decades by the 1984 film *Amadeus*, was composed by Mozart shortly before his death in 1791. Though he did not complete the work before his early death at 35, the Mass was soon completed by Franz Süssmayr. In his closing remarks at the performance, Fr. Brian Ching, C.S.C. commented how fitting it is to perform this *Requiem* during the week in which we commemorate Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection.

The Liturgical Choir spent several months rehearsing this eight-section masterpiece; singers began studying their scores in September. The length and difficulty of the music posed an immense challenge, but the choir collectively strove to learn the music and perform it with feeling.

Junior soprano Caroline Gramm said of the rehearsal



Image by the Irish Rover

process, "We picked up on the difficult music a lot more quickly than our director Andy had anticipated. I honestly think this was due to the amount of passion people had for this piece of music. The excitement surrounding this *Requiem* was palpable among the choristers, both in and out of rehearsal."

Director Andrew J. McShane agreed, saying, "The choir loves the music so much that teaching it was easy." McShane, who first performed the *Requiem* as an undergraduate in college at Wayne State University,

frequently reminded the choir that this opportunity was a rare one: "You don't get to do pieces like this very often," he told the singers.

Though Mozart's *Requiem* is widely performed today, it had never before been performed in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Gramm told the *Rover*, "The space invokes a sense of piety and awe of God's majesty, and is a reminder that heaven will be all the more glorious. Performing the *Requiem* in the basilica, rather than DPAC for example, invokes that same

appreciation. It allows us to perform this *Requiem* not as a concert, but as a prayer of petition to God to remember those who have departed this life."

The choir remembered in a special way those who have passed from this life into the next with a book of remembrance, which was filled with

names of the faithful departed and placed on a podium in front of the orchestra. There was also no applause during or after the performance in order to better remember the spirit of Holy Week as well as the souls of the faithful departed.

The dedication of the choir and its directors made an impression on many who attended the performance. Freshman Anna Hale told the *Rover*: "The *Requiem* was such a great way to begin Holy Week. The voices of the choristers were truly angelic, and together with

the instrumentation, anchored me and helped to orient me toward the true spirit of the week." She continued, "Merely attending the performance was a beautiful way to praise God and prepare for his Passion, death, and Resurrection."

Those who attended the performance were moved by the beauty of the music as well as of the space itself. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend told one singer that he "experienced something transcendent" during the performance, which was standing room only.

Though the concert was free and open to the public, the Liturgical Choir took up a free-will offering to benefit the restoration of St. Adalbert Church in South Bend.

Madeline Huie is a sophomore triple majoring in classics, theology, and music performance. She hopes that Holy Week is spiritually fulfilling for all, and she will be excited to finally get some sleep when it is over. Please send conspiracy theories about ancient Rome (or business-related inquiries) to mhuie@nd.edu.

Pilgrimage
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remembered for his refusal to recognize King Henry VIII as the supreme head of the church in England. Other pilgrims visited Beauchamp Tower, where Catholics imprisoned during the Reformation left carvings—many of them biblical quotations in Latin—in the walls, forever memorializing their witness to the faith in the face of persecution.

Throughout the week, the pilgrims also visited other sites connected to various English martyrs. One such site was Tyburn Abbey, a cloistered convent a few hundred yards from the site of the Tyburn Tree, where many Catholics—including St. Edmund Campion—were executed for their adherence to the faith. At Stonor Park, a country manor owned by a recusant Catholic noble family, the pilgrims saw the room where Campion hid

from royal authorities and secretly published his *Decem Rationes*, the apologetic tract that led to his capture, torture, and execution.

The pilgrims also encountered stories of conversion throughout England. They spent an afternoon at the Notre Dame London Global Gateway, where they engaged in a seminar on G.K. Chesterton, the English journalist and convert, and viewed pieces from the Chesterton Archive. Additionally, as they made their way to Oxford, the pilgrims visited Littlemore, where St. John Henry Newman retreated from the university to pray and write. It was in this small cottage in 1845 that Newman was received into the Church by Blessed Dominic Barberi.

Sophomore Sorin Fellow Theo Austin told the *Rover*, "We had the opportunity to learn about and discuss the thoughts of many English greats, most notably St. John Henry Newman. As a

focus of the trip, the concept of a 'second spring' of the Catholic Church in England brought me to a deeper understanding of the life of the Church there and an understanding of the new life which has and will be emerging through the witness of the saints and martyrs."

During their time at Oxford, the pilgrims were able to walk in the footsteps of Newman, C.S. Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien. They attended Mass at Tolkien's home parish, the Catholic Church of Ss. Gregory and Augustine, and the University of Oxford's Blackfriars Hall Dominican chapel, before engaging in seminars on Newman's and Lewis' conversions.

On the last day of the pilgrimage, separate groups of Sorin Fellows took a country walk through the Cotswolds in the footsteps of Lewis and Tolkien, traveled to Salisbury to visit the cathedral, or stayed in Oxford.

