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MESSAGES FROM THE EDITORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- The editors are pleased to announce that the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* can now be found online at the DES website <http://www.deltaepsilonsigma.org>.
- All published work is peer-reviewed. Submissions are refereed by doctorally-prepared academics or other specialists in the pertaining subject-matter.
- Starting with the Spring 2011 issue, the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* will publish two numbers a year, Spring and Fall.

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PEDAGOGIES FOR THE OPPRESSED:
THEMES OF “AWAKENING TO POTENTIAL”
IN THE *INTERIOR CASTLE* AND
THUS SPOKE ZARATHUSTRA

CÉSAR J. BALDELOMAR*

Introduction**

At first glance, Teresa of Avila’s *Interior Castle (IC)* and Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra (TSZ)* seem to enact utterly different pedagogies. Teresa, after all, wrote for her Sisters and Nietzsche wrote for all and no one. Yet, after reading both works carefully, I see both pedagogies as attempting something similar, namely to awaken oppressed and slumbering audiences who are hindered from achieving their potentials. Both works, in other words, are pedagogies for the oppressed. This essay argues that both Teresa of Avila’s *IC* and Friedrich Nietzsche’s *TSZ* are attempts to *awaken* their audiences from their present state of slumber in order to journey along the difficult (but ultimately rewarding) path towards liberation and the fulfillment of their latent capacities. In the *IC*, the Sisters achieve full potential when their souls join the Divine,¹ and in *TSZ* humans should overcome their weak condition to become the *Übermenschen* (variously translated as “overmen,” “super-men,” etc.).

To elucidate such a thesis, this essay first discusses what a pedagogy of the oppressed seeks to accomplish and why it is important to consider the *IC* and *TSZ* as attempting to accomplish a similar endeavor, that is, to awaken their audiences by instilling, eliciting, and channeling their audience’s desire to reach their highest potentials by either seeking the “transcendent divinity” or the “divine within.” This essay then considers the many thematic correlations between Teresa’s “sixth

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dwelling places” in the *IC* and Nietzsche’s “Prologue” and its tightrope-walker scene in *TSZ*. Finally, this essay concludes by showing how the authors similarly mirrored themselves and their own pedagogical hopes and anxieties in their respective works.

Awakening the Walking Dead

In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire distinguishes between banking and transformative education.² The latter is education that inspires students to forge a more humane social order by overcoming oppression and other obstacles to the humanization of all peoples. Banking education, on the other hand, simply instills in students the tools and knowledge used to perpetuate the dehumanization and oppression of others. Freire states:

Implicit in the banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between human beings and the world: ... the individual is spectator, not re-creator. In this view, the person is not a conscious being; he or she is rather the possessor of a consciousness: an empty “mind” passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside.³

Thus, banking education stifles passion and fosters a slumbering state – allowing oppression to continue and to do so often implicitly. This education forms students who are biologically alive but who fail to use their knowledge and privilege to change unjust structures and supposed “destinies.” Students formed by banking education are fatalistic. Transformative education, on the other hand, is supposed to spark creativity in students, allowing them to see, understand, and alter fate.

Freire also claims that the economically and socially oppressed around the world are the living dead.⁴ They are biologically alive, but dead to the reality around them and to their nature. Thus, through his work, Freire seeks to awaken the living dead to their potential as human beings with full rights to lead joyful, free, and communitarian lives. This task of awakening the sleeping and inspiring the oppressed is not easily accomplished, since the sleeping and oppressed must leave the comforting dream world to face crass reality. Once awakened, the oppressed face a daunting task in overthrowing oppression wherever it exists and may surface. Struggle now marks their lives, but at least the awakened individuals are no longer blind to their reality and nature. They should no longer lack passion or desire for transformation.

The *IC* and *TSZ* are pedagogies for the oppressed.⁵ These two works, like *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, seek to awaken the sleeping and oppressed humans to their potentials. Both works attempt to inject passion into and elicit passion from their readers. Both highlight the necessity of keeping the desire for transformation alive amid the abyss of suffering and pain. And both attempt to inspire moral subjects who ideally should then help others awaken and go on to attain their potentials.

In an age when certain books offer “quick and simple” solutions for unsuspecting readers to reach their supposed goals, these books remind contemporary readers that the journey is never, for lack of better words, a quick “walk in the park.” Moreover, in an age when many concepts and ideas perpetuate ignorance and structures of injustice and oppression, these books instill in readers the importance of the zeal to know and confront what may initially make them uncomfortable but will ultimately liberate them. These books make readers step out of their comfort zones. *IC* and *TSZ* inform readers that it is possible to progress despite the devils and jesters that lie ahead. Above all, these classic works teach the importance of hope and meaning in a world that both Teresa and Nietzsche feared would become hopeless and meaningless. The works by the pious Sister and the brash iconoclast do indeed have much more in common than either Christians or skeptics would care to admit.

Different Authors, Similar Pedagogies

In chapter one of the sixth dwelling places, Teresa states, “Well, then, let us, with the help of the Holy Spirit, speak of the sixth dwelling places, where the soul is now wounded with love for its Spouse and strives for more opportunities to be alone and, in conformity with its state, to rid itself of everything that can be an obstacle to this solitude.”⁶ The soul has reached the sixth dwelling places because it is acutely aware of its own inherent lowliness and weakness in light of God’s vast greatness. The soul is no longer in a state of spiritual sleep and oppressed by worldly distractions as it was before it entered the Interior Castle. Consequently, the soul no longer harbors illusions of its own grandeur. Reflecting on this, Teresa writes: “For He who was able to stop the sun...can make the faculties and the whole interior stop in such a way that the soul sees clearly that another greater Lord than itself governs the castle.”⁷

Nevertheless, the more awake to its weaknesses the soul is, the more susceptible it is to both the devil’s deception and to falling asleep again. Teresa speaks about

this at length when she describes the different “locutions” (a term used in mystical theology, meaning auditory communications heard by the “inner ear”).⁸ Only the soul that is completely awake to God’s splendor can recognize the clarity of locutions stemming from this loving God. On the other hand, locutions coming from the devil or the imagination “will not be so clear or distinct but like something half-dreamed.”⁹ These locutions come to the sleeping and oppressed soul that has lost its drive to reach God. Moreover, Teresa states that both the devil’s and imagination’s locutions deceive the soul by fabricating what the soul wants to hear. These deceiving locutions can halt one’s progress to God by fostering false comfort in one’s present stage in the journey.

As soon as the soul heeds that calling to be one with God, it tastes God’s love and now seeks to feel that love perpetually. This is the motivation that keeps the soul going amid crises. This is the desire that keeps the soul awake even when relapsing into sleep might be the easier option. And this is the desire that the devil seeks to weaken.¹⁰ The devil, according to Teresa, is a trickster constantly tormenting the soul through locutions, visions, and feelings that to the sleeping soul might seem from God.¹¹ The devil attempts to throw the journeying soul off the right path by fostering confusion, but why does the devil enjoy causing such chaos? Teresa answers, “The devil gains much and is extremely pleased to see a soul afflicted and disquieted, for he knows that disturbance impedes it from being totally occupied in loving and praising God.”¹² The devil seeks to distract the soul from its goal, and the distractions intensify as the soul reaches its destination or potential.

