

Class to Bring Drag Show to Campus

Four departments co-sponsor a live drag performance for November

W. JOSEPH DeREUIL & PETER RZEPNIEWSKI
Opinion Editor & Staff Writer

The Film, Television, and Theatre Department (FTT) intends to bring a drag performance to Notre Dame's campus on Friday, November 3, the *Rover* learned in an interview with FTT professor Pam Wojcik.

This semester, Prof. Wojcik is teaching a class titled, "What a Drag: Drag on Screen—Variations and Meanings." According to Wojcik, "Drag has traditionally been understood as someone who identifies as one sex dressed in the clothing of the other sex." Drag has been a "major thread throughout the history of entertainment," she told the *Rover*.

The description on Notre Dame's online "Class Search" platform states that the course "provides an overview of the history of drag performance on screen." It continues, "We will consider televisual drag, comedic and dramatic fiction films, documentaries, and silent films."

"Students will be asked to read essays on drag, write weekly reflections, attend class discussions, and attend



weekly screenings, as well as a symposium on drag and performance on Friday, November 3, 2023," the description concludes.

Wojcik told the *Rover* that the symposium will be on "efforts to ban drag." She confirmed that at the end of the symposium "there will be a drag performance."

Wojcik hopes to "give students knowledge about an art form that has been misdescribed"

and answer common misconceptions about drag, quipping to the *Rover*, "Drag won't turn kids gay." She also asserted that it is "dangerous to put bans [on drag]."

According to Wojcik, the event has four confirmed co-sponsors: the Department of Gender Studies, Department of Music, Department of American Studies, and the Initiative on Race and Resilience. Only the Department of Music responded to the *Rover's*

request for comment.

When asked via email why the Department of Music decided to cosponsor the symposium and drag performance, Prof. Berthold Hoeckner, the department's chair, replied, "Drag performance has been part of musical culture in the West and around the world, so it's been the subject of scholarly research in musicology and ethnomusicology."

He concluded, "Having a

class and a symposium is a great opportunity for interested students to learn about this subject."

Wojcik acknowledged that there will likely be pushback to the event, stating, "There will be police and security for the foreseen protests." Notre Dame Police Department did not reply to the *Rover's* inquiry whether this security request has been made or accepted.

The *Rover* also asked Wojcik whether the event would be open to the public and people of all ages. She replied, "I am not sure if the symposium will be open to people outside the university—I need to talk to DPAC [DeBartolo Performing Arts Center] about that."

The *Rover* obtained the complete 2023-24 DPAC event schedule. At publishing time, there was no event listed for November 3, suggesting that scheduling, the ticketing plan, or some other aspect of the event has not been finalized.

In March of 2023, the university did not permit the appearance of a drag queen at the Mendoza College of Business MBA students' Diversity and Heritage Ball. A *continued on pg. 3*

Kagan to Present at Notre Dame Forum

2023 lecture considers the "Future of Democracy"

W. JOSEPH DeREUIL
Opinion Editor

Justice Elena Kagan of the U.S. Supreme Court will join Dean Marcus Cole of Notre Dame Law School for the 2023-24 Notre Dame Forum.

Kagan, who was nominated to the Supreme Court by President Barack Obama in 2010 and formerly served as dean of Harvard Law School, will discuss "The Future of Democracy."

This year's topic, "The Future of Democracy," is the fourth Notre Dame Forum to discuss elections or democracy, but the first to do so in a non-presidential election year.

Notre Dame Vice President Ann Firth explained the choice: "We are approaching the

question about the future of democracy with a global lens, so it's not tied to whether or not this is an election year in the U.S. As you probably also know, Democracy is one of the major themes of the new Strategic Framework for the University (just released on Aug. 30), which will guide our efforts for the next ten years."

Additionally, the Forum's announcement states, "In recent years democratic norms and institutions have come under attack in the United States and around the world." The announcement continues, "In August 2022, then United Nations [UN] High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet reported that the global state of

democracy is fragile."

In the August 2022 speech that the announcement references, Bachelet noted that "the level of democracy enjoyed globally by the average person was down to 1989 levels."

Bachelet suggested what it means to her for the state of democracy to be "fragile" in a separate summer 2022 UN Statement: "The US Supreme Court ruling on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* delivered today represents a major setback after five decades of protection for sexual and reproductive health and rights in the US through *Roe v. Wade*. [...]"

"Access to safe, legal and effective abortion is firmly *continued on pg. 4*

Faculty Address Outlines "Notre Dame 2033: A Strategic Framework"

Catholic Identity, Affirmative Action, and university growth discussed at September 5 event

BRANDON WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Notre Dame President, Father John Jenkins, C.S.C. presented the new university Strategic Framework in his annual address to the faculty on Tuesday, September 5. This framework, titled "Notre Dame 2033," is a 10-year plan for university operations.

At the event, Provost John McGreevy moderated a roundtable discussion with

Barbara R. Snyder, president of the Association of American Universities (AAU), and Peter Lange, Provost Emeritus of Duke University. They discussed how Notre Dame might implement the framework, focusing especially on the school's Catholic identity. They also discussed how to accord admissions policy with the recent Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action.

Catholic Identity and Hiring
The first goal of the *continued on pg. 4*

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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.

“Every part which does not harmonize with its whole is disgraceful.”
 –St. Augustine, *Confessions* III.8



Identity Confusion at Notre Dame

PAUL HOWARD
 Executive Editor



In their recently released Strategic Framework, Notre Dame leaders reaffirmed that the Catholic character of the university is her single most distinctive feature and expressed the intention that in all matters she act in accord with this identity. Though this may be heartening, the time has already come to make good on their promise.

The primary goal listed in the framework is to “ensure that our Catholic character informs all our endeavors.” But many “endeavors” undertaken at the university not only fail to meet this noble aspiration, but work directly against it—as seen especially through the recently discovered drag performance coming to campus.

As the *Rover* reported, Professor Pam Wojcik, former chair of the Department of Film, Television, and Theatre is planning to host a drag performance in the DeBartolo

Performing Arts Center on Friday, November 3 [staff at DPAC was unable to confirm that the event had been scheduled]. Professor Wojcik told the *Rover* that the “symposium” will be co-sponsored by the Departments of Gender Studies, Music, and American Studies as well as the Initiative on Race and Resilience.

This particularly shocking event is merely the most recent instance of Notre Dame faculty members employing university resources to cut against the very *raison d'être* of their place of employment. Some may argue that hosting such performances at Notre Dame is part and parcel of being an institution of higher education. Is not drag a venerable element of modern entertainment culture? Shouldn't responsible students of contemporary art gain firsthand experience of all aspects of their field?

A university lacking the mooring of Catholic teaching on the human person might be forgiven for answering “yes.” Notre Dame lacks no such foundation. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual *identity*” [italics original]. Regardless of their degree of obscenity, drag performances create confusion about this fundamental imperative and are thus corrosive to the Catholic life of the university and her members. Furthermore, as they promote a

lie about the human person, they have no place in an institution dedicated to finding and upholding truth.

Yes, thousands of Masses are said on campus each semester, countless hours are spent by students and faculty in Eucharistic adoration every week, and long lines snake up to the confessionals in the basilica every day. The Catholic *culture* at Notre Dame is strong for the many who engage with it. But identity is a different matter.

The *identity* of the university is not written in stone. It depends on each member of the community's perception of the institution and their actions that shape its future. Of course, all members of the Notre Dame community will not agree on each and every matter of importance. Such homogeneity could even be toxic to the exchange of ideas integral to healthy academic engagement.

Though disagreement over particulars is inevitable and, in some cases, desirable, the professors at a Catholic university must share a common vision of the formation they are employed to provide. Blessed Basil Moreau summarizes the goal of Holy Cross education in a quotation that appears in du Lac, the student handbook: “While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven.”

The University of Notre Dame was founded upon this

integrated vision of academics and the Catholic moral and spiritual life. Recent events show that this vision may no longer be the *identity*—the collective conception—of the university. Many professors embody their role of formators as envisioned by Bl. Basil. And others, who may disagree with points of Catholic teaching, still provide excellent academic formation without interfering with the university's formative mission. But a third contingent is vocal and active in undermining the very formation for which the university was founded. This last group presents an existential threat to the Catholic identity of Notre Dame.

According to the Strategic Framework, the administration's first goal is to act in accord with Notre Dame's Catholic character. In light of recent controversy, it is time for the University of Notre Dame to embrace her identity, seek faculty who share the institution's dedication to Catholic formation, and put an end to programming that undermines it—starting by canceling the drag performance.

Paul Howard is a senior majoring in classics and medieval studies. He can be reached at phoward2@nd.edu.

WRITE FOR THE ROVER, EMAIL NSCHMIT2@ND.EDU



We Will Not Be Silenced

The Rover faces a baseless lawsuit from a Notre Dame professor

Originally published online
July 11, 2023

After months of leveling false accusations and fundraising for litigation against the *Irish Rover*, Notre Dame Professor Tamara Kay has filed a civil suit in the state of Indiana, claiming that two recent *Irish Rover* articles contained “defamatory and false statements.” Professor Kay’s allegations against the *Rover* are entirely false. And her lawsuit reflects only the latest stage in a tenured professor’s baseless public campaign against undergraduates at her own university who had the temerity to publish accurate stories about her very public abortion advocacy.

Abortion Advocacy Exposed

Since 2003, the *Irish Rover’s* mission has been to defend the Catholic faith and honorable traditions of the University of Notre Dame. As such, the *Rover* unequivocally supports the university’s commitment to the dignity of every human life from conception to natural death.

In the October 12, 2022 edition of the *Irish Rover*, W. Joseph DeReuil, who was then editor-in-chief, reported on Professor Kay’s promotion of abortion access that fall. The report relied upon Kay’s public statements, including her presentation at a university-sponsored lecture, as well as an interview conducted by DeReuil.