Junior Sorin Fellow Katiebelle

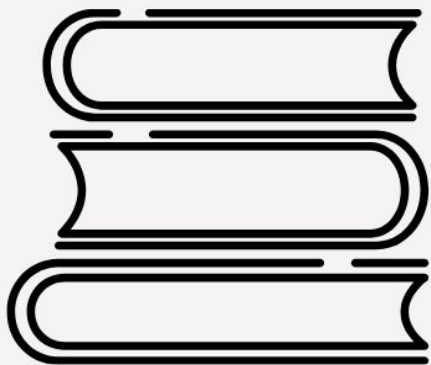
Thompson remarked on the effects of the pilgrimage: "Before this trip, I did not know how rich its history of Catholic martyrdom was, and I certainly gained a deeper appreciation for English Catholicism's spirit of survival, loving dedication, and perseverance. ... It was very humbling to see the immense self-sacrifice of the English saints. It was inspiring and has awakened my curiosity about a life of voluntary asceticism."

Prior to the trip overseas, the dCEC hosted events that exemplified the faith of Becket and More. Students participated in and watched a staged reading of T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, which recounted Becket's death at the hands of agents of Henry II. Earlier in the semester, the future pilgrims attended a big-screen showing of the acclaimed film, *A Man for All Seasons*, which depicts More's final years as Lord Chancellor.

Jason Baxter, visiting associate researcher at the dCEC, also

accompanied the students on the trip and directed the academic seminars during the pilgrimage. He told the *Rover*, "England is a place that a lot of us have visited or will visit, but we don't often go there with an eye to its spiritual heritage. This trip, in a way, was a surprising trip, because we were trying to rediscover, to get a feel for a whole forgotten chapter of the Church's life."

Madelyn Stout is an Anglophile studying English and political science. She embraced the spirit of Tolkien on the pilgrimage, having known half of the participants half as well as she should like, and liking less than half of them half as well as they deserve. If you want to hear about her time in St. Thomas More's cell, watch *Masterpiece Theater*, see her picture with a Dalek, translate Old English, or enjoy a spot of tea, email her at mstout2@nd.edu.



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St. Joseph's Day On Campus

Congregation of Holy Cross and Knights of Columbus celebrate important solemnity

BARTOSZ KAROL CHRAMIEC
Staff Writer

Holy Cross religious commemorated the Solemnity of St. Joseph, one of two solemnities that typically fall during Lent, with celebrations across campus. St. Joseph is the patron saint of the Brothers of Holy Cross.

The Holy Cross brothers are colloquially known in French as *Joséphites*. At the final profession of vows, they receive a St. Joseph medal as the final part of the habit that they have worn since their first profession of vows. The only canonized Holy Cross religious, St. André Bessette, a Holy Cross brother, is famous for his devotion to St. Joseph and the founding of the St. Joseph Oratory in Montreal, the largest oratory to St. Joseph in North America.

The Holy Cross Brothers were founded in 1820 as the Brothers of St. Joseph by Fr. Jacques-François Dujarié to educate boys in the rural areas around Le Mans, France. Br. Donald Stabrowski, C.S.C. told the *Rover* that one of the many reasons Fr. Dujarié chose St. Joseph as patron was so that the members of the newly-founded society would “replicate St. Joseph in [their] lives as humble and hard-working men to assist the clergy and the parishes in educating the post-Revolutionary children of France in religious instruction.”

The Congregation of Holy

Cross was formed when Bl. Basil Moreau united the Brothers of St. Joseph with his recently-formed Auxiliary Priests. This new society of priests and brothers took the name “Holy Cross” from the suburb of Le Mans that was their headquarters—Sainte-Croix.

This year, Holy Cross religious, along with students, staff, and faculty, celebrated the solemnity by attending the 5:15 p.m. Mass at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. It was celebrated by Fr. William Lies, C.S.C., Provincial Superior of the United States Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross, with Dcn. Brian Vetter, C.S.C. as the homilist. The Liturgical Choir sang for the special occasion.

St. Joseph's feast day is also an important day for the Knights of Columbus. Fr. Brian Ching, C.S.C., chaplain of the Notre Dame Knights of Columbus Council, explained to the *Rover*, “As an organization of Catholic Men, the Knights have always looked to St. Joseph as a model husband and father and had sought his intercession as the protector of the Holy Church.”

The Notre Dame Knights



Image by the Irish Rover

of Columbus celebrated by organizing a consecration to St. Joseph after the 5:15 p.m. Mass. The 33-day preparation for the consecration, based on Fr. Donald Calloway's *Consecration to St. Joseph*, began on February 16. The preparation consisted of a daily reading from *Consecration to St. Joseph* and praying the Litany of St. Joseph. Each week, participants met as a group, discussed the readings, and prayed together.

Freshman knight Gabriel Ortner, who participated

in the St. Joseph consecration, said he decided to consecrate himself because he needed “a role model and patron to call upon for help when [he needs] to be strong.” He added that he chose to consecrate himself to St. Joseph “to prepare [himself] to be a father who [his] family and community can depend on in a world abounding with broken families.”