Thus, the difficulty that comes with one’s awakened state and from being so close to the goal, namely the unison with God in the “seventh dwelling places,” might diminish the soul’s desire or spark (loving and needing God). The soul’s stamina, after overcoming one difficult challenge after another, might be so severely depleted or distracted that it begins to waver under future, more severe trials.

Teresa, however, constantly reassures her Sisters that, if their souls are truly alert to and zealous for God’s grandeur and love, God will provide favors that will keep the flame of longing for God alive. One such favor she describes at length is the quick rapture or “suspension of the soul.”¹³ This moment of union with God is for the soul a preview of what it will feel eternally when it reaches its zenith. Teresa testifies that she is unable to give a full description of this moment of “suspension”: “Whether all this takes place in the body or not, I wouldn’t know; at least I wouldn’t swear that the soul is in the body or the body is without the soul.”¹⁴ In this moment of utter ecstasy, the binaries of body and soul experientially dissolve. One is one with oneself and with the Creator. Following the experience, which leaves one certain that God is always present within, the soul is now awake and fully

attentive to everything.¹⁵ Also following the experience, the soul is left with three realizations: 1) God's grandeur; 2) one's lowliness and humility before God; and 3) the threat that earthly things cause to spiritual union should be ignored.¹⁶

Paradoxically, the fact that the "Lord" grants the soul greater favors is a (positive) sign that the soul's trials have become more intense as it nears its goal. Teresa worries that humanity's inherent weakness – even when strengthened by God – will prevent the soul from reaching union with God. Reflecting on the soul's utter weakness, Teresa laments:

O God help me, what interior and exterior trials the soul suffers before entering the seventh dwelling place. Indeed, sometimes I reflect and fear that if a soul knew beforehand, its natural weakness would find it most difficult to have the determination to suffer and pass through these trials, no matter what blessings were represented to it – unless it had arrived at the seventh dwelling place.¹⁷

Teresa recognizes the many challenges involved. The sixth dwelling places present the soul with arduous tasks that might lead the weak soul to failure. This progression of the soul is an uncertain journey, even though it is certain that God provides favors to maintain the soul's proper purposefulness. Teresa intends to keep the right spark alive within her Sisters, who, because of their inherent weaknesses, might decide to regress. After all, ignorance is bliss and foregoing a difficult task is convenient.

This situation is analogous to a scene from the movie the *Matrix*, wherein one of the characters, in desperation, pleads with the evil agents to return him to his previous state of ignorance. In the *Matrix*, two worlds exist: a virtual world resembling contemporary society and the real world that is cruel, dark, dirty, and ruined by war and the super machines who rule by keeping humans ignorant of their reality. Only the "awakened" humans battle the machines in an effort to liberate the rest of humanity from their slumber. But living in the real world is anything but glamorous. These humans, who wear rags and consume only liquids, live on filthy battle ships and constantly face death, while their sleeping counterparts enjoy counterfeit steaks that nevertheless taste real. The awakened humans live with the painful realization that they and their loved ones led and continue to lead deceived lives in a virtual world. Above all, they live everyday with the uncertainty whether, in the unlikely scenario that they do someday defeat the machines, they can indeed rebuild the real world. All this uncertainty and anguish leads one of the awakened characters to betray his fellow humans by asking the evil agents (who work for the machines) to restore him to the virtual world as a rich and powerful actor. He does not want to

remember anything, for he says that ignorance is bliss. Oppression, strangely, seems to equal bliss!

The soul in the sixth dwelling places is in a similar conundrum. It has almost reached its goal, but it has yet to confront its most intense trials, those that could easily lead to the soul's demise or relapse. Teresa's goal is to help her Sisters overcome their weaknesses by strengthening their desire to continue on the progression to God even amid such intense ordeals. She writes, "It's natural that what is worth much costs much."¹⁸ The soul's difficult quest for intimacy with God is dangerous because it might lead to death before its final destination is achieved.

In sum, Teresa's pedagogy attempts several tasks:

- To awaken the soul to its weakness/oppression and to its potential liberation in God;
- To clarify the fact that what is worth much costs much;
- To warn the soul of distractions that could lead one astray; and
- To give firm assurance that, despite the soul's inherent weakness, God will always accompany the soul to nourish and cultivate its holy desire.

The Prologue and the tightrope-walker scene of Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* also attempt to accomplish several important goals: (1) to awaken humans to their inherently weak condition and to their potential to overcome and transform their weakness; (2) to impart recognition of the difficulty in such a transformative journey; (3) to warn humans of the distractions that perpetuate their slumber; and (4) to assure humans that, though they are inherently weak, to become the overmen is possible and indeed necessary for triumph over eternal sleep.

Similar to Teresa's pedagogy, Nietzsche's *TSZ* arouses its readers to their capacities so they can overcome their presently weak state. In *TSZ*, Nietzsche's character Zarathustra, who many commentators consider really a reflection of Nietzsche himself,¹⁹ declares that "Human being is something that must be overcome." Unlike Teresa, however, Nietzsche, perhaps inspired by Emersonian thought,²⁰ understands this potential to lie naturally within humans – similar to a silkworm transforming into a butterfly.²¹

Zarathustra, having spent ten years living in solitude on a mountaintop, decides to come down from the mountain and speak to other human beings, who are oppressed and blind to their latent capacity as *Übermensch*. In a marketplace, he declares his hope for humanity to the crowd: "It is time that mankind set themselves a goal. It is time that mankind plant the seed of their highest hope."²² That Zarathustra urges humanity to set a goal suggests that humans have been living without a goal. They have been living without meaning, without purpose. They

have been living in mediocrity and slavery, and, to the shock of the awakened Zarathustra, they are content with their lot. According to William Lloyd Newell, “The superman [*Übermensch*, or “overman”] concept was rarely used by Nietzsche, but when it was... it referred to stealing the gods’ fire by overcoming mediocrity.”²³ These humans have been asleep to their vocation as overmen. They resemble Freire’s living dead, who are “passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside.”²⁴

Nietzsche, like Teresa, views humanity as weak and lowly. Curiously, both Teresa and Nietzsche employ the metaphor of the worm to describe humans. Teresa writes: “O my Sisters, what nothingness it is, that which we leave! Nor is what we do anything, nor all that we could do anything for a God who thus wishes to communicate Himself to a worm.”²⁵ Zarathustra proclaims that, though humans have progressed beyond being mere worms, there is still much in humans resembling worms. Both authors consider the unawakened human condition paltry indeed, and requiring skillful pedagogies.

For Nietzsche, the highest potential is not the soul’s unison with God, but rather its overcoming the human condition so one becomes overman. He writes, “The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the overman *shall be* the meaning of the earth!”²⁶ Yet, the journey to become the overman is difficult and fraught with several trials, just as the soul’s journey to God in Teresa’s *IC*. It is easier to be the living dead and not heed the call to reach one’s highest calling. As in the *IC*, the more awake one is to the reality of one’s weak human state, the more difficult it becomes for one to overcome this state, irrespective of one’s desires to reach one’s highest potential. The precise desire to overcome weakness therefore becomes central and must be strengthened by adequate instructions.