Aside from the comments drawn from the interview, the facts reported in DeReuil’s article were already matters of public record. Nonetheless, Professor Kay responded to the article’s publication by backtracking, denying that she had made the statements recorded by the *Rover*.

The day after DeReuil’s article was published, Professor Kay



Members of the 2022–23 Rover Masthead. Image by William White

took shots at the *Rover* in the course of tweeting about more sympathetic coverage of her abortion advocacy in the student-run magazine *Scholastic*. She tweeted that, unlike the *Rover*, *Scholastic* doesn’t “publish lies.” Professor Kay continued: “Oh, and very important—a fantastic journalist [] actually...wait for it... INTERVIEWED ME for the piece and quoted me accurately (unlike the other for which there was absolutely no interview).”

The implication that the *Rover* had never interviewed Professor Kay is demonstrably false. The *Rover* has a recording of a conversation in which DeReuil introduces himself as “Joe DeReuil, the editor of the *Irish Rover*,” before asking Professor Kay questions about her position on abortion.

Hours after the tweets mentioned above, Professor Kay again tweeted about the *Rover*: “It’s not affiliated with ND, it’s not a ‘student publication,’ it has no journalistic standards, holds no ethics, is run by faculty advisors

who promote bigotry & connect students to national orgs that promote hate (see who reposted).”

Then, discrediting her own baseless charges, Professor Kay confessed: “My colleagues gave me the Cliff Notes version [of the article about her advocacy] b/c I don’t read it [the *Rover*].”

The *Rover*, for its part, continued to cover this unfolding story. When she spoke about her support for abortion rights to College Democrats on March 7, the *Rover* reported on the content of her lecture in the following issue.

Kay Prepares to Sue Students

In January, a GoFundMe page was started to benefit Professor Kay and assist with the costs of “retaining legal representation.” At this time, the *Irish Rover* had not been notified of any potential legal action on Kay’s behalf.

Months later, on April 3, Kay told *The Cut* that she was “weighing legal action against both the publication [the *Irish*

Rover] and the university [of Notre Dame].”

In the *Cut* article, Professor Kay no longer claimed that “absolutely no interview” had occurred, as she had tweeted on October 13. Mr. DeReuil had informed the *Cut* reporter that he had proof of their interview. Professor Kay discussed with the reporter her memory of the conversation with Mr. DeReuil, confirming in the process that he had opened by introducing himself.

As *The Cut’s* article states: “When the event ended, The *Irish Rover’s* editor-in-chief, W. Joseph DeReuil, approached her [Kay]. ‘He introduced himself and he asked me a couple questions. There was a lot of noise and a ton of people,’ Kay says.”

Yet puzzlingly, Professor Kay repeated her claim that “he did not say that he was interviewing me.”

Kay Files Lawsuit

In the first week of April, DeReuil received from Professor Kay’s lawyer a letter of intent to

sue the *Rover* for defamation. The letter also demanded that the *Rover* retract the October 12 and March 22 articles so as to “mitigate damages that may be awarded or recovered in this case.”

“An apologize [sic] should also be offered to Dr. Tamara Kay,” the letter added.

Professor Kay filed the defamation suit on May 22. Her complaint alleges defamation in the October 12 article but does not specify any statement or aspect of the article that is false.

The complaint also objected to the brief summary of the October 12 article contained in the March 22 article—a summary that is a commonsense reading of the October 12 article and that aligns with the way Notre Dame administrators themselves

interpreted Professor Kay’s messaging. Kay’s complaint also falsely claims that the *Rover’s* coverage of her presentation to the College Democrats was false or defamatory, as revealed by a recording of the presentation and ensuing question and answer period.

Simply put, the articles discussing Professor Kay’s abortion advocacy were fair and accurate in all respects. The record will confirm this beyond dispute. The *Rover* will not apologize for just and truthful reporting that helps Our Lady’s University stay true to its Catholic mission. To that end, it has produced important stories for twenty years and will continue to do so, with determination and resolve, Professor Kay’s baseless public campaign and lawsuit notwithstanding.

In Notre Dame,

*The 2022–2023 Editorial Staff of
the Irish Rover*

Drag Show

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graduate student organization, “LGBTQ+ and Allies Club,” invited a “prominent and well-respected drag queen to campus to speak about their experiences as an LGBTQ+ person” for the event, according to reporting by the Observer.

The university released a statement explaining their decision, stating, “Notre Dame values the LGBTQ members of our campus and works closely

with the undergraduate and post-baccalaureate student groups on a wide array of events. Any programming sponsored by a student club must align with the group’s mission. That was not the case in this instance.”

The *Rover* was unable to obtain comment from the Office of the President whether the planned November 3 event will occur.



W. Joseph DeReuil is a senior studying too many things. When he graduates he will be opening a joint restaurant and painting studio, both of which he will manage in his spare time. Send tips on how to bilocate to wdereuil@nd.edu.

Peter Rzepniewski is a sophomore studying classics and history, or as others call it—finance. When he is not debating his favorite professors, he can be found in the basement of North Dome hitting a volleyball out of bounds. For tips and tricks please email przepnie@nd.edu.



ND Forum

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rooted in international human right [sic] law and is at the core of women and girls' autonomy and ability to make their own choices about their bodies and lives, free of discrimination, violence and coercion."

Justice Kagan, whose lecture was announced with reference to Bachenet's fears, argued to uphold *Roe v. Wade* and co-wrote the dissent to the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs*.

In addition to Firth and Notre Dame President Fr. John Jenkins, C.S.C., this year's advisory committee for the Forum includes five Notre Dame professors—largely from the Department of Political Science and the Keough School of Global Affairs—and the Vice President of Federal and Washington Relations, Laura Parker McAleer.

Firth explained the role of the advisory committee, "Its membership is based on the ND Forum theme for the year—

those serving this year are faculty scholars whose work relates directly to our theme of 'The Future of Democracy,' either in the U.S. or internationally.

Firth continued, stating that the advisory committee "is invaluable as we think about speakers and events that might advance our campus-wide conversation." She concluded, "We also collaborate and consult with student government, both for undergraduates and for graduate students, as student engagement is critical to the success of the Forum."

One of the political science professors on the committee, Prof. Christina Wolbrecht, spoke on the panel "Post-Roe America: Making Intersection Feminist Sense of Abortion Bans," which the *Rover* reported on last fall. Wolbrecht declined to comment about the Notre Dame Forum.

Professor Matthew Hall, Director of the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy, responded to the *Rover's* inquiry about the selection of Justice Kagan for

the Notre Dame Forum: "I'm afraid I wasn't involved in that decision. Sorry I can't help you."

David Campbell, a professor of political science and another member of the advisory committee, told the *Rover* that he was not involved in the decision to invite Justice Kagan. He added that he hopes "as many Notre Dame students as possible attend this event, as it is a rare opportunity to hear from a justice of the Supreme Court."

Professor Aníbal Pérez-Liñán declined to comment. No other member of the advisory committee responded to the *Rover's* request for comment.

Justice Kagan will be the fifth Supreme Court Justice to speak at Notre Dame in the past two years, following Justices Clarence Thomas, Amy Coney Barrett, Brett Kavanaugh, and Samuel Alito. Kagan will be the first Democrat-appointed Justice to speak at Notre Dame since Justice Ginsburg's 2016 lecture.

Her lecture is scheduled to be the second event in this year's Notre Dame Forum, following



Kagan in 2008, Image by Harvard Law Record via Creative Commons

the performance of "What the Constitution Means to Me." It will be held September 22 at 2:30 pm, in the Leighton Concert Hall of the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. It is a free but ticketed event.

W. Joseph DeReuil is a senior studying too many things. When he graduates he will be opening a restaurant and painting studio, both of which he will manage in his spare time. Send tips on how to bilocate to wdereuil@nd.edu.

Strategic Framework

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framework is to "ensure that our Catholic character informs all our endeavors."

The introduction to the framework states that Notre Dame has an obligation to "offer a complementary approach to excellence that bridges faith and reason in an academic world accustomed to separating them." It continues, "Notre Dame's approach is anchored in Roman Catholicism, the religious tradition that gave birth to universities in the medieval era and that has become the world's most global, multicultural, and multilingual institution."

At the roundtable, Lange described Notre Dame's Catholic tradition as "an advantage because it is something that you hold that others do not." He suggested further that Notre Dame "bring that broad Catholic tradition, not a narrow one ... to bear on the activities, teaching, learning, and research in the university."

Throughout most of the roundtable discussion, Provost McGreevy read questions submitted by the faculty, which Snyder and Lange each answered. But McGreevy noted that three faculty members asked him specifically to answer the question, "How do we sustain the Catholic mission of the university in the context of hiring Catholic faculty?"

McGreevy answered that hiring Catholic faculty is important for ensuring that Notre Dame sustains her "particular Catholic mission." But he continued, "We've never said there was a quota. We've never said, you know, 51 percent versus 49 percent makes a huge difference. But we have said we're committed to Catholic hiring, because that is our distinctive mission and our comparative advantage. And

the hope is that that continues in a profound way over the next decade."

Provost McGreevy did not respond to the *Rover's* request for comment.

Former Notre Dame President Father Edward A. "Monk" Malloy, C.S.C., previously asserted that the portion of the university's Mission Statement that speaks about the necessity of a "continuing presence of a predominant number of Catholic intellectuals" should be read in stronger terms.

In a 2006 talk, given while he was president, Malloy stated that "a predominant number" "refers to both more than 50 percent and not simply being satisfied with 50 percent [Catholic faculty]." He reiterated, "It's an effort, without specifying a specific number, to take seriously that numbers and percentages make a difference."

Growth and Investment in Competitive Student Support

The second portion of the framework, titled "Where Notre Dame should go," mentions several areas in which the university seeks to "strengthen already excellent foundations in an effort to achieve preeminence." The framework favorably contrasts its approach of building upon strengths with a strategy that alternatively seeks "competence in areas where our track record is [now] modest."

One such area in which the university seeks to focus on building upon strong foundations is financial support for students.