On the Thursday, March 21 after St. Joseph's Feast Day, Moreau Seminary celebrated St. Joseph by organizing an Italian-themed social after Lucernarium, their weekly night prayer service. In Italy,

St. Joseph's Day has been an important celebration day since the Middle Ages, when his intercession relieved Sicily from a famine.

Though there were meatballs at the St. Joseph social, the traditional St. Joseph's day meal contains no meat, as the old regulations for Lent did not allow for the consumption of meat at all. According to an informative sign, the main course is “typically a pasta dish with sardines and tomatoes, and sprinkled with breadcrumbs to represent the sawdust of

a carpenter.” Various other dishes accompany this main meal, such as lentil soups and vegetable dishes made of fava beans, the crop that grew bountifully because of St. Joseph's intercession.

A St. Joseph table, or altar, was set up in the common room of the seminary. According to an informational sign, a St. Joseph table is a traditional Sicilian way of showing thanks to St. Joseph. It typically has three levels to symbolize the Holy Trinity, with a statue or image of St. Joseph or the Holy Family on the top. The table is decorated with lilies—St. Joseph's flower—and vigil candles of brown, green, and dark yellow, colors associated with St. Joseph. Breads baked in various shapes, such as a cross and carpentry tools, are also placed on the table.

The St. Joseph's day celebrations were recognized by many students as particularly fruitful in light of the observation of Lent, as Holy Cross religious and Notre Dame students alike prepare for Easter this March 31.

Bartosz is currently taking a *Rover*-recommended class with Fr. Gregory Haake, C.S.C. about images of the priest in French culture. If you want to learn more about why M. le Curé de Torcy is literally him, email Bartosz at bartosz.chramiec@nd.edu.

Notre Dame Forum Attacks Online “Disinformation”

Journalist Maria Ressa maligns Trump, criticizes GOP

AEDAN WHALEN
Staff Writer

The Notre Dame Forum hosted Maria Ressa, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, on Wednesday, March 20, for a keynote address entitled “Safeguarding Democracy in an Era of AI and Digital Disinformation.” An accomplished journalist, Ressa is the co-founder and CEO of Rappler, the Philippines' top digital-only news site. The event was co-sponsored by the Office of the President and the Keough School of Global Affairs. It was the final keynote event for the Notre Dame Forum's 2023–24 series on “The Future of Democracy.”

Speaking to a packed Smith Ballroom in the Morris Inn, Ressa argued that the unchecked power of social media has put American democracy in dire straits. She lamented that journalists have been usurped in their role as “gatekeepers to the public sphere,” as tech companies have replaced mainstream journalism with person-to-person communication. Ressa

expressed concern that the advent of such free communication has left the public unsure of what to believe, as social media platforms are flooded with disinformation.

Ressa then spent significant time criticizing the “disinformation” campaign surrounding the 2020 U.S. presidential election and the idea that its results were significantly affected by voter fraud. First, she asserted that the “metanarrative for election fraud was seeded” by nefarious forces, such as Russian state media. She then tracked its mainstream propagation by figures like Steve Bannon, Tucker Carlson, and Alex Jones. Though nearly seventy percent of Republicans and more than a third of all Americans think that Joe Biden won illegitimately, Ressa condemned their “metanarrative,” lamenting that, though “they were all taken down ... no one was responsible for the damage they did. Someone should be responsible.”

She then connected the problem directly to former President Donald Trump, insinuating that he bears responsibility for the January 6 Capitol riot: “QAnon drops it, and then President

Trump comes out with it afterwards. And what did we get? That violence [of January 6].”

Transitioning to a discussion of current violent metanarratives, Ressa put a *New York Times* headline on the screen: “G.O.P. Targets Researchers Who Study Disinformation Ahead of 2024 Election.” Ressa fumed, “You are walking into your elections with news getting choked ... Demand better.”

As he introduced Ressa prior to the address, Fr. Jenkins claimed that she “exemplifies what we really prize here at Notre Dame,” and praised her commitment to “combatting disinformation.”

During a question and answer session following the lecture, Ressa was asked to elaborate on her comment about holding responsible those who speculated on election fraud. She labeled these as “crazy neighbor” types who must not be allowed to influence the national conversation: “Your crazy neighbor can still say crazy things, but he doesn't get to make the headlines.” She continued, describing “the information ecosystem as a river, a very polluted river. And there is this

factory that is polluting the river ... The river is still polluted until you close [the factory] down.”

Some students thought Ressa delivered an important message. Senior Mike Jekot told the *Rover*, “She was an extremely engaging speaker, very informative.”

Like Ressa, Jekot is concerned about the promotion of disinformation: “Those individuals that ... I once wrote off as crazy in high school, unfortunately now I have to grapple with the fact that they hold the same exact power that I do.”

Ressa's attacks on Trump and the Republican Party did not sit well with other attendees, including some who were especially troubled by Fr. Jenkins' role in hosting the event. Jack Docherty, a freshman political science major, told the *Rover*, “This event had a clear partisan bent. As President of the university, Fr. Jenkins has a responsibility to represent all students. By endorsing this left-wing lecture, he abdicated that responsibility.”