Zarathustra states that “one must still have chaos in oneself in order to give birth to a dancing star.”²⁷ This chaos represents the longing that humans must have to reach the dancing star, that is, the overman within. Humans can no longer afford to continue on in their meaninglessness. Zarathustra warns against distractions that buttress humanity’s slumber, such as the otherworldly aspirations of Christianity. In the words of Newell, “For [Nietzsche], Christianity killed the creative force in humankind by crushing passion. Nietzsche intends to restore passion, to return sensuality, feeling, and will to their pristine unity.”²⁸ He beseeches his brothers at the marketplace to “*remain faithful to the earth* and...not [to] believe those who speak to you of extraterrestrial hopes!”²⁹ Zarathustra and Nietzsche focus on the here and now. Anything that distracts from this material reality is an obstacle to instilling and cultivating desire to become the overman.

At this point it should seem clear that both Teresa and Nietzsche rely on a pedagogy that pushes human beings towards the development of their potencies. This likeness can be shown concretely through a comparison of Nietzsche's tightrope walker scene and the occurrences in Teresa's sixth dwelling places. After reaching the marketplace, Zarathustra speaks to a crowd gathered to watch the tightrope walker. He tells them about the overman, but the crowd takes such teachings literally and believes that the tightrope walker, who is aloft above the crowd, is literally the overman. A frustrated Zarathustra then tells the crowd that "Mankind is a rope fastened between animal and overman – a rope over an abyss."³⁰ As in Teresa's *IC*, humans are suspended between an animal-like stupor and genuine wakefulness.

Also present is the abyss. This image suggests that once one has begun the journey, there still exists the danger of falling into the abyss, of plunging into one's death or into an angst resembling the trials and dark nights of the soul in the *IC*. Zarathustra describes this journey to the status of *Übermensch* as "A dangerous crossing, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking back, a dangerous shuddering and standing still."³¹

The jester responsible for the tightrope walker's fall resembles Teresa's devil, who causes confusion and delights in afflicting pain, suffering, and even death upon the soul. The jester is responsible for the tightrope walker's fall into the abyss. The brave tightrope walker, who had begun to awaken to his potential, does not fulfill it. The leaping, yelling jester distracts and ultimately murders the tightrope walker. Like the devil, the jester does not touch his victim, but nevertheless causes him enough mental anxiety to make him lose his balance (concentration) on the difficult tightrope challenge, where the slightest misstep results in serious injury and/or death.

Even though the tightrope walker fails to reach his destination (the overman) and break the chains of slavery, Zarathustra admires his effort and even comforts the jester's fallen victim. The dying tightrope walker worries that the jester, after having tripped him, will also drag him to hell for not finishing his tightrope walk. Zarathustra responds by stating that devils and hell do not exist. He urges the tightrope walker to "fear no more!" The walker then reveals to Zarathustra that he feels he is "not much more than an animal that has been taught to dance by blows and little treats."³² A compassionate Zarathustra then tells him that he is not an animal who followed the orders of others or accepted fate. Instead, he tells him, "You made your vocation out of danger, and there is nothing contemptible about that. Now you perish of your vocation, and for that I will bury you with my own hands."³³ The tightrope walker, as opposed to the sleeping humans, was beginning to awake and had the desire to begin his journey of transformation. It does not

matter that he died while on the journey, for at least he had conviction, purpose, and meaning in his life.

Zarathustra's compassion resembles God's compassion in the *IC*. God constantly grants the soul favors even though it constantly stumbles on its progression toward Divine unison. Again, the journey is difficult, but help, hope, and compassion are available to help the weary but brave traveler. Both Zarathustra and Teresa's God understand humanity's weakness, so both appreciate those humans who are authentically brave.

Teresa and Nietzsche: Similar Writing Goals

I think it is imperative that modern readers know some biographical information about the author of any text, but especially texts attempting to inspire moral subjects. Investigating the author's life could reveal the experiences that formed the author's ideas, as well as the author's intention in crafting a book of moral instruction. Thus, after exploring the parallels in the pedagogies of both Teresa and Nietzsche, this essay next considers how Teresa and Nietzsche in their own lives (1) made their own experience central to understanding their texts; (2) wrote for themselves and others; and (3) sought to inculcate in their readers, through their own passionate writing, a sense of passionate duty. For both authors understood that their own pedagogical writing constituted for themselves a moral duty.

According to Thomas Brobjer, "where most novelists and poets base their figures on some kind of model, or on fantasy, Nietzsche consciously constructed Zarathustra out of himself, out of his experiences, and his thinking."³⁴ Brobjer claims that Zarathustra's hopes, anxieties, and struggles reflect Nietzsche's own.³⁵ In fact, Brobjer tells us that Nietzsche himself disclosed in several letters to his publisher and few friends that not only is *TSZ* "his most personal book but he also frequently claims that to understand it one needs to have gone through the experiences it is based on."³⁶ *TSZ*, in other words, represents much more than a canvass on which Nietzsche draws his philosophy. He draws in detail his often negative personal experiences and how he overcame them.³⁷ His beloved book speaks to those who have begun their experiential journey toward the overcoming of "living death."

In a similar vein, Teresa wrote her *IC* out of her struggles during her soul's progression toward God. The *IC* is a spiritual autobiography similar to her other spiritual classic, *The Book of Her Life*. Her experience, and not scholastic theology and philosophy, was the primary source for her writing. And similar to the soul's

concern for the dangers awaiting it on its transformative journey, Teresa understood the perils and potential pitfalls of writing about her mystical journey. She was writing for her Sisters who have experienced or would soon experience both the confusion of their souls' "dark nights" and the infusion of God's favors. Like Nietzsche in *TSZ*, Teresa assumed that her readers would fathom, through their own comparable experiences, the soul's multifarious phases as it travels through the seven dwelling places.

Nietzsche and Teresa, as is perhaps already clear, wrote their books for themselves and for others. In a letter to a friend shortly after he finished all parts of his *TSZ*, Nietzsche describes his book as "an entrance hall to my philosophy – built for me, to give me courage."³⁸ He had written his *magnum opus* to provide a framework for all his past and future works. Brobjer asserts that the book's dual audience – himself and others – makes *TSZ* unique in the Nietzschean corpus: "What characterizes *Z*, what separates it from his other works – and is the reason he praises it so highly – is its existential content – both personally for Nietzsche and also in a more general manner, more or less available to all readers."³⁹ Hence, the book's subtitle, *A Book for All and for No One*, makes perfect sense. He no doubt sought to inspire moral agents to overcome, but he also strove to overcome his own weaknesses in the process.