The framework outlines that the university is prepared to increase investment in financial aid to bolster undergraduate diversity, better residential housing to cultivate a stronger campus community, and undergraduate curriculum and research to improve the caliber of undergraduate education.

In particular, the framework mentions building "new facilities" for science and engineering that invest in "health and well-being," "climate change and the environment," and "data and computational science."

On the subject of financial aid for undergraduates, the plan also mentions the possibility of expanding its need-blind financial aid policy to international students as a possible remedy to its relatively low proportion of international undergraduates, but admits this would be a "dramatic (and expensive)" solution.

The university also intends to increase financial support for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to better compete with peer institutions, and it remains committed to "attracting, developing, and retaining talented and diverse staff."

The section on growth concludes by identifying "particular intellectual areas where the university already possesses excellence and can imagine preeminence." These include "the humanities and the arts," which "will remain central to Notre Dame because of their importance for understanding truth, beauty, and the human condition, and their centrality to Catholic intellectual life." The other areas outlined for growth are democracy and ethics.

One particular goal concerning the university's plan to become preeminent in the study of democracy is to "consciously strive to become a forum for bipartisan conversations about a shared democratic future."

With regard to ethics, the framework states, "Success would be more top-flight scholars with both a professional and public voice on important ethical questions; opportunities for students to confront contemporary challenges such as artificial intelligence,

bioethics, and ethical investing; and a commitment to hosting significant public events on these topics."

Diversity and Affirmative Action

The new Strategic Framework expresses a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout. In the section titled "Diversity and Inclusion," the framework details its all-encompassing diversity goals as "cultural," "intellectual," and "representational."

In response to the Supreme Court ruling this summer in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, which held race-based affirmative action in college admissions to be unconstitutional, the framework states: "More needs to be done to recruit underrepresented students from within the United States. This summer's Supreme Court decisions will complicate, but not deter, our efforts to enroll a student body that reflects the diversity of experiences and gifts of the human family."

Regarding this same topic, Lange argued in the roundtable that the ruling on affirmative action "leaves a massive amount of space for figuring out what to do," and that "a commitment to diversity means pushing those boundaries and taking the risk that something you do may get [you] sued."

"If you don't take those risks," he concluded, "we're going to have a serious backsliding in the diversity of our student bodies."

Association of American Universities

In his address, Fr. Jenkins also celebrated Notre Dame's new membership in the Association of American Universities (AAU), stating, "Membership in the AAU will bring Notre Dame practical benefits allowing us to join annual

meetings of presidents, provosts, vice presidents for research, and other academic leaders of the world's best research universities."

He added that "Access to valuable data collected and studies done by the AAU [will] help us assess our progress and assist us in our decisions," and he celebrated "a recognition by the world's most distinguished association of research universities [of] the progress Notre Dame has made in recent decades."

Notre Dame was recently inducted into the AAU alongside Arizona State University; George Washington University; the University of California, Riverside; the University of Miami; and the University of South Florida.

Notre Dame is also "the only explicitly religious institution in the AAU," as Fr. Jenkins pointed out in his faculty address. Currently, the AAU consists of 71 universities in the United States and Canada. Other notable schools in the AAU are all eight Ivy League institutions, the University of Chicago, and Duke University.

In addition to the faculty address and accompanying roundtable event, the Strategic Framework will also be discussed at the Fall 2023 Staff Town Hall, set to be held on Tuesday, September 19.

Brandon "Buddy" Williams is a senior mechanical engineering major from the great state of Texas. You can catch him with his canine companions enjoying the last bit of sunlight on South Quad before the winter hibernation. If you would like to offer him suggestions for his viral Gregorian Chant playlist, he can be reached at bwilli32@nd.edu.



New Campus Group Fights Sexual Addiction

AsceND Accountability groups available for students

EVAN BURSCH
Staff Writer

The *Observer* recently published “Escaping porn’s prison,” a viewpoint article about the damage caused by pornography and masturbation. The author, Josh Haskell, is a senior at Notre Dame. He highlighted that 91.5 % of U.S. adult male internet users have watched porn at least once in the last month and described the way that he has been personally affected, beginning at 15 years old (3 years older than the national average age of first exposure). Throughout, Haskell detailed his personal journey with and struggle against these two issues.

Haskell’s article was the kickoff for a new group on campus known as AsceND. Its founders and leaders are working to transform the lives of Notre Dame men in order to free them to love in the way that God desires.

Haskell writes, “One year of fighting passed. Then two years. Then three. And after almost a thousand days of strenuous effort, I still couldn’t break free from porn.” He continues, “There was one thing stronger than my nagging shame: my desire to love. I had this clear, detailed image in my mind of the man that I wanted to be.”

This mission of AsceND is

firmly rooted in the eternal truths of the Catholic Church. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, section 2338, says, “The chaste person maintains the integrity of the powers of life and love placed in him. This integrity ensures the unity of the person; it is opposed to any behavior that would impair it. It tolerates neither a double life nor duplicity in speech.”

AsceND began over the summer when Josh Haskell and fellow junior Nadim Khouzambboth independently decided to create an opportunity for the men of Notre Dame to join accountability groups to fight sins of lust. When they heard about each other’s efforts, they joined forces to help support the men of Notre Dame. Their stories bear remarkable similarities to each other and are indicative of the widespread

struggle against pornography and masturbation today.

The two men also share a

accountability to fight against it.”

This sentiment is the driving strategy of their new group. It is set up with one leader facilitating a small group of four men, which is then broken down into accountability partner pairs. The leaders are also in groups of other leaders in order to ensure that everyone receives accountability and support.

Thus far, the response on campus has been strongly positive.

Campus Ministry has partnered with the group to advertise, provide meeting locations, and give general support. Due to Haskell’s article, Campus Ministry, several announcements at dorm masses, and word of mouth, the group has grown to include well over 100 members.

Members of AsceND will start off by reading *Forged* by Matt Fradd and Jason Evert. Moreover, men will be supplemented by

monthly group activities such as attending Mass, volunteering at a nursing home, and sharing meals.

In addition to AsceND, there is a similar effort starting for women on campus. The Notre Dame women’s discernment group, BeLoved, will be partnering with Magdala Ministries to form a Notre Dame accountability group in late September using a curriculum specially designed for women struggling with porn and/or masturbation. The Magdala curriculum is rooted in Catholic doctrine, but women of all faith backgrounds are welcome to join.

To sign up for one of these groups, fill out the interest form. Men interested in learning more can reach out to Josh Haskell (jhaskell@nd.edu) or Nadim Khouzam (nkhouzam@nd.edu), while women can email BeLoved vice-presidents Lorenza Vielma-Paredes and Hope Gaetano at (magdala.und@gmail.com).



Image from Notre Dame Campus Ministry

similarity in the path that led them to grow in purity and fight lust. Both Haskell and Khouzam acknowledge the role that accountability has played in their personal growth in this area. In an interview with the *Rover*, Khouzam said, “When something lingers in the dark for so long, it’s easy for our eyes to miss it. When we bring it out to the light, we can face it head-on and work together in

Evan Maxwell Thomas

Aquinas Bursch is a senior from Caledonia, Michigan, majoring in physics, philosophy, and theology. He is a Resident Assistant in O’Neill Family Hall (the best hall on campus). If you have any advice that might aid him in applying for Ph.D. programs in plasma physics please email ebursch@nd.edu.

Saturdays with the Saints: A Season with Our Lady

Institute for Church Life hosts lecture series dedicated to Mary

MERLOT FOGARTY
Staff Writer

The annual Saturdays with the Saints series, presented by the McGrath Institute for Church Life, has dedicated this year to fostering greater intellectual curiosity about the Virgin Mary through its series titled “A Season with Our Lady.”

The hour-long lectures with McGrath Institute staff and other academics (many of whom are Notre Dame professors) on home football game days began in 2010. Saturdays with the Saints aims to offer students and football fans alike the opportunity to learn about exemplary figures in Church history and regain perspective of Notre Dame as a Catholic university.

In an interview with the *Rover*, Professor John C. Cavadini, Director of the McGrath Institute, explained the motivation for this year’s theme, reflecting on the institute’s desire to “nurture the study of Mariology ... and help us remember our roots.”

Cavadini noted that Father Sorin dedicated the entire University of Notre Dame to Our

Lady in 1888—the dedication of the basilica was extended to the surrounding buildings, the statue of Mary on the dome, and the very ground on which the university stands. This dedication is depicted in “Father Sorin’s Votive Window,” a stained glass window in the basilica.

Cavadini continued: “You have to understand who Mary is and her care for us, out of which you kind of get a re-birth of awareness of what our university is. ... Mary has been dropped out of a lot of western theological discourse and western ecclesial life ... since the second Vatican council.” He hopes that Notre Dame can embrace a “renewal of Mariology and of devotion to Mary in an idiom that’s appropriate for our time and our students.”

The first Saturdays with the Saints lecture of this season was titled *Tota Pulchra: Immaculate Conception*. The five remaining lectures will explain other Marian titles: Mother of Mercy, Mother of the Church, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, and Our Life, Our Sweetness, and Our Hope.

These titles help to remind the faithful that the Incarnation is not just a concept, but a

person—Jesus Christ—who became “as utterly dependent on his mother as any newborn,” explained Cavadini. “The Almighty became weak and dependent for us ... that’s how far He bent down.” This “very concrete mystery at the heart of our religion [is] why devotion to Mary fosters adoration of Jesus, of the Incarnate Word,” Cavadini said.

“When you remember Mary as Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church—Mother of Jesus, Mother of the Head, and of His members—you realize the Church herself is a Mystical Body, something which is not our creation but which comes from the very concrete person who emptied Himself and, in that self-emptying, bound us together in His love.”

The first lecture, presented by Sister Ann Astell, a theology professor at Notre Dame, took place on Saturday, September 2nd before the Tennessee State football game. Sister Ann detailed the origins of the title “*Tota Pulchra*,” the complete and absolute beauty of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, and how this title has been celebrated since the fourth century.