Some believe that Notre Dame Forum events have made a pattern of half-veiled partisanship. During Steven Levitsky's

December keynote address, the Harvard Professor asserted that the Republican party “is no longer committed to playing by the democratic rules of the game” and accused its politicians of “flirt[ing] with violence.”

At that event, Fr. Jenkins expressed his hope that the forum would help people “reach across party lines.”

Eric Gordy, a sophomore in the Department of Economics, said of Ressa's lecture, “This is the kind of language I expect from College Democrats, not at an event sponsored by the President. That the President's Office would host this and pretend it's nonpartisan is a slap in the face to conservative students.”

This year, the Notre Dame Forum's series on “The Future of Democracy” sought to “invite reflection and dialogue on the rising threats to global democracy,” per the Forum's website.

Aedan Whalen is a sophomore with majors in the Program of Liberal Studies and political science. Email him at awhalen3@nd.edu.



Students React to Potential TikTok Ban

Bipartisan legislation targets ByteDance's ownership

PJ BUTLER
Politics Editor

With broad bipartisan support, the United States House of Representatives passed the “Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act” on March 13. The bill would force TikTok’s Chinese-owned parent company, ByteDance, to divest from the short-form video platform or cease the app’s operations in the United States. The Congressional action sparked a nationwide debate over the popular app and its ability to shape political narratives leading up to the 2024 election.

Despite TikTok having one of the largest user bases of any social media platform in the United States, ByteDance has been accused of working on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and harvesting the data of American users. While the Beijing-based company has publicly denied that it is controlled by the CCP, leaks have revealed that ByteDance has engaged in mass collection of browsing histories, keystroke data, message drafts, and the text, images, and videos from the clipboards of its users’ devices.

Under the bill, it would become unlawful for internet hosting providers and app stores to enable the distribution

or updating of applications deemed to be “foreign adversary controlled” within the U.S. This prohibition would go into effect 180 days after the legislation is enacted for ByteDance-owned apps like TikTok.

The bill would give the president the authority to identify other apps presenting significant national security threats and prohibit transactions with those platforms after providing Congress 30 days notice.

The bill offers a path for apps to be exempted from the restrictions if the foreign ownership stake is divested through a process meeting particular criteria. The president has the ultimate authority to decide whether a company has successfully divested from a foreign adversary-controlled application.

Enforcement of the bill’s prohibitions would be handled through civil actions brought by the attorney general. The bill explicitly states that individual app users would not be subject to enforcement actions, as some critics fear.

While the legislation provides broad authority to restrict apps deemed national security threats, its sponsors emphasize that it is narrowly tailored to addressing the specific risks posed by TikTok. The bill does not propose a blanket ban on TikTok, as it allows for the app to continue operations, provided that ByteDance sufficiently severs

their U.S. operation from foreign adversary control or influence.

As the proposal was weighed in Congress, it sparked a heated debate both in Congress and online over the future of TikTok and its role in American society. While the bill was under deliberation, TikTok sent its users a push notification claiming that “Congress is planning a total ban of TikTok.” It encouraged the platform’s users to speak up before the government “strips 170 million Americans of their Constitutional right to free expression and damage[s] millions of businesses, destroy[s] the livelihoods of countless creators across the country, and [denies] artists an audience.”

Surprisingly, TikTok received support from an unlikely source: Republican nominee and former President Donald Trump. Trump took to Truth Social and posted, “If you get rid of TikTok, Facebook and Zuckerschmuck will double their business. I don’t want Facebook, who cheated in the last Election, doing better. They are a true Enemy of the People!”

Trump’s stance on the issue was surprising given his previous actions against the app. In 2020, the Trump administration issued executive orders that would have effectively banned TikTok in the United States due to similar national security concerns about the app’s Chinese ownership.

While both efforts share the

goal of addressing national security risks, the current legislation takes a narrower approach. Trump’s original orders were much broader in scope, as they would have prohibited all U.S. transactions with ByteDance and its subsidiaries. The orders faced legal challenges from TikTok and never took effect before Trump left office in 2021. In contrast, the bill passed by the House this month provides clearer off-ramps, such as data portability requirements and a divestiture process to allow TikTok to avoid an outright ban.

Conservative reactions to the bill were mixed, with many viewing it as a necessary step to protect national security. Others questioned whether the proposed legislation was prudent in an election year.

College Republicans President Elliot Anderson told the *Rover*, “The attacks on TikTok by Congress are a clear example of the hegemonic political establishment. Meta—including Facebook and Instagram—and Google collect and sell private information from consumers to the same degree as TikTok, yet they remain untouched due to their sizable lobbying efforts.”

Law student and College Republicans of America President Will Donahue said, “I think President Trump, who is doing remarkably well among young voters for a Republican, is smart to avoid taking away

a really popular social media platform. He’s also likely correct that banning TikTok would drive more traffic to Instagram and Facebook, both of which contributed to a lot of misinformation and voter suppression in the last two elections.”