Teresa also wrote her masterpiece for herself and for her Sisters. Terrance G. Walsh, S.J., argues that Teresa wrote her book "to convince her religious world of the cognitive character of what passed between her soul and God, and of the relevance of such experience for transforming the lives of her nuns."⁴⁰ Teresa wanted, through her writing, to assure herself that she was not deranged for experiencing what she did. She wanted instead to make these experiences foundational to her thought and life's mission. Like Nietzsche, she wrote a book that would be an entrance hall to her thinking and experiencing. Yet, she also wrote *IC* as a tool of moral formation for her Sisters. She wanted to convince herself and her Sisters that God indeed helped the soul overcome temptations to either give up or submit to diabolical distractions and trickery.

Both authors also seem to struggle to put into words the journey leading to the fulfillment of humanity's highest possibilities. The *IC* should not be read as a map that leads the soul smoothly and easily to God. Nor should readers approach *Zarathustra* as a glib manual on how to become a successful tightrope walker. Recall that Zarathustra must strive mightily in order to convey his teaching of the overman to the crowd at the marketplace. Teresa also must struggle hugely to explain what the soul experiences during its many encounters with God. Words alone do not seem to do justice to the moral wisdom these two authors are aiming to convey.

But they nevertheless wrote. They perhaps wrote to make sense of their own experiences. As with any confused writer, they both often felt anxious, hopeless, and doubtful of their own rhetorical skills – of their efficacy in communicating their experiences and message. Ultimately, however, these two authors were brave enough to begin the journey of expressing what they believed. Indeed, with interspersed feelings of passion and anxiety, both authors come alive in their writings. Nietzsche claimed that writers must always write with passion, love, and conviction.⁴¹ They must feel what they are writing. Teresa, as shown in her Prologue and Epilogue, also expressed her passion and her doubt when writing. In the Prologue, Teresa seems confused and nervous at writing a book about the soul's highest calling, but a more confident and satisfied Teresa emerges in the Epilogue. Both authors, through the task of writing their "writings," mirror what it means to (1) awaken to the task of writing a moral pedagogy for the oppressed; (2) progress along the writing path by overcoming obstacles and resisting the comfortable urge to succumb to sleep; and (3) remain confident – though not certain of the book's outcome – that one has at least begun one's transformative journey.

Conclusion

The several pedagogical similarities in the *IC* and *TSZ* may make it difficult for some readers to see the existing differences. Both texts seek to awaken their audiences to their sleeping and oppressed states. Yet, both texts treat desire differently. The *IC* constantly warns against succumbing to desires that could lead the soul astray. This implies that the soul already desires things, but they are wrong desires. Thus, the *IC* seems to be channeling the soul's desires for worldly things to then reorient them toward desire for union with God. In other words, the *IC* assumes that the Sisters already have desires that should be turned into a passionate longing for God. This reorienting of passion can be painful for Sisters too attached to other desires that distract from God. And, since these Sisters have experienced some joy in these wrong desires, it is possible for them to long for these false joys. It is therefore easy to succumb to the devil's trickery and relapse into these worldly attachments. The *IC* constantly seeks to remind the Sisters that desire for God leads to pleasures unrivaled by worldly desires.

In *TSZ*, desire of any kind seems to be missing. Humans are alive, but passionless! Zarathustra, then, attempts to instill desire in humans. He cautions humans against things that oppress desire, such as otherworldly hopes. For Zarathustra, it seems that passion of any kind is welcome. The first step is to begin desiring some-

thing, whatever that may be. Once humans experience desire, Zarathustra expects them to begin walking the tightrope toward the correct desire to become the overmen. Unlike the *IC*, *TSZ* does not promise that desire to reach the overman will lead to happiness and joy. On the contrary, it could result in much pain, suffering, and even death, but at least one is now fully living. One is no longer among the living dead, who are desire-less and who consequently passively accept fate. Apart from these differences, both texts do seek the same aim: to awaken their audiences to reality by either instilling, eliciting, or channeling their desires. Ultimately, both texts are pedagogies for the oppressed who fail to realize their potentials, and these potentials are possible only through desire.

ENDNOTES

¹ In Catholicism, the soul-in-grace is understood to share in the Divine Life but to remain distinct from God. Mystics such as St. Teresa of Avila, when they speak of “joining the Divine,” are reporting the *phenomenology* of their mystical experience, and not diagnosing its theology. That is, they are reporting that the *experience* of a state of ecstasy (which is a mirror of what the experience of beatitude is for the souls in heaven) is that of *unity* with God. Perhaps the phrase “unison with God” metaphorically captures the theology of this beatitude, since the word “unison” literally means “concord of two or more sounds,” thus metaphorically representing the “Divine sound” and “the ecstatic soul’s sound” as one-and-the-same.

² Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2003). See especially pp. 71-85.

³ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁵ For Teresa, any soul not in union with God is oppressed, since it too often falls to the trickery of the devil. For Nietzsche, all human beings are oppressed by obstacles that keep them from reaching the overman.

⁶ Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1979), 108.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 122-126.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹¹ See pp. 151 and 161.

¹² *Ibid.*, 163.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 133.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 152.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 108-109.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹⁹ Thomas Brobjer, “*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as Nietzsche’s Autobiography,” in *Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra: Before Sunrise*, ed. James Luchte (London: Continuum, 2008), 30.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

²¹ Teresa uses the silkworm to butterfly analogy to describe the soul’s journey to God.

²² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9.

²³ William Lloyd Newell, *The Secular Magi: Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche on Religion* (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1986), 185.

²⁴ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 75.

²⁵ Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, 130.

²⁶ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 6.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁸ Newell, *The Secular Magi*, 186.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, 11.

³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁴ Brobjer, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra as Nietzsche's Autobiography," 30.

³⁵ I quote Brobjer at length to elucidate the many similarities between Nietzsche and Zarathustra: "Like Nietzsche, Zarathustra longs for company, praises friendship, although having difficulty finding it, hesitates to teach 'eternal recurrence,' and has as his most terrible threat, pity. Both have been scholars but have moved beyond that stage. Both are poets, although critical of mere poets. Both have spent too much time in solitude and long to be human again. They both live a life of chastity, but know the power of sexuality. Both had little experience of women but know the power of this cat-like being. They both are a-political and avoid mass society and the flies at the marketplace. Both are destroyers of morality, but lived very 'moral' lives... Both have an ambivalent view of 'followers' and 'disciples,' but nonetheless strove intensively to acquire them. Both have believed beyond the world, in a God, but realized this was only a symptom of human suffering, and both proclaimed the death of God." See pp. 33-34.

³⁶ Brobjer, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra as Nietzsche's Autobiography," 31.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁸ Quoted in Brobjer, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra as Nietzsche's Autobiography," 40.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴⁰ Terrance G. Walsh, "Writing Anxiety in Teresa's *Interior Castle*," in *Theological Studies* 56 (1995), 251.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 39.



NOT “SIMPLY A MATTER OF TASTE”: THE COMMUNITARIAN CASE AGAINST INDECENCY IN THE MEDIA

STEPHEN F. GAMBESCIA*

The Supreme Court ruled in April 2009 (Bravin & Shatz) that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) had the authority to set and apply fines to operators of public airway stations when celebrities unleash so-called “fleeting expletives.” What is disconcerting about the arguments made by network lawyers before the Court is that these lawyers, in order to keep the FCC from serving sanctions, have added a defense other than that of constitutionality. They argued that the expletives used by these celebrities are so “common” and so “pervasive” that they have lost their shock value and can no longer be considered lewd or offensive when judged according to the “reasonable person” test.