Sister Ann said that, similar to the recent regilding of the golden dome, the lecture series “wants to renew the memory of Mary.” She told the *Rover*, “[Mary’s] many titles capture different aspects of her wonderful beauty. Reflecting upon them helps us to discover Mary’s beauty in ourselves and in others. Mary is our mother, model, and educator.”

Will Hunter, senior philosophy-theology major, has been attending Saturdays with the Saints since it was revived in the fall of 2021. He told the *Rover*, “The speakers are not interested in giving purely academic lectures, nor are they willing to water down the content of their presentations. What results is something that can be appreciated equally by students of theology and by football fans exploring the spiritual heritage of Notre Dame.”

Saturdays with the Saints remains “a wonderful encounter with the Mystical Body of Christ and an invaluable part of my football Saturdays,” he says.

Anne Marie Bollman, senior in the Program of Liberal Studies, echoed Hunter’s love of the series and its representation of Notre Dame’s Catholicism on football

weekends: “It’s like getting to see the players who have already won the game and are yet still teammates who guide us to victory too. It adds an eternal dimension to the prospect of victory we are already excited about on gameday.”

Cavadini concluded with an optimistic message about the potential fruits of the series: “I think that from an increased focus on Mary, many graces will flow for this university—graces of healing and of rebalancing in a charism that ... we never talk about.”

Saturdays with the Saints lectures are held on home football game weekends at 10:30 am (for afternoon games) and at 3:30 pm (for night games) in the basement of Geddes Hall.

Past lecture recordings are available to watch on the McGrath Institute website.

Merlot Fogarty is a senior

studying theology, political science, and constitutional studies. After visiting two Marian apparition sites this summer, she would love the opportunity to rave some more about Mama Mary. Email her at merlot.fogarty@nd.edu.



Basilica of the Sacred Heart Tour Guide Ministry

Volunteers welcome visitors into the beauty of the Catholic faith

KATHRYN BOWERS

Religion Editor

With a majestic baroque altar, an impressive reliquary chapel, and exquisite frescoes, the Basilica of the Sacred Heart is one of the most frequently visited sites on the Notre Dame campus by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Every day (except for Saturday), visitors to the basilica can be accompanied by a tour guide free of charge.

Fr. Brian Ching, C.S.C., the rector of the basilica, told the *Rover* that tour guides have served in the basilica since 1990. Fr. Brian said, “The basilica is certainly a beautiful building, but that beauty is also meant to convey a message about who we are, who God is, and the relationship that God invites us to with him. This would have been a bit more intuitive at the time of the basilica’s construction, so today it is helpful to explain some of the meaning behind the basilica’s style and adornment so that the richness of people’s encounter with the Lord in the basilica is deepened.”

Katie Pelster, Coordinator of Basilica Tours and Hospitality, explained to the *Rover* that people volunteer to become tour guides. Around 35 of them are from the community, and 10 are students; the only factor that really distinguishes the two groups is that students do not serve during breaks. Pelster

expressed that students had always been welcome to serve as guides, but Campus Ministry only began to publicize the

volunteer guides. Guides receive instruction about core stops in the basilica, shadow others, and read books. One such book is

the basilica alone that we have right now, so it is able to go into lots of details about the building that other Notre Dame history



The interior of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart (Wikimedia Commons)

opportunity last academic year.

Pelster, who has been in her position for Campus Ministry for about one year, shared that she was excited to accept her current position. Before coming to work at Notre Dame, she researched art in her spare time.

Pelster emphasized that “everybody is constantly continuing to learn” when discussing the training for the

Stories in Light: A Guide to the Stained Glass of the Basilica at the University of Notre Dame (published in 2020). The main resource for guides is a book entitled *A Spire of Faith: The University of Notre Dame’s Sacred Heart Church* by Thomas J. Schlereth, which is no longer in print, so Pelster emails a copy to guides. “[This book] is the only comprehensive history of

books don’t cover.” Guides also have the freedom to focus on researching their own interests in the basilica.

Matt Hansen, a current junior, served during the spring semester of 2023. He told the *Rover* that he was motivated to join the ministry because he “wanted to immerse [him]self more fully into the beauty and richness of the basilica and its history.”

Hansen shared that his most memorable experience as a guide was his first tour, which included an alumni named Jack who graduated from Notre Dame around 70 years ago. Jack clearly had a focus on heaven and told stories about his time at Notre Dame. Hansen remarked, “As a college student, my interactions with the elderly are sparse, so having this opportunity was incredible and reminded me of my greater calling. ... I’ll never forget Jack and will keep him in my prayers!”

Hansen’s experience as a tour guide served to deepen his faith. “Ultimately, being a basilica tour guide allowed me to enter into deeper communion with God by entering into a fuller understanding of my surroundings and how they contribute to my understanding of Him.”

According to the basilica website, it is least frequently visited during the first three months of the year. The website also includes a virtual tour of the basilica. Tours are available in the mornings and afternoons on weekdays and in the afternoons on Sundays.

Kathryn Bowers recently dropped an empty coffee cup while biking. Email her (with common sense advice, suggestions on where to get coffee, or really anything) at kbowers2@nd.edu.

Danielle Allen Explores “Justice by Means of Democracy”

Harvard political scientist outlines vision for power-sharing liberalism

PJ BUTLER & NATHAN

DESAUTELS

Politics Editor & Staff Writer

Harvard Professor of Political Philosophy and resident researcher for democracy renovation, Danielle Allen, delivered a lecture on campus about her newly published book, *Justice by Means of Democracy*, on Wednesday, September 6.

The Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government (CCCCG) hosted the lecture to a crowded venue of professors, students, and South Bend locals. Allen provided an emphatic defense of democracy while highlighting the need for empowerment to protect the rights of citizens and non-citizens alike. She related this theme of empowerment back to her own family history, recalling how they always held sacred the dignity of another human being even in times of disagreement.

Allen argues that Americans must recognize that, despite

political partisanship, they often share identical aims. In her lecture, she called for a return to common good politics in America, a goal shared by the CCCC in its about page.

She invoked the philosophy of John Rawls, a political philosopher most famous for his 1971 book, *A Theory of Justice*. Allen took issue with some of Rawls’ assertions about the relative unimportance of positive rights, which provide the right holder with a claim to some good or service against either the state or another person.

“I’m not sure Rawls’ theory of justice is really accounting for what I see around me in terms of how fundamental people consider empowerment to their lives,” Allen reflected. She continued, “Our private effort to act on our purposiveness actually depends on our having access to the shaping of the rules and constraints that come out of our public world.” If the private sphere, the realm of negative rights, depends on access to shaping the government, then empowerment is necessarily the

key to securing rights in a liberal democracy.

This led Allen into her explication of “power-sharing liberalism” and the central question of her lecture: “What would it mean to take empowerment seriously?”

During the question and answer period, one South Bend local posed a question: How could he, as a public-school teacher, implement democratic empowerment for his students in an effort to prevent drug and gang violence? Allen answered that safety and security are prerequisites to empowerment, suggesting measures like community policing to



Danielle Allen delivers a lecture on “Educating for American Democracy” in November 2021 (Wikimedia Commons, Shawn Miller)

intercept and mediate threats before they occur.

Another attendee asked how the Supreme Court might regain legitimacy in America. Allen suggested limiting the

Supreme Court justices to 18-year terms, giving every president two appointments on a consistent, fixed schedule. The

continued on pg. 7



Judge Amul Thapar Visits Notre Dame

Federal judge delivers lecture, co-teaches course on affirmative action

JOSE RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

The Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government, the Notre Dame Law School, and the Program on Constitutional Structure co-sponsored a lecture titled “The People’s Justice: Clarence Thomas and the Constitutional Stories that Define Him,” as part of a Napa Institute Forum on August 29.

Judge Amul Roger Thapar, the featured speaker, was appointed by President Donald J. Trump to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in 2017. Thapar was also speculated to have made President Trump’s shortlist to fill the Supreme Court seat of Anthony Kennedy in 2018.

Speaking to a full room in the law school, Thapar described three of Justice Clarence Thomas’ key qualities: his pure originalism, his intense care for the people around him, and his strong black voice. While Justice Thomas has often been portrayed as someone who favors the strong over the weak due to his originalist philosophy, Thapar argues that “the opposite is true. And the cases in the book prove it.”

In his defense of originalism, Thapar quoted the late Justice Antonin Scalia, stating that judges and lawyers “have an obligation to fly the flag of

originalism.” Though Thomas is “first and foremost an originalist,” Thapar points out that “he cares a lot about people, and that is often lost.” The justice’s concern for the livelihoods of ordinary Americans inspired the title of Thapar’s new book, *The People’s Justice*.

Thapar covered three of the book’s twelve cases in the lecture: *Kelo v. City of New London* (1978), *McKee v. Cosby* (2019), and *City of Chicago v. Morales* (1999).

In *Kelo v. City of New London*, the plaintiff was a mother of five and paramedic who wanted to retire in New London, Connecticut with a water view. She bought a run-down house in a blue-collar neighborhood and renovated it over time, painting it pink and building a sign labeled, “The Kelo House.”

The city of New London wanted to redevelop a waterfront piece of property into a Pfizer research and development facility, so they invoked the doctrine of eminent domain to take possession of Kelo’s nearby house. In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court ruled against Susette Kelo and expanded the Fifth Amendment’s language of “public use” to include “public purpose.”

In his dissenting opinion, Thomas was the only justice to argue in favor of returning to the original language of the Constitution. Thapar pointed out that Thomas’ return to the language of “public use” would limit the government’s ability to evoke eminent domain,

which disadvantages minorities and the poor.

In the two latter cases, *McKee v. Cosby* and *City of Chicago v. Morales*, Thapar argues that Thomas’ jurisprudence continues to highlight how he seeks to defend the disadvantaged. Further reflecting on how Thomas’ strong stance on originalism is compatible with his care for the poor, Thapar concluded that Thomas’ originalism “favors the document, the document reflects the will, those words have meaning and consequence, and it often protects the ordinary citizen and the little person.”