Donahue noted that the current approach of the House bill had some merit. “Legislative action is really the only way to deal with this. Former attempts by President Trump to ban TikTok via executive action were struck down as arbitrary and capricious; the courts have already spoken on the issue,” he added.

Although the House approved the bill by a large margin, it faces an uncertain path forward in the Senate. The legislation has so far been met with reluctance by Senate Majority Chuck Schumer, whose spokesman said he would consult with the chairs of relevant committees for further action. Even though his presidential campaign uses the platform heavily, President Biden expressed openness to banning the app if the bill reached his desk.

PJ Butler is a senior studying political science and theology. His favorite use of AI is writing Tucker Carlson monologues to describe the events of his personal life. You can reach him via email at pbutler3@nd.edu.

Senate Hearing *continued from front*

clinic stopped offering treatments after the *LePage* decision. Fellow witness Lourdes Rivera, president of the pro-choice legal organization “Pregnancy Justice,” expressed concern that similar laws will “criminalize pregnancy” in the U.S. if adopted on a national scale.

Texas S.B.8, commonly known as the state’s “Heartbeat Bill,” was another topic of discussion of the panel. Passed in 2021, the bill bans abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, though it provides an exception for “medical emergencies” that would threaten the mother’s life. Senate Democrats called Dr. Austin Dennard, an OB-GYN from Texas, to testify about the effect the bill had on both her work and personal life. Dennard told the Committee about her experience procuring an abortion out-of-state after discovering that her baby had anencephaly, a fatal condition that would have ended the child’s life a few hours after birth.

In his testimony, Professor

Snead argued that the Supreme Court’s decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson* brought the United States into “alignment” with most of the world by making abortion a question for the legislative, rather than judicial, sphere. Snead then offered three suggestions for governing the “complicated” landscape of abortion laws in the U.S. today.

First, Snead advised that the Senators keep in mind the complex nature of the abortion debate. “[T]he issue challenges us to consider how these goods stand in relation to the life of the unborn child—a whole, living, distinct member of the human species,” Snead said. He added that both pro-choice and pro-life advocates suffer when they fail to acknowledge this complexity.

Second, Snead addressed common misconceptions about the Alabama and Texas controversies. Snead clarified that the *LePage* case was not “a theocratic power grab heralding the demise of IVF,” pointing out that the Alabama state legislature promptly acted to protect IVF clinics by granting

them civil and criminal liability.

Turning to Texas’ “Heartbeat Bill,” Snead refuted claims that the legislation denies Texas women “life-saving care.” Snead explained that the bill’s exception applies only to cases when the mother’s life is at risk, not the unborn child’s, and he argued that such guidelines have operated “without issue” in the state since 2013.

Finally, Snead asked the senators to re-evaluate their understanding of the abortion debate entirely. “Instead of a zero-sum conflict among strangers over the permissible use of lethal force,” he explained, “think of it ... as a crisis facing a mother and her child. Then ask how we can work together across our differences to come to their aid not just during pregnancy, but throughout life’s journey.”

The Republicans’ second witness, Dr. Monique Wubbenhorst, brought her medical expertise to bear on the subject matter. Relying on scientific research, Wubbenhorst argued that abortion is harmful to women and is “not safer than childbirth,” contrary to pro-

choice claims.

Wubbenhorst also spoke on the hearing’s name, saying, “‘Reproductive rights,’ so-called, are not human rights, because... they dispose of the fetus. So-called ‘reproductive justice’ is in fact reproductive injustice, because it selectively destroys black and brown babies.”

Although most of the senators focused on the majority’s pro-choice witnesses, both Snead and Wubbenhorst argued for more thorough IVF regulation during the hearing’s questioning period.

In response to Ranking Member Lindsey Graham, Professor Snead compared the U.S. to other Western nations, most of which have abortion limits at 15 weeks and more robust regulations for IVF treatments. Dr. Wubbenhorst added that those working in the IVF industry “say that it’s like the Wild West” because of the lack of national treatment standards. Going forward, Snead recommended that elected officials build upon the 1992 “Fertility Clinic Success Rate and Certification Act” in

order to best protect families seeking fertility care.

Sophomore Shri Thakur expressed both skepticism and inspiration following Notre Dame’s appearance at the Senate, calling it “very encouraging” to see Notre Dame represented “on the front lines of the pro-life battle in the United States.” He added, “Though I am uncertain of the impact Professor Snead’s testimony will have legislatively, it is undoubtedly a positive development for Catholics to boldly be asserting their faith in the public square.”

Haley Garecht is a sophomore studying political science, constitutional studies, and Irish studies currently in Washington, D.C., where she works for the Senate Judiciary Committee as a part of Notre Dame’s Washington Program. Her most recent accomplishment is placing first in her family’s March Madness bracket competition. Please send all congratulations, questions, and comments to hgarecht@nd.edu.