Admittedly, public authorities and courts historically have had a difficult time deciding what is indecent and what is obscene in the public’s eyes and ears. But should that complexity keep us from trying to define such limits? Indeed not, for perhaps the most disturbing argument from apologists who speak on this anti-censorship issue reflects this struggle. In fact, the exercise of clarifying moral boundaries remains all the more important to pursue, given that the standards and definitions of what is appropriate must come from the community. We should not throw our hands up in the air and shrug our shoulders, claiming stalemate because individual ethical standards are “simply a matter of taste.” Rather, we should embrace the exercise of collective discernment because it validates and reinforces the meaning of social responsibility in a true liberal democracy. Individual speech, while intrinsically important, should not trump the intrinsic moral fabric of a community.

Plenty of evidence exists to show that fleeting expletives and indecent exposures on network television are rampant during this decade. Therefore, the time has come to help TV producers and network executives—if their celebrities can’t

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figure it out—to decide what is indecent and obscene to a general viewing audience. For example, pop singer Janet Jackson “errantly” displayed for a few seconds her bare breast during the halftime entertainment of the 2004 Super Bowl game. Just before the airing of a Monday Night Football game in November 2005, ABC aired a commercial promoting the hit show *Desperate Housewives*. The commercial featured actress Nicollette Sheridan enticing then Eagles wide receiver Terrance Owens, by dropping her towel while in the men’s locker room, so he would be tempted from going to the impending game. Cleveland news anchor Sharon Reed created a national stir in November 2004 for airing a first person account of her nude photo shoot experience—all in the name of generating higher ratings for her news program. As if the lewd language and soft porn exhibitions during “family programming hours” were not bad enough, dismissive apologists make flippant arguments that these behaviors should be, at best, overlooked as simply Hollywood antics or, at worse, considered productive because in our classic economic tradition a little avarice and vice “help make the world go round” (Mandeville, 1988).

Lazy Arguments

Apologists consistently present three arguments in support of non-censorship of the entertainment industry’s debased content: (1) Complaints are coming from only a small vocal minority of radical right-wing ideologues; (2) Those who complain about and seek to control the avant-garde artistic expressions of Hollywood and media personnel are treading on the First Amendment; and (3) Because the entertainment industry makes a profit on what shocks us, shock-entertainment must be something good and, therefore, should be left to market forces.

This paper first exposes the weaknesses of the *lazy arguments* that find the gratuitous violence, sexual content, and lewd and abusive language on our public airwaves “much ado about nothing.” It then shows how Communitarian thinking provides the appropriate social reflection that can guide the public, policy makers, and the entertainment industry so they can put into place appropriate guards against culturally debased content.

The “Concocted Controversy” Argument

It has already become a hackneyed argument that the public’s outrage against events such as those mentioned above is “concocted” by the moralizing right

(especially when the latter feels emboldened by certain election results). Yet the record shows that the public's and policy makers' call for accountability on the part of entertainment venues has been well underway since the late 1980s ("reduce the violence") and mid-1990s ("stop the indecent and obscene incidents on our screens and on the air") (Peysner, 2004; Gallagher, 1997). The message to the entertainment industry that "We have had enough!" comes from broad-based public support and out of nonpartisan motive, and even from some decision-makers in the entertainment industry. A moral voice (Etzioni, 1993; 1996) has already arisen, one unrelated to this country's presidential and Congressional politics.

For example, as early as 1989, then Senator Paul Simon (Illinois) moved through Congress a bill requiring television networks to come up with a code to "help parents" identify shows that exhibit excessive violence (Gunther, 1994). This bill generated a watershed of legislative proposals at the national level requiring several measures to rein in television programming. Several high profile Congressional hearings took place thereafter to understand the nature and extent of violence on television and what to do about the issue, if anything. Sponsors of prospective bills to curtail and control violence on television presented testimony from child health and welfare groups, media watchdogs, professional health associations, and researchers, all demonstrating in some way that violence on television has a negative affect on our society.

The first serious measure to control violence on network TV was stimulated by the Television Violence Act of 1990. Congress gave antitrust exemption to the networks to talk among themselves about reducing violence; this move brought on the voluntary two-year trial Advanced Parental Advisory Plan. The 1996 Federal Telecommunications Act required the television industry to devise a *voluntary rating system* to assist parents in making decisions as to what shows are objectionable or too mature for children. Finally, television manufacturers were required after January 2000 to equip TV sets with V-Chips that work in sync with the ratings mentioned above, so parents could program the TV to block objectionable shows based on the age appropriate and content-specific ratings (Rozansky, 1996).

While the debates over excessive violence on television continued, the public and policy makers also became acutely aware of other disturbing content shifts in network television programming. The family hour waned, children's educational programming declined, public service announcements all but disappeared, and many shows became racier,—replete with nudity, sexual scenes, vulgar and course language, and non-stop sexual innuendo. In 1990 the Children's Television Act required broadcasters to air and document educational and informational programming for children. However, Congress and the Federal Communications

Commission left what was “educational and informational” to be determined in grand measure by the broadcasters themselves. Consequently, when reapplying for licensure to the FCC, the networks were known to include *The Jetsons* and *The Flintstones* as evidence of responsible educational programming and their good faith in acting according to “the public interest” (Edwards, 1994). Furthermore, network stations on average gave about one minute per hour during prime time to some public service announcements. Since the mid-1990s that time for PSA’s has dwindled to a 10-second spot per hour (Farhl, 1997).

Added to the tasks of reducing, rating, and screening “adult” oriented content on screen in order to protect our children is yet another task: what to do about the impromptu obscenities that appear on live TV and radio. Celebrities see indecent words, expressions, and exposures as a new sport for live TV and radio programming: the celebrities seem to enjoy playing cat and mouse with the FCC, network executives, and sponsors. Radio has had a comfortable run featuring shock jocks such as Howard Stern, whose sponsors believe that their vulgar acts are an artful form of play. However, the vulgarity motif is working its way into many music and sports radio programs where the indecencies are programmatically incidental but nonetheless common. Thus the larger issue has become not only concern about the thinning line of indecency and obscenity standards (Etzioni, A., 2004), but also whether there will soon be any line at all.

Similar to the concern about violence on television, the pervasive use of indecencies and obscenities on network television has caught the ire of the general public, child health and welfare groups, media watchdogs, professional health associations, and policy makers. In 2003 the FCC received almost a quarter million complaints about TV and radio programs, compared with 14 thousand in 2002. In 2004, the FCC reported four times the number of public complaints over those in 2003 (Rubin, 2004). Clearly, the notion that right wing moralists have concocted the outcry against gratuitous and intense violence, sexual scenes or innuendo, and lewd and abusive language is factually inaccurate.