Last year, Thapar had the unique opportunity to teach a one-credit course alongside Professor Vincent Muñoz titled “Church, State, and the Supreme Court.” Thapar and Muñoz are teaching together again this fall with their “Race and the American Constitution” course.

The class covers a series of prominent Supreme Court race-related decisions leading up to the recently decided *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* (2023) case. The Supreme Court issued a 6-2 ruling that the race-based admissions policies adopted by Harvard University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill were unconstitutional.

Senior Merlot Fogarty is one of the fifteen students currently enrolled in the course. She

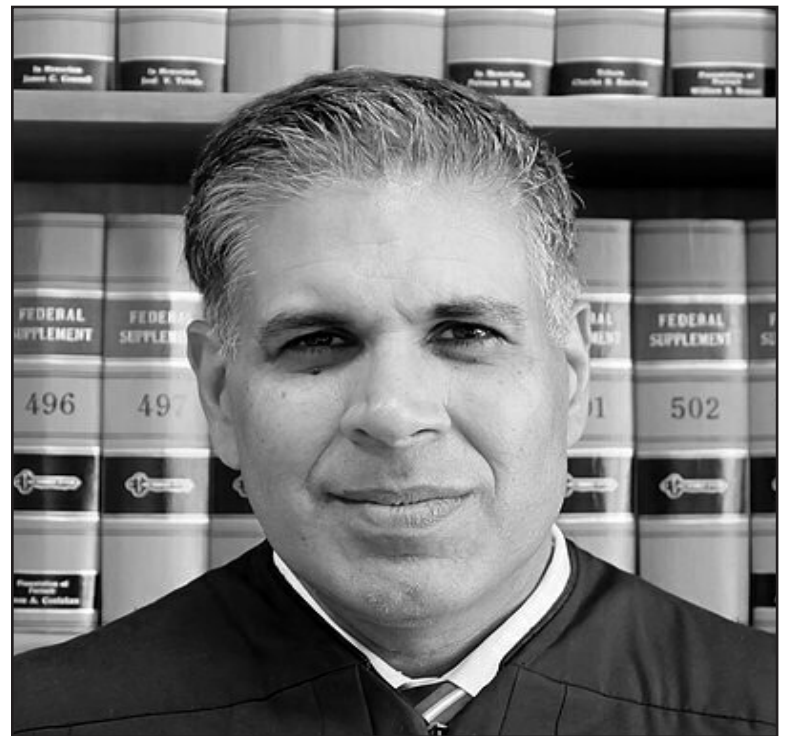


Image from the Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government

told the *Rover*, “Having Judge Thapar on campus so soon after the decision was released allowed us to have conversations about the tangible effects on admissions,” specifically about the future of the admissions process at Notre Dame.

Though the Supreme Court has ruled on affirmative action, many challenges remain for the university admissions process. Fogarty acknowledged that this course gave her hope for the future: “This is a controversial topic that university administrators don’t want to acknowledge, but if 15 students and a federal judge were able to deliberate the

fruits and repercussions of racial discrimination in admissions, then our university administrators should be able to as well.”

Jose Rodriguez is a senior from West Palm Beach, Florida majoring in computer science with minors in theology and constitutional studies. When he’s not selling pizza for \$1 a slice in the depths of Keenan Hall’s Zaland, you can reach out to him at jrodri27@nd.edu.

Danielle Allen

continued from pg. 6

proposal has been supported by academics such as Alicia Bannon and Michael Milov-Cordoba of the Brennan Center for Justice, but the view is still far from popular consensus. Suzanna Sherry and Christopher Sundby of the Vanderbilt School of Law warn that term limits could turn the Supreme Court into an explicitly partisan institution.

Allen is no stranger to putting forward dramatic solutions to fix what she believes are the current ailments of American institutions. For instance, she recently proposed that the House of Representatives needs to be expanded from its current fixed cap of 435 seats to 1,305 members. Under her model, each existing congressional district would be represented by three members rather than one.

She explained, “We need to elect those three members in a single election using ranked-choice ballots, which allow voters to record their first, second and third choices.” Despite these changes marking a significant departure from a system that has been settled for more than a century, Allen argues that her measures are essential for ending what she calls “the gerrymandering arms race.”

When asked for comment by the *Rover*, Dr. Don Stelluto, Co-Director of the CCCG replied, “The value of a broad and well-informed academic background to aid in understanding and discussing intelligently is something that we appreciate in Professor Allen, and we will continue to foster in the training and preparation of our students here at Notre Dame.”

Student reactions to the lecture were varied. Sophomore Eric

Gordy told the *Rover*, “While I thought that Professor Allen presented an honest and well-thought-out case for increasing power-sharing in a democracy in order to empower more citizens, I found that her argument was overly secularized and prioritized personal autonomy over societal virtue and morality.”

He continued, “She made no mention of the role of the American government in promoting Christian ethics and the common good—both elements emphasized by the founders—instead advocating for mass democracy that would likely lead to greater division and discontent in our already polarized country.”

Others received Allen’s talk more positively, disagreeing with Allen on particulars while still finding intrigue and even partial agreement with her assessment of democratic processes. Senior

Mark Ballesteros told the *Rover*, “I enjoyed how Danielle Allen approached the Hegelian dialectical framework of democracy. She underscores the need for a uniquely strong system of liberal democracy to combat the issues facing Americans.”

The strong attendance at the lecture and interest in Allen’s work reflects her rise to popularity in recent years. Outside of her academic work as a Harvard professor and an author, she ran for Governor of Massachusetts in the 2022 With Maura Healey, the eventual winner of the race, having outlasted her 8-to-1, Allen decided to suspend her campaign before the Democratic primary.

The CCCG has several upcoming events including a lecture from Kate Hardiman Rhodes titled “Unshackled: Freeing America’s K-12

Education System” on September 15, and a Constitution Day Panel titled “Religious Liberty and the American Founding: Natural Rights and the Original Meanings of the First Amendment Religion Clauses” hosted by Professor Phillip Muñoz on September 22.

PJ Butler is a senior from St. Louis, Missouri studying political science and theology. He feels somewhat apprehensive about residing in the same polity as Nathan. He can be reached at pbutler3@nd.edu.

Nathan Desautels is a junior studying political science and philosophy-theology. He enjoys being a member of the polity. Contact him at ndesaute@nd.edu.



It behooves a watchdog to bark. Good, Rover.



Who's Who: The Morris Inn Twins, Shelly and Kelly

Sisters offer a warm welcome to all who come to campus

BRYCE McDONNELL
Staff Writer

Since its 2013 renovation, the Morris Inn has been a hallmark of the Notre Dame welcome. The “living room of our university” provides comfort and air-conditioning for prospective students, alumni, and families. The core of this Morris Inn welcome is not simply the hearth or the hallways. Rather, it is the identical twin sister employees, Kelly Weidner and Shelly Jackson.

Amid the fleeting moments of entering, exiting, or even passing by the Morris Inn, guests are constantly met with the sisters' smiles. Sometimes the guests are surprised or confused at seeing the twins.

“People do the double-take and say, ‘You’re still here?’ and I say, ‘No, I am a twin,’” Shelly remarked. Kelly then jumped in, adding, “They have been coming here for years and didn’t know there were two of us. They just thought we worked all of the time.”

After the remodeling of the Morris Inn, the university was looking for employees for its valet service. Shelly convinced Kelly to apply so that they could both work the part-time gig.

“I thought it would be fun to meet some people, park cars, and get some exercise,” Kelly revealed. “It was that simple.”

The Morris Inn hospitality staff has evolved from its initial valet

service into a two-fold operation: lead ambassadors who direct the driveway and traffic and indoor ambassadors who care for the guests and luggage. Kelly and Shelly, now full-time employees, preside in the doorway as lead ambassadors. Kelly welcomes guests as they depart from 7 am to 3 pm, and Shelly takes over from 3 pm to 11 pm.

Beyond opening the gate for guests to park their car and offering directions to lost visitors, Shelly and Kelly look to assist the Notre Dame community in small ways, like offering someone an umbrella on a rainy day or giving a smile to hard-working students. Kelly and Shelly are consistently amazed by the kind gestures and positive energy of Notre Dame students, especially since Cafe J opened in 2022.

“They come in for coffee so much now and give little snippets of their life, from families to studies,” Kelly shared. “One student shouts my name when he sees me from afar and comes to give me a hug. They don’t forget me,” she said with a smile.

All employees, including Shelly and Kelly, contribute to the beauty surrounding Our Lady’s University and the way it forms all who come to campus.

“The integrity and morality is really built into its people,” Shelly said, only speaking if her younger sister missed key details. “It’s like working at Disney

World but without the rides—it’s magical.”

The sisters extend an offer on behalf of the whole Morris Inn staff for students who do not find themselves at home: “Whether you are a freshman or international student who is away from family or just feels lost or sad or

incomplete, come here. We tell parents this too so that they are comforted during the transition. Upperclassmen take the students in, but we are always here if they need an adult.”

The first Saint of the Congregation of Holy Cross, St. Andre Bessette, took on the humble role of doorkeeper with great humility. The hospitality and simplicity with which he performed his task enhanced countless lives, a legacy continued by the welcoming spirit of Kelly and Shelly.

Although Kelly and Shelly love their job dearly, it is not without its share of difficulties.



Kelly Weidner, left, next to her sister Shelly Jackson, right. Image by Bryce McDonnell

“We’re siblings, and have our little scruffs sometimes—Who’s the boss? Who’s telling who what to do? We work through it though,” Kelly—three minutes younger than Shelly—admitted. “And slow down. I’m praying your brakes work!”

In a busy and hustling community with cars, bikes, electric scooters, and food-delivering robots, the Morris Inn driveway can become, like many daily moments, an obstacle to navigate. The sisters offer their presence to encounter others in these otherwise hurried moments of life.