WRITE FOR THE ROVER, EMAIL NSCHMIT2@ND.EDU



Magnificat Choir Releasing New Album

Signum Records produces tracks by Notre Dame women’s choir

KATIEBELLE THOMPSON
Staff Writer

The Notre Dame Magnificat Choir, the only on-campus, all female liturgical choir, is releasing a new album titled “Magnificat.” Signum Records produced the album, and the choir released their first song, “The Choristers’ Prayer,” by Kartika Putri on February 29, 2024.

Choir director Patrick Kronner told the Rover that he chose to release the album slowly, one single per month, in order to “highlight each track and its text ... and to serve as monthly prayer devotionals for those who would like to pray and listen along with us.”

Kronner shared, “It’s not dedicated to anyone in particular, but we hope everyone will find it as a beautiful way to experience many beautiful prayers of the church through gorgeous music.”

Kronner also noted that all tracks were selected to align with the album’s mission of seeking “to magnify the light of Christ

through prayer, meditation, and song. As Mary’s ‘yes’ brought light into the world, we pray she may serve as our example.”

While the choir has released albums before, all were previously under the name “The Notre Dame Women’s Choir,” and none feature current students. This is also the first professional recording to feature the Murdy Family Pipe Organ, heard in many of the tracks.

The album’s individuality comes from both the compositions themselves and the close involvement of students throughout the recording process. Kronner worked with choir members to select songs for the album, most of which were written by female composers. This made the project deeply personal for the group. Selections include: “O Pastor Animarum,” written by the choir’s patron saint, Hildegard of Bingen and arranged by David Marshall; “Hail Mary, Full of Grace” by Susan Powell; and many others. The album includes songs in Quechua, Latin, and English.

According to choir president Hannah Schmitz, the process

of recording one three-minute song may take up to an hour, as each song requires multiple takes. It is estimated that the choir spent at least 300 hours preparing to release this album.

The basilica’s air conditioning unit posed a particularly unique challenge. The sensitive recording equipment picked up its rustling and clanking sounds, causing the choir to re-record several songs. Throughout the process, the choristers kept up morale through group bonding activities such as dress up days. When asked about these challenges, soprano Dana Mays remarked, “The sacrifice pales in comparison to the fulfillment we receive from singing these prayers.”

Another chorister, Sofia Benigno, emphasized the songs themselves as motivation for perseverance: “Having the memory of how to sing the prayer reminds you of the beauty of the Faith, and reminds you that prayer itself is something beautiful.”

The next track scheduled to be released is “O God, You Search Me,” by Bernadette Farrell and arranged by Hillary Doerries,



Image from Signum Classics and Patrick Kronner

on March 28. Students can find the tracks, along with the choir’s other performances, on YouTube, Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon, and other streaming platforms. For those who want to hear the choir perform live, they can be found singing at the Saturday vigil mass at 5 p.m. and several of the Holy Week services.

Katiebelle Thompson enjoys singing in her spare time, and can be found doing so in her dorm, during Mass, and on walks. She prefers classic rock and movie scores, but her physics class has got her ‘singing the blues.’ Song recommendations can be sent to cthomp23@nd.edu.



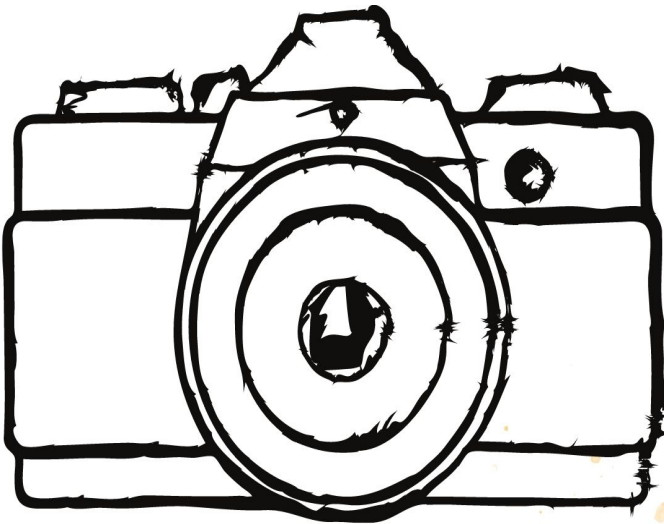
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Glee Club Spring Concert

Male acapella group sings final school-year performance

DANIEL RUEDA-RAMIREZ
Staff Writer

The Glee Club performed their tour set list for a Notre Dame audience at the Leighton Concert Hall on Friday, March 22. The concert was well attended by students, families, and Glee Club alumni.

The Notre Dame Glee Club was founded in 1915, making it the oldest glee club at a Catholic university. Their musical selection includes both religious and secular songs.

For many of the 60 singers, this is their first experience in a choral setting. Though members do need to have musical knowledge, a passion to learn and grow with other members of the group is considered in who they select. Glee Club can be viewed as a brotherhood, since, according to their website, “membership in the Glee Club is defined by great friendships and unforgettable memories.”