While apologists certainly have the right to disagree with the *Moral Voice* of the Community in its demand that the public airwaves be cleaned up, it is disingenuous — given the evidence to the contrary—to portray the Community as a return to the politically partisan ideology of the “Moral Majority.” Rather, the general response to this issue demonstrates the nature and extent of a “responsive community” movement. The voices come not simply from a homogenous group of ideologues or killjoy nanny advocates; the voices flow from parents, educators, youth groups, early childhood educators, health and welfare groups, and researchers. A genuine concern for the chronic ill effect on society from the questionable content moving

across our public airwaves emerges from all sectors of our community: general public, policy makers, government agencies, media advisers, and market-driven stakeholders. Remediation of the expressed problems via perceived censorship will of course have to stand on some combination of intellectual, moral, and legal grounds, thus forming a Communitarian approach to this issue that follows collective propriety.

The “Violation of First Amendment” Argument

The second case against any censorship of inappropriate material on our public airwaves also contains a lazy argument. Apologists and many media conglomerate officers simply note that any form of censorship creates a violation of their First Amendment right to “free speech.” They begin with a false start in claiming *carte blanche* protection for anything they say at any time and within any context. The authentic starting point, on the other hand, holds that our government has oversight responsibility for what reverberates through *public airwaves*. In principle, entities are authorized to use the public airwaves for a wide variety of purposes but with the provision that the government must maintain an interest in order to serve the public. In exchange for a license to use the airwaves, entities must adhere to some level of regulation. When there are disputes, the stations are held to the very important “in the public interest” doctrine.

The best understood example of “government’s need” to use the airwaves points to a need to warn or give communities information in the event of a natural disaster, national defense act, or a terrorist threat. The authority to regulate public network television and radio stations remains a question, legally, involving *matter of degree*, for the Federal Communications Commission certainly has the legal authority to regulate the airwaves and set certain standards for programming. If arguments are to be made for or against censorship, those arguments should be based on the reasonableness of the standards set in the overall public interest, not on an open-and-closed proclamation that censorship violates Constitutional speech rights.

When speech is of a commercial nature, most of us understand that our courts do not give commercial speech the same level of protection under the First Amendment as other forms of speech, such as political or religious speech. In practice, however, the FCC gives the networks and radio stations a lot of latitude in the nature of the content traveling through the public airwaves. Similarly, the FCC gives a lot of latitude to commercial speech. In fact, intermittent support has emerged during the history of our country to continue to increase the degree of commercial speech protection. More recent movements seek to place commercial speech under

the same protection as our individual speech rights protected by the First Amendment (Kaplar, 1991). The rationale points to the idea that in today's society commercial speech has a tremendous effect on how we choose to live our lives day-to-day. Giving people as much information as possible and allowing them to judge for themselves a matter's utility should make for a free and healthier society.

A corollary argument within this second argument against any censorship of inappropriate material on our public airwaves tacitly recognizes that regulation can occur but warns that initial censorship starts us down the "slippery slope." The slippery slope, so goes the argument, engenders more regulation that we eventually will regret as oppressive. Again, I consider this a lazy argument. Arguing to pause when considering official regulation to protect public health and welfare because a community may not know "where it will all end" shirks the difficult but essential responsibility of determining where such regulation should at the very least begin.

Much has been written from a Communitarian perspective that seeks the proper balance between individual rights and social responsibilities—all for the common good (Etzioni, 1993; 1996; 1998; 2004). Individual speech, while intrinsically important, should not trump the intrinsic moral fabric of a community, however that may be defined. Mass media has become such a large part of our cultural formation—for all that is considered valuable and for all that seems questionable—that we should give to it the time and intellectual energy needed to establish standards that serve the public interest. Television remains the most pervasive form of communication the world has seen. Because the instrument itself is a so powerful, users and guardians of the instrument need to appreciate the *context* within which it operates so as not to afford users unjust advantage. For example, commercials that pander to an unsuspecting audience to hawk a product, celebrities who make political statements from an unlabeled podium, athletes who gesture to fans or competitors, or news programs that take advantage of their credibility status to sensationalize a non-issue, all actually cheapen our speech rights. Their voices and images are heard and seen taking advantage of their privileged positions and circumstances and are consequently unfairly heralded as the "voices of reason" in a controversy. Additionally, without agreed upon standards the general public has the ongoing burden to cry foul on decisions made by the networks and radio stations.

Here is where Communitarian thinking and analysis can be helpful. Communitarians appreciate the need to focus on the "differentiation" of any rationale presented to either encroach on rights or boost community safeguards. This real and serious work must be done when resolving many health and public welfare

issues for the commonweal. Unfortunately, many important health and social welfare issues fail to get the appropriate intellectual analysis and discussion underway, even when those groups whose “rights are at stake” agree with critics that, in fact, a problem exists. For example, the tobacco companies, almost from when health reports first began to show that cigarette smoking is injurious to one’s health, adamantly began to claim that they did not want children smoking.

In these cases, apologists argue—usually with an open mike from media outlets—that the “differentiation” exercise is untenable, i.e. we can never agree on what standards of decency to use. Therefore, they argue, prudence dictates that nothing be done lest we encroach on someone’s rights. Apologists pollute meaningful discussion of this issue when assuming the voices of the community have no intellectual capacity to see the difference between Janet Jackson’s breast at a half-time Super Bowl show and a woman’s breast on an *ER* episode involving women’s breast health. The community’s moral voice is counted out before a useful analysis and discussion can begin. Without serious mutual dialog on this subject, we all shirk our responsibility to be good stewards of our evolving yet interesting culture. Our liberal democracy demands that we determine what the acceptable standards are for public broadcasts, especially during the times when impressionable children and adolescents are exposed to said broadcasts.

A Communitarian perspective can be useful in this regard. To illustrate further, in the long and well documented tobacco-control policy case, public health advocates for clean indoor air policies were stalled for decades by warnings from social science apologists predicting that draconian “no smoking” laws would stigmatize smokers. Any fair analysis of the impact of these public health policies shows that, fortunately, “smoke-free” regulations are working as intended and smokers have not become social pariahs. In fact, I have argued in a detailed study that in the 1980s and 1990s the significant progress made by tobacco-control policy had less to do with public health information campaigns and legislative measures and more to do with the public’s moral outrage. The marketing and lobbying practices of the tobacco oligopoly incensed the public (Gambescia, 1996).

The “From and For the Marketplace” Argument

A third popular argument against additional regulation on the entertainment industry, given the concerns mentioned above, proves to be again a lazy argument, namely, that because the entertainment industry makes a profit serving up what shocks us, the shock-industry must be something “good.” The Libertarian

argument that a healthy marketplace trumps other spheres, such as the community and government, manifestly debases our responsibilities in a participatory democracy (Bellah, et al., 1985).

Apologists argue that most of the entertainment programs of “questionable content” perform quite well in the market place. Indeed, trying to decipher and distinguish what are the true preferences of the consumer audience and what are the results of savvy marketing strategy, of “leading your customer” (as it is called), becomes a challenging task. Pinpointing the root cause of why violent and indecent material maintains so pervasive a presence on the public airwaves remains a dizzying task. Writers claim that producers want to see this type of material; producers note that the network executives call for these shows; and the networks argue that the advertisers respond positively to such shows because they know these shows have many viewers.