“We just want to leave a

memory—a thumbprint—on the lives of those who pass through here,” they agreed.

As a senior studying Mechanical Engineering and Theology, **Bryce McDonnell** has likely passed by the Morris Inn over 2,000 times and has been formed by the smiles and encouragement of countless University employees. If you know any University employees who deserve a story, please reach him at bmcdonne@nd.edu.

Rover Reviews: Tyranny, Inc.

Sohrab Ahmari confronts privatized tyranny

W. JOSEPH DeREUIL
Opinion Editor

Opinion

[This article originally appeared in the *National Catholic Register* on August 28, 2023.]

Catholics since Pope Leo XIII and his 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* have recognized that the post-industrial economy left the working class prone to unjust exploitation.

“Some opportune remedy must be found quickly for the misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class: for the ancient workingmen’s guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other protective organization took their place,” wrote Pope Leo.

Sohrab Ahmari’s *Tyranny Inc.: How Private Power Crushed American Liberty*—and What to Do About It, seeks to address this still-present need.

“Private actors can imperil freedom just as much as overweening governments,” Ahmari notes, and, thus, the government must support workers against these private actors. The laissez-faire impulse

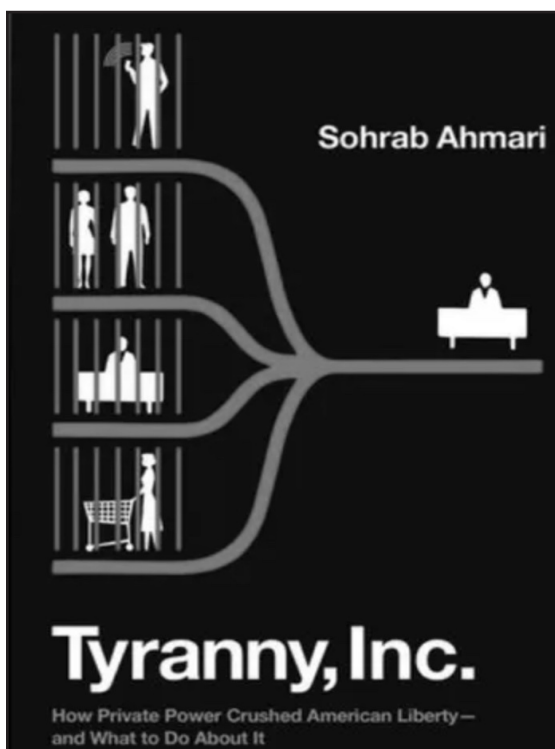
dominant today is the same one Leo decried—as vociferously as he decried the socialists.

“We can insist that economic activity isn’t and shouldn’t be divorced from justice, fair play, checks and balances, and other principles we associate with a decent political order,” states Ahmari’s introduction.

He then documents particular examples of “private tyranny” that illuminate structural issues in today’s economic order.

The book follows commonplace (yet incredibly difficult) situations, such as a single mother restaurant worker struggling with untimely scheduling, and it documents the seemingly absurd: a rural family being billed \$20,000 from a “private firefighting company” after the company did nothing to prevent their home from burning to the ground. It then narrates the widespread—and once-illegal—union-busting

techniques employed through numerous industries today and relays the dangers of the over-financialized modern economy.



Book cover of Sohrab Ahmari’s latest book. Image from Penguin Random House

Through these examples, Ahmari seeks to demonstrate first that the market is fundamentally coercive. For instance, the single mother could not quit her job without

fear of homelessness, nor could the family evade their nonsensical, devastating firefighter bill. Then, while implicitly following the same logic as *Rerum Novarum*, Ahmari diagnoses how to balance state and corporate coercion—in order to allow for flourishing businesses and support the often-powerless working man.

“Not every instance of coercion is necessarily bad,” Ahmari states. “Rather, the point is to notice that market power is coercive power, often relying on the state’s backing and benefiting those blessed with legal sophistication at the expense of those who lack it.”

Many have regarded the recognizing of the conflict between worker and employer (the asset-less vs. the asset-rich, as Ahmari puts it) as “proto-socialist.” But failing to do so precludes the possibility of addressing the flaws that Leo XIII deemed so urgent at the end of the 19th century. Indeed, “When a system denies this reality, ignoring the power inequalities to which market

societies are especially prone, we end up with the sorts of unjust coercion explored in this book,” Ahmari declares.

In this book’s recounting, the economic injustices deplored by Leo XIII reached their climax in the United States in the years before FDR’s New Deal.

The labor law enacted under FDR was the first and best reflection of Catholic social teaching America had seen: It provided bargaining power for the employee against the employer (significantly through the 1935 National Labor Relations Act). It also instituted a federal minimum wage and required employers show “just cause” for terminating contracts, helping level the employer-employee power dynamic.

However, in Ahmari’s telling, these labor laws have been defanged in the past decades, with judges reinterpreting them in favor of corporations rather than employees.

Ahmari calls for a renewal of strong labor law, arguing via rhetorical feint: “Karl Marx, for example, spoke of a ‘conflict now raging,’ as a result of the *continued on pg. 10*

Summer Culture Collection

Nico Schmitz
Editor-in-Chief

Pick: *Appaloosa Bones* (Gregory Alan Isakov)

In his newest album, folk artist Gregory Alan Isakov delivers a distinctively organic and soothing sound that reflects the American west in which Isakov works as a farmer. This slow-paced album features tracks titled “Miles to Go,” “Terlingua,” and my personal favorite, “Sweet Heat Lightning,” as Isakov brings listeners to the empty mountain highways of Colorado. The natural sound centers around complex but soft melodies centered around banjos and guitars. While *Appaloosa Bones* can serve as relaxing study or background music, its mystical and rolling buildups can keep a listener engaged for the album’s entire duration. The melancholic backdrop throughout all of the tracks is a breath of fresh air in a folk genre and music industry that often lacks depth and originality. I recommend this album to anyone looking for new music for driving or studying. I promise it will not disappoint.

Paul Howard
Executive Editor

Pick: *Untold: Swamp Kings*

In the waning days of August before college football’s Week 0 start, Netflix released *Untold: Swamp Kings*, a four part mini-series retelling the glory years of Gator football at the University of Florida between 2006 and 2008. The game footage is grainy, the pre-game suits are ill-fitting, but college football enthusiasts will relish the opportunity to relive three seasons of hard-hitting football with commentary from head coach Urban Meyer (one-time wide receiver coach at Notre Dame), analysts such as Paul Finebaum, and star players Brandon Spikes and Tim Tebow. The full range of emotions in BCS-era college football—a period in which a single loss jeopardized even the most dominant team’s chances at the national championship—are on full display in game clips, locker room footage, and retrospective interviews with coaches and players. If Colorado’s Week 1 upset of TCU didn’t rouse your excitement for the 2023–2024 season, queue up *Swamp Kings*, crack a beer, and brace for a fresh bout of Tebowmania.

Elizabeth Hale
Managing Editor

Pick: *A Year in Provence* (Peter Mayle)

After a successful career in advertising, Peter Mayle had had enough of the busyness of London and moved with his wife to a quiet town in the Luberon region of Provence. Mayle retells the story of his first year in France in the endlessly charming novel, *A Year in Provence*. I stumbled upon this book by accident while bored on a hot summer afternoon, but I was quickly taken by its lovely scenery and delightful characters. The beauty of the book is in its simplicity. An Englishman’s adjustment to the foreign, and sometimes outlandish, customs of the Provençal provides continuous amusement and plenty of situational humor. It will be difficult not to fall in love with personalities like Monsieur Menicucci, the lively plumber, or Didier, the erratic mason. Nonetheless, I highly recommend this simply endearing novel.

Viana Schlapp
Culture Editor

Pick: *Don Quixote* (Miguel de Cervantes)

The novel *Don Quixote* has more to offer than being just another thick book on your shelf. This fantastic piece of literature repeatedly made me laugh out loud, feel bad for laughing, and come close to tears chapter after chapter. Don Quixote, our misguided protagonist, sets off on great adventures riding his ancient horse alongside his hilarious sidekick, Sancho Panza. This book could easily be read little by little if the thousand pages is feeling particularly hefty this semester. It’s impossible to read this incredible novel without seeing some of yourself in the madness of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. To further pique your interest, I leave you with this quote: “When life itself seems lunatic, who knows where madness lies?”

W. Joseph DeReuil
Opinion Editor

Pick: *Decline and Fall* (Evelyn Waugh)

In this satire of the “modern aristocracy,” Evelyn Waugh poignantly ridicules many aspects of 1920s Britain through the eyes of a mild-mannered Oxford student who has “no business being the protagonist of a novel,” Waugh explains, were it not for the absurd circumstances modern life threw at him. In brilliant English prose, Waugh reveals the corruption of modern art, architecture, education, and, more generally, elite society, as his banal protagonist gets slowly entangled in more and more severe moral atrocities, seemingly through no agency of his own—simply because he trusts the “system” and high society to hold the moral on the inside that are suggested by their exterior civility. Waugh’s title parodies that of Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall* of the Roman Empire, the famous 18th-century history, suggesting through this light, witty comedy that perhaps—even in 1928— Western society is in a similar position as late-Rome.

Michael Canady
Campus Co-Editor

Pick: *The Father’s Tale* (Michael O’Brien)

In this lengthy but enthralling novel, O’Brien adds endless layers of wisdom about Catholic theology, Western civilization, and the depth of family relationships. O’Brien is a master of historical fiction, and although his other novels are also fantastic reads, this modern representation of the parable of the prodigal son truly displays all aspects of his personality, from Russian literary scholar to Catholic thinker. This work is not only a thrilling page-turner, but it also prompts insightful questions about our society and culture, especially in jarring comparison to communist Russia. Most importantly, it depicts the infinite value of paternal love, and it inspires readers to seek closer relationships with their family and friends.