This concert’s set list featured several spiritual, cultural, reflective, and classical choral pieces. These constituted “a collection of [Glee Club’s] best songs,” according to sophomore member Joe Whelpley.

The concert began with classic Glee Club staples: “And So it Goes” and “You are the New

Day.”

Next, the Glee Club performed two compositions from 2013. The section began with “Gagòt,” a Haitian Creole song which describes the chaos and volatility of life and ends in resolve to fight each moment’s battle well. It ended with a rendition of the “Salve Regina,” from which the motto of Our Lady’s university is drawn.

The following two sections bore a more reflective tone. They featured scriptural-based Lenten motets as well as melancholy pieces that meditated on death in war, most notably a letter that an Iraq War Veteran wrote to his wife, young son, and unborn baby to be opened if he should die.

The first half concluded with a performance of Franz Biebl’s “Ave Maria.”

Following intermission, the Glee Club presented a series of American originals, Jazz classics, and Irish traditionals. A variety of songs were featured, including



Image by the Notre Dame Glee Club Instagram

soundtrack pieces from *West Side Story* and Disney’s *Hercules*; “An American Tune” by Paul Simon; Tom Lehrer’s comical “The Elements”; Chuck Berry’s “Route 66”; and “Danny Boy.”

The Undertones, a subgroup of the Glee Club, also performed a rendition of “How Deep Is Your Love,” a classic song popularized by The Bee Gees.

In its entirety, the set list ex-

plored many different genres and moods, allowing the audience to experience chaos and peace, sorrow and joy, longing and contentment. “I was joyfully taken from moving, slow pieces to upbeat fun songs,” freshman Asher Martin remarked, continuing, “Overall, the Glee Club did an outstanding job throughout the whole concert.”

The Glee Club closed their performance with classic renditions of Notre Dame’s timeless anthems, inviting all the Glee Club alumni present

to join them on stage as they sung the Glee Club Alma Mater “Notre Dame We Hail Thee,” the Notre Dame Alma Mater, and the Notre Dame Victory March.

Audience reactions to the concert were overwhelmingly positive, particularly among first-time attendees. Sophomore Joseph Truluck commented, “I have never been to a Glee

Club Concert before, and while I had only heard good things, I was a little skeptical if they were deserving of boasting around their jackets all over the place.” He continued, “What I found was loud and energetic show tunes, humor, acting, and beautifully somber and sad melodies. Glee Club is sick!”

Another freshman shared with the *Rover*, “The Glee Club was not only proficient in the performance of their pieces, but also in the thematic ordering of their show. I would definitely see them again!”

While the Spring Concert was their last performance with all students on campus, Glee Club will sing during commencement weekend for those in South Bend for graduation. The Commencement Concert will be held on Saturday, May 18 in Leighton Concert Hall.

Daniel Rueda-Ramirez

is a freshman from Baumer Hall, majoring in Business Analytics and theology. When he is not studying or singing with the Liturgical Choir, he can probably be found playing foosball in the CoMo lounge. You can email him at druedara@nd.edu.

Who’s Who: Best Buddies

Student club fosters community for individuals with disabilities

BRIDGETTE RODGERS
Culture Editor

Out of all of the opportunities provided to students to continually grow in their faith, morality, and spirit of giving, one in particular stands out as consistently allowing students to give of themselves in a way they might not have experienced before: Best Buddies.

Notre Dame Best Buddies seeks to build personal relationships between college students and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Notre Dame chapter is part of an international organization, Best Buddies International, which works with middle and high schools in addition to college campuses.

Vice President of Notre Dame Best Buddies, Rocco Browning, shared with the *Rover*, “We have 50 buddies and a lot of members, probably around 200.”

When asked about his involvement with Best Buddies, Browning said, “I love Best Buddies for a lot of different reasons. Getting to see my buddy Andrew each week is reason enough, but there’s a lot more to it than that. The club is a great opportunity to set our

own unique differences aside and celebrate friendship in the purest form.” He continued, “I think you really get a chance to be more empathetic with those around you, and that’s a really awesome thing.”

An officer for Notre Dame Best Buddies, Katie Finn, shared a similar sentiment. Finn said, “I love the reciprocity of Best Buddies! Not only do our buddies gain friendship, but so do we.”

She continued, “What I’ve learned over time from Best Buddies opens my eyes and inspires me to open other people’s eyes everyday through awareness.”

Gratitude for this community not only exudes from buddies and students, but also from parents of the buddies who participate. One mother shared with the *Rover*, “I signed Charlie up so he could meet friends and have a buddy to do things with. Notre Dame Best Buddies is perfect! He loves to be social and this was a great program. Charlie has met a lot of friends and we have too.” She ended by warmly expressing, “Thank you Notre Dame Best Buddies!”

This semester, Best Buddies held celebrations for both Valentine’s Day and St. Patrick’s Day. Both events were highly attended and included lively

conversation over some tasty treats, in addition to much singing and dancing. In April, Best Buddies will have their annual prom, which many students and buddies are looking forward to.