So who acts as the operative trendsetter here? When certain shows are popular and command good advertising dollars, then obviously the result is seen, in capitalism, as something “good.” The market sphere in a capitalist country has a serious cachet that cannot be denied. However, even Adam Smith, the strident cheerleader for a market-based economy, saw disadvantages to the commercial society. He was concerned about the bad influences the rich would have on other classes who will emulate what is perceived as fashionable. If there were evidence of some socially redemptive benefits to this “new age” programming, then one could argue, as did the early twentieth century economist Friedrich Hayek: moral imperfections in the system can be tolerated if we expect an overall greater good in the marketplace (Hayek, F., 1994). Apologists argue that the steady diet of sex and violence on TV does minimal to no harm. No one, however, makes the claim that in the aggregate this diet does any good.

Conclusion

The market place and the artists from the entertainment industry, along with media apologists, surely have spoken. But the dialog remains incomplete. It seems that the communal sphere and even the governmental sphere are weighing in and leaning in the other direction. In these controversies, one often hears that morality cannot be legislated or regulated. Therefore, say the apologists, what we are witnessing more and more on the public airwaves is hardly pathological. Rather, it is merely a matter of taste. A Communitarian or Aristotelian approach asks that we structure our institutions and laws in ways that help us do the right thing. The

apologists for the entertainment industry take the easy way out: don't quibble about style and let profit prevail. I think the majority of the public in this debate will be siding with Thomas Jefferson, who gave the following counsel to our "virtuous republic" in times of crisis and controversy: "On matters of style, swim with the current; on matters of principle, stand like a rock" (Kaminski, 2006).

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WINNERS OF THE 2009 UNDERGRADUATE WRITING COMPETITION

At the January meeting of the Executive Committee of Delta Epsilon Sigma National Scholastic Honor Society, the following winners of the 2009 Undergraduate Writing Competition were selected.

- **Poetry:** First Place, Deanie Vallone, Cardinal Stritch University (Wisconsin)—“Thirteen”; Second Place, Leah Corkery, Loras College (Iowa)—“I Was Kneeling.”
- **Non-fiction prose:** Honorable Mention, Alyssa Waugh, King’s College (Pennsylvania)—“Jazzberry Jam.”
- **Short fiction:** Honorable Mention, Stephan Ikeda, University of St. Thomas (Minnesota)—“Ah, Look At All the Lonely People.”
- **Scholarly research:** Honorable Mention, Rita DiBello, Thomas More College (Kentucky)—“Kingsolver’s Ecology: Ecocriticism in the Poisonwood Bible.”



THIRTEEN

DEANIE VALLONE

In the creek that winds
serpentine through the sapling woods,
we swam for hours
in the lung-crushing cold,
our feet scraping
the stony floor, collecting
cuts along our arches and toes.
Then panting, half-delirious,
we heaved our bodies out of the water,

and collapsed on the bank,
stomach-down, our lips
touching the soil,
inhaling the scent
so heavy and raw
we could feel it
behind our eyes.
Finally, we rolled onto our backs,
shivering, staring
at the bursts of sunlight
between black branches,
feeling our heartbeats throb
through our backs, all the way down
to the tangle of tree roots
under the earth.



I WAS KNEELING

LEAH CORKERY

I was kneeling
in my garden when I saw him:
Twined leaves, woven stems,
verdant face of Jesus.
A grasshopper jumped
from his eye.

AN INVITATION TO POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTORS

The editors of the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* invite contributions to the journal from our readership. Send manuscripts (email attachments preferred) to the co-editors. Submissions to *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* are peer reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or specialists in the pertaining subject matter. The journal is open to a wide variety of topics and genres. Particularly welcome are submissions addressing issues of concern to Catholic colleges and universities:

- What is the impact of new technology such as the Web or distance learning on higher education, and how can we best manage its advantages and risks?
- What strategies are most useful in encouraging the development of student leadership and the integration of academic work and campus social life?
- What are the most promising directions for service learning and for the development of the campus as community?
- What is the identity and mission of the American Catholic liberal arts college in the era inaugurated by *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*?
- What are the implications of globalization in relation to Catholic social and economic thought?



SYNOPSIS OF THE 2010 ANNUAL MEETING, DES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of Delta Epsilon Sigma met in St. Petersburg, Florida, January 1-2, 2010. Present were Dr. Claudia Kovach, President of the Society, and Co-Editor of the *DES Journal*; Dr. Gertrude Conway, Vice President; Rev. Dr. Anthony Grasso, C.S.C., Chaplain; Sr. Linda Marie Bos, Dr. Christopher Lorentz, Dr. Richard Nicholas, and Dr. June-Ann Greeley, Members; Dr. Robert Magliola, *DES Journal* Co-Editor; and Dr. Thomas Connery, Secretary-Treasurer.

Dr. Kovach called the meeting to order and the 2009 Meeting's minutes were approved. Dr. Kovach then introduced, welcomed, and installed the Committee's new member, Dr. June-Ann Greeley of Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT.

Dr. Connery went over the financial audit, which is required by the By-Laws, that had been conducted by the accounting firm of Lethert, Skwira, Achultz & Co., LLP, of St. Paul, MN. The auditors concluded that the organization's records are in good shape, but recommended that all processes and procedures for overseeing the organization's finances be formalized and put into writing. That is being done by Dr. Connery and DES Administrative Assistant, Ms Debbie Shelito.

In presenting a proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins April 1, Dr. Connery expressed concern over declining revenues and rising costs. The auditors reported net assets as of the end of the last fiscal year (March 31, 2009) to be \$451,744, down from \$538,190 in 2008. Dr. Connery estimated that net assets would probably drop again by March 31, 2010. Although he reported that the organization's equity investments were making a comeback, increasing from \$85,930 on April 1, 2009 to \$109,406 on Dec. 1, 2009, that remains considerably less than the \$187,000 in equities that DES held before the recession and the market fall which was principally responsible for the drop in net assets. In addition, other revenue streams had declined over the past five years, with considerable drops in annual donations and in dues from a drop in annual student inductions. Consequently, he presented two budgets: one in which induction dues would remain at \$35 and the other in which dues would be raised to \$40 and would prevent having to turn to savings to cover \$20,000 to \$40,000 of annual costs. After extensive discussion, the Executive Committee decided to raise dues to \$45 in order to guarantee the financial stability of DES for the near future and in order for DES to more fully carry out its mission. Although concern was expressed regarding students' ability to afford the increase, the committee reasoned that to postpone an increase could prevent DES from regaining financial stability. Several members noted that at their institutions, a small fund exists in Academic Affairs to cover the induction fee for students who cannot afford it.