PJ Butler
Politics Editor

Pick: *First Man*

First Man is a cinematic masterpiece that authentically captures Neil Armstrong’s journey to the moon. Directed by Damien Chazelle, the film’s dedication to historical accuracy, attention to detail, and practical effects create an immersive experience that transports viewers to the decisive effort of the space race. Ryan Gosling’s nuanced portrayal of Armstrong and Claire Foy’s compelling performance as his wife Janet add depth to the narrative. Chazelle’s direction, especially the use of handheld cameras during the sequences in space, enhances the suspense and emotional impact. Justin Hurwitz’s score is brilliant, complementing the cinematography beautifully. *First Man* is a cinematic achievement that resonates intellectually and emotionally, setting a high standard for modern biographical films and celebrating the first man to step foot on the lunar surface.

Madeline Murphy
Copy Editor

Pick: *Sound of Freedom*

The horrors of the sex-trafficking industry are exposed in this new movie that is based on the true story of Tim Ballard, a man who left his job to save children across seas from predators. This heart-wrenching, action-packed film will have you on the edge of your seat as you watch Ballard traverse rebel lands in the Columbian jungle and narrowly escape death in his rescue missions, and it will inspire you to speak up for the victims of this debauchery: those innocent children who have no voice of their own.

James Whitaker
Humor Editor

Pick: *The Innocence of Father Brown* (G.K. Chesterton)

While Chesterton is known to many Catholics for his semi-theological works such as *Orthodoxy* and *Everlasting Man*, he is known to the world at large (like Lewis) for his fiction. And this is rightly deserved;his skill as a writer of mystery stories earned him the role as the first president of The Detection Club, founded by such significant authors as Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. What the character of Fr. Brown forces upon the reader is the substantive difference between wisdom and cleverness—the vision of a simple and holy man is far keener than that of a clever and prideful man like Holmes. Chesterton’s thesis is that a detective detects all the more when he desires to know the suspect’s soul rather than the clues he leaves behind. Because Fr. Brown cared more about the criminal than his crimes, he is the only “detective” whose stories end not only with the criminal’s confession, but with his absolution and reconciliation.

Madelyn Stout
Layout Manager

Pick: *All Creatures Great and Small* (James Herriot)

In a series of memoirs written by James Alfred Wight under the pen name James Herriot, Wight drew upon his years as a veterinarian in the Yorkshire Dales. With an uncanny gift for humorous and poignant storytelling, Wight captures the marvels of creation, great and small, as he relays his encounters with animals and their owners. In breathtaking detail, Wight describes not only the dales, but the traditional, hardworking community he finds himself in. Mentorship, love, and friendship stand as the cornerstones of Wight’s work and lessons for the reader to come away with.



Rover Reviews: *Barbie*

Et in Arcadia Ego, *Barbie*

ELIZABETH HALE

Managing Editor

For all its musical numbers, plastic, pink, and absurdity, *Barbie* is an unexpected and insightful look into the modern psyche. The film accurately identifies modernity's universal anathema—death—as that which stuns and liquidates a life of superficiality.

The movie begins with scenes from Stereotypical Barbie's life in Barbie Land, a pink utopia of "authentic artificiality" where every day is perfect and everyone is best friends. Perhaps most unbelievably, though, there is no competition between the Barbies. All of them are high-achieving, beautiful, and sincerely excited for each other's success. This lack of competition and jealousy is perhaps due to the fact that they do not have to vie for male attention. The Kens adore the Barbies, and the Barbies do not have to give a second thought to the Kens.

Tellingly, one only has to look to Twitter to see that the line, "Barbie has a great day every day. Ken only has a great day if Barbie looks at him," is one of the most famous from the film. The dream of men as incessant in their adoration of women has ubiquitous feminine appeal. This dynamic was intentional in Barbie Land. In an interview with *Vogue*, director Greta Gerwig commented, "Barbie was invented first. Ken was invented after Barbie, to burnish Barbie's position in our eyes and in the world. That kind of creation myth is the opposite of the creation myth in Genesis."

As the movie begins, all is well in Barbie Land for Stereotypical Barbie, played by Margot Robbie. That is, until she mentions the abominable. Barbie stops her extravagant world in its tracks by asking, "Do you guys ever think about death?" From then on, her life is disrupted. She wakes up with morning breath, her showers are cold, her feet are flat on the ground, and she falls off—rather than floats down—from her balcony. She experiences,

for the first time in her life, discomfort.

It is introspection that shatters the hyper-feminist mirage of Barbie Land because it is precisely the lack of any interior life that characterizes Barbie and all those who seek to emulate her.

Struggling to embody her role, Robbie told *Vogue* that in order to play her character, she was advised to listen to a podcast called *This American Life* about a woman who never reflects on her own life. Robbie said, "You know how you have a voice in your head all the time? This woman, she doesn't have that voice in her head." It was this woman whom Robbie channeled while playing Stereotypical Barbie.

The theme song for Barbie Land, "Closer to Fine" by the Indigo Girls, demonstrates this lack of interior life. It is the only song on the radio in Barbie Land, and it is what Stereotypical Barbie listens to as she begins her journey to the real world. The song is a celebration of superficiality and a life lived without asking any meaningful questions.

The song begins, "The best thing you ever done for me / Is to help me take my life less seriously / It's only life after all." It belittles the idea that life has any meaning, and it posits that the key to happiness is living an unexamined life. Each verse discusses different sources of

potential knowledge, including the Bible, and says that each was as unsatisfactory as the rest. The true answer to any existential questions which one may have is to just not ask them because "it's only life after all."

However, through Barbie's travels in the "real world," she comes to understand that this

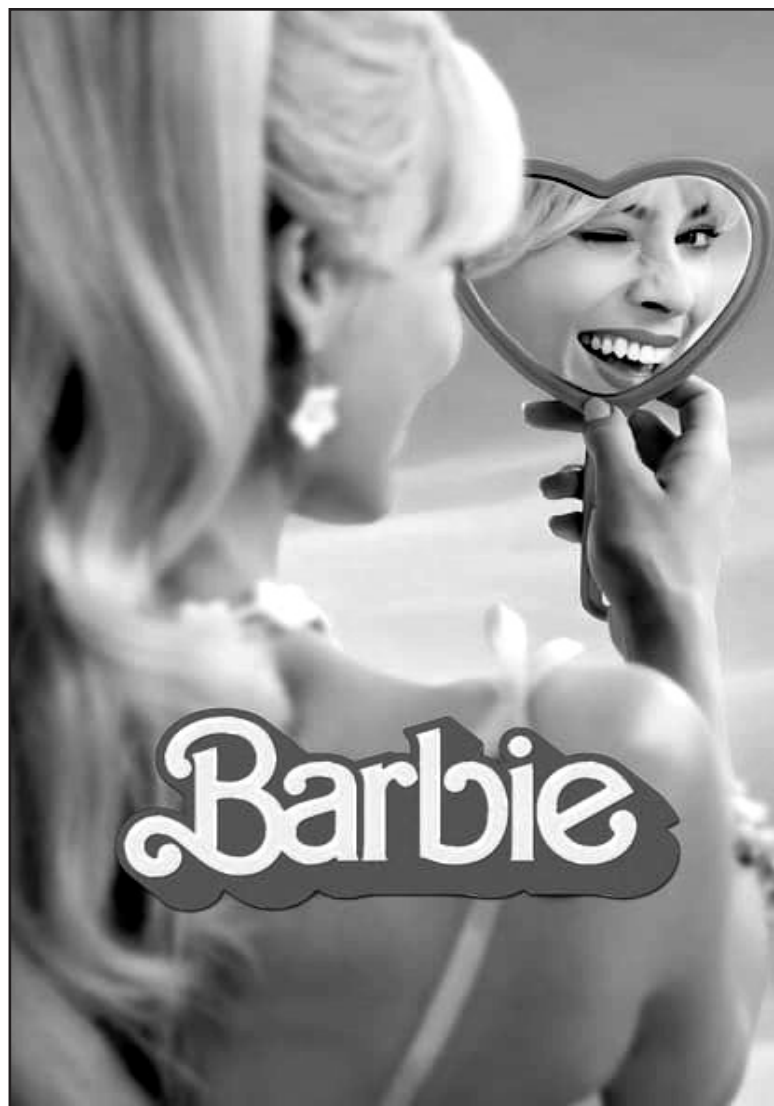
Stereotypical Barbie is given the choice to return to Barbie Land or to become a real woman.

During this scene, Eilish describes Barbie's experience of the emptiness of the life idealized in "Closer to Fine." The song asks, "Looked so alive, turns out I'm not real / Just something you paid for / What was I made for?"

Before she makes her decision, Barbie is reminded that "Humans only have one ending." Namely, death. Before Stereotypical Barbie can choose to enter the real world, she must know fully what she is accepting. She is shown a montage that communicates that, were she to become human, she would have to embrace not only the guarantee of death, but that of pain and suffering, too.

Finally, when the montage is over, Barbie chooses the life of pain and suffering. This would not make sense were it not for the song's vocalization

Promotional Photo for Barbie



view of the human person, one which turns a blind eye to the reality of death and a higher call, is ultimately unfulfilling. After witnessing suffering, strained relationships, and aging in the real world, Stereotypical Barbie returns to Barbie Land with an understanding of the beauty to be found in that suffering.

After her return to Barbie Land, "Closer to Fine," is answered by one of the more popular songs from the film, Billie Eilish's existential ballad, "What Was I Made For?" This song is played during the movie's emotional climax, when

of Barbie's realization. After asking the question "What was I made for?" over and over again, finally there is an answer: "Think I forgot how to be happy / Something I'm not, but something I can be / Something I wait for / Something I'm made for."

The film again subverts audience expectations at its end once Stereotypical Barbie has entered the real world. The audience watches as she enters a tall building, presumably for a job interview, perhaps with Mattel. However, she is not at the building to enter

the workforce or to become a CEO; she is there to see her gynecologist.