Senior Keaton Rodgers noted, “Best Buddies not only sparks friendships and builds community for the 50 buddies, but also for the college students involved. Through these opportunities to foster friendships with each other, both the student and the individual with the disability learn to be more loving and compassionate with those whom they encounter.”

Rodgers continued, “Sadly, I didn’t join until my senior year, but I have loved every minute of the time I have gotten to spend with my buddy Charlie this year, especially dancing, since he has the best dance moves. Getting to know him, hearing him laugh, and seeing him smile has brought immense joy to my life in a very special way, and it has inspired me to be the best version of a friend, brother,



Image by the Notre Dame Best Buddies Instagram

and, hopefully in the future, father that I can be.”

If you have ever considered joining Best Buddies, the club leaders enthusiastically suggested that you should “Join!” Browning said, “Anyone can come to our events! They are every other Tuesday and all you need to do is register with Best Buddies, which I can help anyone do.”

Best Buddies can be found on social media sites such as Instagram, where they post

about all of their events, or you can contact Rocco Browning at rbrowni2@nd.edu to learn more.

Bridgette Rodgers

is a sophomore studying political science and theology. Her March Madness Bracket didn’t go as planned. Unfortunately she rooted for the wrong underdogs. Please send condolences to brodger4@nd.edu.



Administration Silences Globalist Viewpoints

Do their arguments stand on solid ground?

AYDEN ELLIS
Staff Writer

A recent protest by an emergent student group was shut down in front of the Jordan Hall of Science last Monday. The group, named Students for Global Truth (SGT), was robbed of their first amendment right as officers forcefully broke up their peaceful demonstration.

The students held signs with messages such as “We Want The Truth” and “The Science Is Clear.” An estimated 200 students joined in the protest, and the chant “Drift, shift, it’s all a myth!” could be heard all the way at DeBartolo Hall.

What exactly were the students protesting? According to the Students for Global Truth leader Terra Bunk, the demonstration aimed to spread the truth about Pangea. “We are just trying to wake people up to the establishment’s lies,” said Bunk.

Pangea is the name of the alleged supercontinent that existed hundreds of millions of years ago and contained all of the Earth’s land mass. Pangea radicals believe that the seven continents we know today come from pieces of Pangea breaking apart and spreading out, a

process called continental drift. Students for Global Truth begs to differ.

The group’s website offers the following “rock solid” debunking: “Let’s look at the facts. For instance, why would all the land start out in one spot? You’re telling me that the whole globe was ocean except that one clump of land? Then it just ‘drifted’ apart? Sounds more like a continental drift to me.”

The debunking continues: “Have you ever felt this supposed ‘continental drift?’ If these ‘continents’ were moving so much, how would we not feel them moving beneath us? I’ll tell you why. Corrupt oligarchs are maliciously spreading these shifty ideas so that they can exploit you for your money. They want you to think that these tectonic ‘fakes’ are constantly moving, so you’re too scared to buy oceanfront properties.”

To combat the supposed misinformation about plate tectonics, Students for Global Truth has sold over 1,500 “Pangea Denier” t-shirts to the Notre Dame student body. One student protester commented, “I am really proud that my generation is finally putting a



Image by the Irish Rover

stop to these blatant lies.”

In response to the student protest, Notre Dame issued a statement reaffirming its commitment to academic freedom and open dialogue: “We defend this freedom even when the content of the demonstration is objectionable to some or even many.”

In spite of the backlash from administration, SGT remains steadfast in their mission to correct the falsehoods about Pangea. They plan to host a series

of lectures featuring renowned Pangea-Truthers, like Ann T. Science, the award-winning author of “The Great Divide: Shifting the Narrative on the Pangea Hoax.”

While local law enforcement may have silenced these students for now, Students for Global Truth stand strong with their earth-shattering message. Whether you’re a continental conformist or a Pangea denier, one thing is certain—these students won’t rest until they

shatter the mainstream narrative into pieces.

Ayden Ellis is a junior studying chemical engineering. He spends his free time working on his 9-foot-tall wooden hamster wheel for his Youtube channel “Ayden’s Workshop.” To book an appointment on the wheel, email aellis7@nd.edu.

NEW YORK TIMES V. SULLIVAN AND THE ORIGINAL MEANING OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT

RETHINKING LIBEL AND FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Carson Holloway

Carson Holloway is Ralph Wardle Diamond Professor of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Political Science at the University of Nebraska, Omaha and a Washington Fellow in the Claremont Institute’s Center for the American Way of Life. He is the author of *Hamilton versus Jefferson in the Washington Administration: Completing the Founding or Betraying the Founding?* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). His scholarly articles have appeared in the *Review of Politics*, *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy*, and *Perspectives on Political Science*, and he has written more popular articles for *First Things*, *The New Criterion*, *National Affairs*, *Public Discourse*, *National Review*, *Law and Liberty*, *The Federalist*, the *American Spectator*, and the *American Conservative*. Professor Holloway received his B.A. from the University of Northern Iowa and his Ph.D. from Northern Illinois University.



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