Dr. Magliola and Dr. Kovach, *DES Journal* Co-Editors, reported that they are very pleased with the *Journal's* new printing company, and that they had received positive feedback about the publication's new look. In addition, submissions have increased and it was suggested that consideration be given to peer review submissions, thereby increasing the *Journal's* stature among potential contributors. The Committee agreed that the editors should transition to peer review of submissions. It was further decided to make the *Journal* available online through a link at the DES website, which is in the process of being upgraded. The Committee discussed moving entirely to an online publication, but concern was expressed about its availability to all members since *DES Journal* is designated the "official organ" of DES by the organization's Constitution. Providing members with the option of a

hard copy also was discussed and will be revisited at the 2011 meeting. The desirability of moving from three to two issues a year to cut costs and to increase quality had been discussed previously and was again considered, but it also will be reconsidered at the 2011 meeting.

Dr. Chris Lorentz reported that he will put into play various Moderator/Advisor outreach efforts through email messages to Chapter Moderators and through postings on the revamped DES website.

In judging the Writing Contest entries, committee members expressed disappointment over the number of entries and the quality of the entries. Only 24 entries were submitted for the four categories for the second year in a row. The Poetry category proved to be the strongest, with First and Second Place winners; and the other three categories had one Honorable Mention each:

- Poetry—First Place, Deanie Vallone, Cardinal Stritch University (Wisconsin), for “Thirteen”; Second Place, Leah Corkery, Loras College (Iowa), for “I Was Kneeling.”
- Non-fiction prose—Honorable Mention, Alyssa Waugh, King’s College (Pennsylvania)—“Jazzberry Jam.”
- Short fiction: Honorable Mention, Stephan Ikeda, University of St. Thomas (Minnesota)—“Ah, Look At All the Lonely People.”
- Scholarly research: Honorable Mention, Rita DiBello, Thomas More College (Kentucky)—“Kingsolver’s Ecology: Ecocriticism in the Poisonwood Bible.”

In order to further encourage essay writing that specifically reflects the Catholic intellectual tradition, the Committee voted to create a new writing award, the J. Patrick Lee Prize in Ethics. The prize will honor Pat Lee, who served DES as national Secretary-Treasurer for twenty years before his untimely death. A subcommittee will create a description of the essay.

Dr. Kovach passed the gavel to Dr. Conway, who assumed a two-year term as president. Dr. Lorentz assumed the vice presidency. In stepping down, Dr. Kovach recalled the “warmth and hospitality” that characterized DES under Dr. Lee when she joined the Executive Committee, and which continue to mark the Committee and its work. She said that she hopes to continue to foster this “spirit of hospitality and generosity” in her work as co-editor of the *Journal*.



THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA DISTINGUISHED LECTURERS PROGRAM

Delta Epsilon Sigma offers each year an award of one thousand dollars for a speaker at a major meeting sponsored or co-sponsored by a chapter of Delta Epsilon Sigma or by a Catholic professional society. Application for this award must be filed with the National Secretary-Treasurer one year in advance.

The society also offers awards to help subsidize lectures sponsored by local DES chapters. An application for one of these must be filed with the National Secretary-Treasurer thirty days in advance; the maximum award will be two hundred dollars.



THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA WEB PAGE

The Delta Epsilon Sigma Web page is available at <http://www.deltaepsilonsigma.org>. The *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* is available online there, in addition to DES application forms, programs, and announcements.



THE UNDERGRADUATE COMPETITION IN CREATIVE AND SCHOLARLY WRITING

Delta Epsilon Sigma sponsors an annual writing contest open to any undergraduate (member or non-member) in an institution which has a chapter of the society. Manuscripts may be submitted in any of four categories: (a) poetry, (b) short fiction, (c) non-fiction prose, and (d) scholarly research. There will be a first prize of five hundred dollars and a second prize of two hundred fifty dollars in each of the four categories. No award may be made in a given category if the committee does not judge any submission to be of sufficient merit.

The first phase of the competition is to be conducted by local chapters, each of which is encouraged to sponsor its own contest. A chapter may forward to the

national competition only one entry in each category. Editorial comment and advice by a faculty mentor is appropriate as an aid preparatory to student revision, so long as all writing is done by the student.

Prose manuscripts should be typed or word-processed, double-spaced, 1,500-5,000 words in length. Scholarly papers should attach an abstract, should include primary research, and should present some original insight. Documentation should follow one of the established scholarly methods such as MLA (old or new) or APA. A long poem should be submitted singly; shorter lyrics may be submitted singly or in groups of two or three. Moderators should send all entries to the National Secretary-Treasurer by December 1.

Final judging and the announcement of the result will take place not later than May 1st of the following year. Winners will be notified through the office of the local chapter moderator.



DELTA EPSILON SIGMA SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Delta Epsilon Sigma sponsors an annual scholarship and fellowship competition for its members. Junior-year members may apply for twelve Fitzgerald Scholarships at \$1,000 each, to be applied toward tuition costs for their senior year. Senior-year members may apply for twelve Fitzgerald Fellowships at \$1,000 each, to be applied toward tuition costs for first-year graduate work. These scholarships and fellowships are named after the founder and first Secretary-Treasurer of DES, Most Rev. Edward A. Fitzgerald of Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa. The awards will be made available on a competitive basis to students who have been initiated into the society and who have also been nominated by their chapters for the competition. Applications may be obtained from the Office of the National Secretary-Treasurer.

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA NATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

Delta Epsilon Sigma has a national award to be presented to outstanding students who are members of the society and are completing their undergraduate program. It is a means by which a chapter can bring national attention to its most distinguished graduates.

The National Office has a distinctive gold and bronze medallion which it will provide without cost to the recipient's chapter for appropriate presentation. Names of recipients will be published in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*. Qualifications for the award include the following:

1. Membership in Delta Epsilon Sigma.
2. An overall Grade Point Average of 3.9–4.00 on all work taken as an undergraduate.
3. Further evidence of high scholarship:
 - a) a grade of "A" or with the highest level of distinction on an approved undergraduate thesis or its equivalent in the major field,
 - or
 - b) scores at the 90th percentile or better on a nationally recognized test (e.g., GRE, LSAT, GMAT, MCAT).
4. Endorsements by the chapter advisor, the department chair or mentor, and the chief academic officer.
5. Nominations must be made no later than six (6) months after the granting of the undergraduate degree.



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THE DES NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC HONOR SOCIETY EMBLEM



The emblem of DES contains the motto, the name, the symbols, and the founding date of the society. Delta Epsilon Sigma is an abbreviation constructed from the initial Greek letters of the words in the motto, *Dei Epitattein Sophon*. Drawn from Aristotle and much used by medieval Catholic philosophers, the phrase is taken to mean: “It is the mission of a wise person to put order” into knowledge.

The Society’s Ritual for Induction explains that a wise person is one “who discriminates between the true and the false, who appraises things at their proper worth, and who then can use this knowledge, along with the humility born of it, to go forward to accept the responsibilities and obligations which this ability imposes.”

Thus the three words on the *Journal’s* cover, Wisdom · Leadership · Service, point to the challenges as well as the responsibilities associated with the DES motto. The emblem prominently figures the *Chi Rho* symbol (the first two Greek letters of the word Christ), and the flaming lamp of wisdom shining forth the light of Truth.

DELTA EPSILON SIGMA JOURNAL
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