This last scene serves a primarily comedic end, but it is funny because it is unexpected. Here, *Barbie* is telling the (chiefly feminine) audience that entering the real world and being truly happy requires embracing that which makes you female. Just as Stereotypical Barbie does not succeed in the real world by trying to change it nor by becoming a "girlboss," but by becoming a real woman—something that is much more than skin deep.

Barbie, whether or not it intended to, told audiences—over \$1.38 billion worth of them—that life is not worth living if you abandon who you are to an "authentically artificial" life of surface pleasure. It explicitly said that you were made for happiness; to be truly happy you will have to face and embrace suffering. A superfluous life is not ultimately fulfilling, and, even then, you cannot escape the reality of death. It stands at the ready, prepared to stop your artificial world in its tracks by its mere mention. So embrace it, because *Et in Arcadia Ego*, Barbie.

This is College Barbie, and her dream house (BP) is currently under construction, so for now she lives in Zahm (definitely Mojo Dojo Casa House vibes). At college, she learns political science and hangs out with all her closest friends—literally every single person on campus! She can be reached at ehale@nd.edu.

Tyranny, Inc. continued from pg. 8

'changed relations between masters and workmen' and the 'enormous fortunes of some few individuals, and the utter poverty of the masses.'

But then he continues, "Actually, those words were penned not by Marx but by Pope Leo XIII in his 1891 encyclical on capital and labor, *Rerum novarum*."

Despite the "moral degeneracy" Leo asserted was inspired by this economic hardship, "conservative defenders of the system" often ignore the fact that "cultivating virtue

requires tangible, structural supports." Just as "a child will struggle to master honesty if his parents routinely model dishonesty; a body politic will likewise spurn the virtues if subjected to merciless economic exploitation," Ahmari concludes.

Such exploitation afflicts laborers regardless of religion or party — restoring the necessary bargaining power to the hands of the asset-less is a pre-condition to helping them attain the economic necessities to live humanely.

In such a polarized political climate, this book has a potential to be a coalition-building anomaly among the

populist right and labor left: The work keeps its focus on unjust economic coercion and does not touch upon cultural issues.

This intentional omission recognizes that the political opinions of the laborer are largely irrelevant to questions of economic justice. Indeed, Ahmari notes, "The rich must refrain from cutting down the workmen's earnings," whether by "force," "fraud," or "usurious dealing." He then posits refraining from these would be sufficient to avoid "all strife and all its causes?"

Tyranny Inc. certainly carries this sentiment, but these words are not Ahmari's but are rather

Leo XIII's from *Rerum Novarum*.

The Catholic social tradition recognizes through *Rerum Novarum* that "public administration must duly and solicitously provide for the welfare and the comfort of the working classes" that they might strive to be worthy of "the inheritance of the kingdom of Heaven."

Tyranny Inc. has certainly garnered detractors among the laissez-faire capitalist of today. But through it, Ahmari ignores partisan orthodoxy and offers one of the most persuasive contemporary arguments for a secular economic order that implicitly reflects the earliest

social encyclical.

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W. Joseph DeReuil is a senior a senior studying too many things. When he graduates he will be opening a restaurant and painting studio, both of which he will manage in his spare time. Send tips on how to bilocate to wdereuil@nd.edu.



Chingtreuse: A Review

A rich liqueur, despite the vow of poverty

JAMES WHITAKER
Humor Editor

Distilled and distributed by our own Fr. Brian Ching, C.S.C., Chingtreuse [ching-TROOZ] is a dark-red bitter liqueur sitting at a whopping 170 proof (85 ABV). We were able to sit down with the rector-distiller and ask him some questions about his passion project.

Rover: What was your inspiration behind Chingtreuse?

Fr. Brian: Uh, yeah, I mean, I like to think that it was completely original. I think that a high-proof weirdly-colored liqueur made by a religious order is a pretty novel thing.

Rover: Are you concerned about the apparent similarity between your product and the liqueur Chartreuse, distilled by Carthusian monks?

Father: ...I don't want to talk about that, please.

Rover: What does your distilling process look like?

Father: Well, being vowed to poverty definitely complicates the kind of operation I can run. First off, every distinctive liqueur needs an innovative base ingredient. So usually, my routine before distilling involves rummaging

through the trash of South Dining Hall until I have collected enough individual pepperoni slices off of discarded pizza to fill a 5 gallon bucket. With my base ingredient acquired, most of my work is done, but occasionally I'll try to find new ingredients that I could mix in as a distinctive flavor for a variety. My new favorite method is to grab a Grubhub-bot and pry it open, using whatever I find in there.

Since we don't have ordinary equipment like copper pot stills, usually I just throw the pepperoni into a Crockpot with some water, olive brine, and whatever I got from Grubhub. While that simmers, I read aloud the passage about the wedding at Cana, and by the time I read the words, "You saved the best for last," the concoction has reached its full potency at 170 proof.

Rover: How would you describe the flavor profile of Chingtreuse?

Father: Hang on one second, I had my PR guy write something for this...okay, I found it: "Chingtreuse introduces to the nose frothy waves of bitter esters, beset upon a shore of lychee grains and tannin sands, in which is buried a chest of tarragon and elderflower. It seduces

the palate with a sultry tang evoking apricots but subsisting in rosemary, fennel, cumin, rosehip, and Sunny D. Its finish is clean, Martinique, herbaceous, and nostalgic, recalling a distant dream of camphor and curaçao." Pretty good, right? Personally I still think it tastes like pepperoni and olives.

Rover: Have you run into any problems with distribution?

Father: Storage has been an issue for sure. I tried storing the bottles in the sacristy until I ran into the canon law nightmare of someone trying to consecrate Chingtreuse. I've also tried storing the bottles inside the pipes of the Basilica organ, but one of them leaked, which attracted bugs, which attracted bats. We know how that ended. I ended up leaving them all in the Breen Phillips basement back in June. I haven't checked in on them since, though...I probably should.

Distribution has definitely had some challenges, but also some surprising successes. Because it demands such a mature and acquired taste, most underage students have avoided it. But some other groups have purchased large quantities for their various needs. I know they

used it as a corrosive agent in cleaning the Golden Dome—turns out they didn't need to regild, since Chingtreuse is so strong that it burns away the outer level of tarnished gold. I also heard that some students, especially around Lent, were seeking firmer penances after confession. They would post-game confession with shots of Chingtreuse, and they found it so repulsive that they haven't sinned since.

James Whitaker is a graduate student in the theology department. As he is now the oldest "editor" at the *Rover*, he has made an appeal to the precedent of primogeniture in order to insert himself as the new Editor-in-Chief. But for now, you can still reach your lowly humorist at jwhitak5@nd.edu.

Culture Collection

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Kathryn Bowers
Religion Editor

Pick: Orthodoxy (G.K. Chesterton)

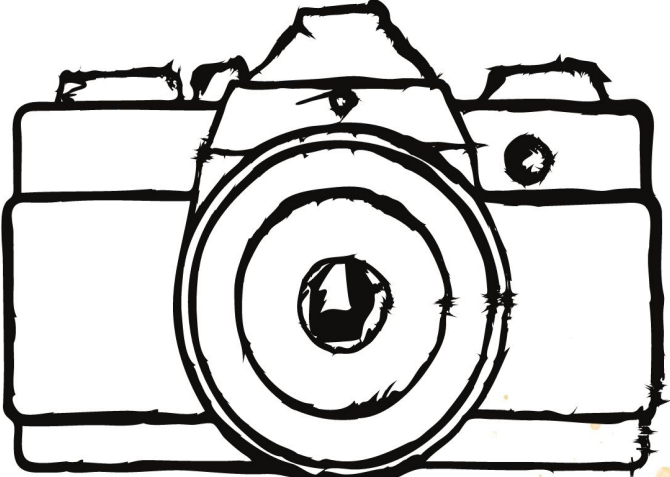
The first two Chesterton books that I read were *The Man Who Was Thursday* and *The Ball and the Cross*, and I was not especially looking forward to reading this nonfiction piece of his which details his personal journey to Catholicism. I ended up liking it, however, and his arguments for the faith were thought-provoking. Chesterton is well-beloved by Catholics, and this short classic of his deserves a read!



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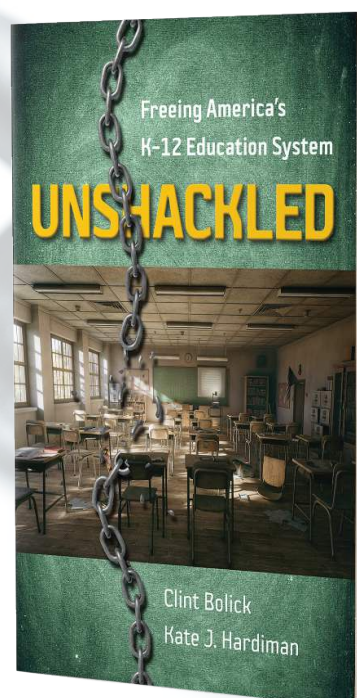
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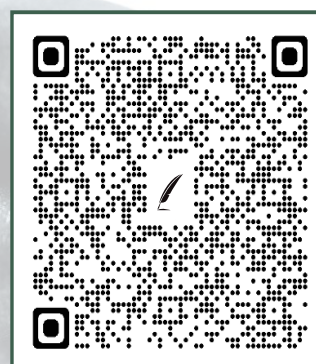
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Kate Hardiman Rhodes '17 is Notre Dame alumna and a 2016-2017 Menard Family Tocqueville Fellow. She also received her M.Ed. through Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) program in 2019, teaching high school English and Religion in Chicago. Kate '17 attended Georgetown Law School while working for Cooper & Kirk, PLLC, a constitutional litigation firm. She then clerked for Judge Trevor N. McFadden on the District Court for the District of Columbia and currently works as an associate at Cooper & Kirk, PLLC while living in Washington D.C., with her husband, Matt.



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