

NEVERMORE

Franklin Pierce's Literary Journal



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NevermoreSpring 2022

Editorial Board

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Jenna Parent
Sarah Mclaughlin

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Editor's Note

Howdy readers, my name is Alexis Briggs, and I am the Editor-In-Chief for this semester's edition of Nevermore! I am a junior with a double major in both Communications and English with a Women in Leadership Certificate. My cemented career path is still in the works, but my main dream is to travel the world expanding my horizons with a pen in my hand to showcase my experiences in new lands.

My theme for this piece is masks. Not just because we are still surviving through a pandemic, but the mask people might wear that isn't visible to the naked eye.

I want to take this opportunity to thank my Editorial Board, Parker Bosse, Nevaeh Chansouk, Dylan Kluepfel, Jenna Parent, Sarah McLaughlin and my amazing advisor Professor Margot Douaihy for guiding me through this process. Without all of your help, this edition wouldn't be what it is now in print!

Please enjoy this edition of Nevermore!

Sincerely,

Alexis Briggs
Editor-In-Chief
Nevermore Spring 2022

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Cover and artworkby Sarah Mclaughlin

Logan Walter

Unmask the Reality

Masks. Quite a word. It's a plain, dry sound rolling off the tongue to make a bland feel. Masks something that is covering up the real people, the real faces, the real personalities. Fake smiles, fake face expressions. Trying to hide what really lies within. Literal and metaphorical masks all exist. Brings us to an ultimate utopian reality to help us cope with the pandemic and struggles we are all going through in our lives. We are all masked even if the person isn't wearing one that you can see they are masking their lives to make it seem perfect to the viewers. But through the curtains, through the walls the real you is hiding ready to ignite at any minute, you can't keep it sheltered from the mask you wear or from acts that can be perceived as ideal or flawless. We all know people are hiding, hiding something, something horrible now or from the past. We don't know what it is, but we know you are hiding behind the mask that folds your life into perfection. Waiting for it to unravel to see you, all of you, the real you. In a reality that isn't fabricated to your satisfaction. Live in the fake reality and the real reality, not just your own. Unmask the mask you wear.

Sarah McLaughlin

Greatest Influencer

For my little sister

Influencers appear to us like a light to a moth,
drawing you in, coaxing you into the warm, soft glow it gives off.
While many can be as harmless as a lightbulb sitting in a glass box,
under a lamp shade, or nestled inside a chandelier,
Know the difference between a gentle light
versus a raging, burning fire.
For influencers can be harmless
giving encouragement to your growing prowess
that shines just as bright as their gentle words,
or they can singe your soft wings
destroying what makes you unique and special,
wanting to see nothing but for you to crash and burn
into merely another ember tossed away by the wind.
This world is vast, and full of many bright and tempting people.
Know the difference between friend and foe,
Burning flame and harmless light.
However, always know that the greatest influencer is you.
You can either be the flame that brings you down
or the light that guides and strengthens you as you grow.
You were born for greatness, with a burning light inside you.
It's what you turn that greatness into,
whether your guide, or your demise,
is up to you, and you alone.
You are your best friend.
You are your greatest influencer.
Don't let the demons in you be the flame that burns you out
but rather let the soft voices brighten your spirit, your passion and
talent,
into something only you can do.
For you are your greatest influencer.
And I know your light will be the brightest of them all.

Nia Johnson

Fake It Til' You Make It

Who am I? Being in New Hampshire at a PWI where I put on a face that says, I love it here, but in reality, I just wanna fit in, well, sometimes. Being “too black” for the white kids. And being home where I’m “too white” for my black homies. I be wanting to tell my friends here “to come to my crib,” but ya’ll don’t get what that means, so I just say “hey, do you wanna come to my place,” or “Dang your kitchen looking crazy.” But with y’all, I say, “the hair on the back of your head could be brushed more”. Often, I find myself in my own world where it’s just me and a small, very small group of friends. Have you ever been lonely in a crowd full of people? I wish I could take them with me everywhere then I could always be myself. One thing about me, I ain’tfinna change for anyone. Hm, I wonder which mask I’m gonna wear today.

Sean Patrick Dancik

Masks Poem

So, what's the life of a college student, you may ask?
It's the waking up at 7am and hearing your roommate snoring and
looking out the window
to see if there's a glimpse of light.
It's the struggling to get out of bed while trying to find your
balance.
It's the deciding if today is going to be a good or bad day.
It's the messy hair, piles of dirty laundry, and the smell of coffee
from my Keurig.
It's the standing under the warm, yet yellow dingy water to help
jump start your body.
It's the struggle to find your keys and head off to your vehicle.
It's the getting to the door of your car and forgetting your mask for
class.
It's the walking into your class and taking the same seat that you
chose on the first day.
It's the 50-to-75 minute class, while your professor just rambles on.
It's the watching of the clock every 5 minutes.
It's the dismissing yourself.
It's the walk back to your dorm.
It's the counting down the week until the weekend.
It's the horrible food.
It's the wanting to rip your hair out because of the amount of stress.
It's the forgetting to read your assigned reading, so you cram it all
in an hour before the class.
It's the choice of eating dinner tonight or saving my money to drink
on the weekends.
It's the lies.
It's the secrets.
It's the high-school drama that doesn't go away.
It's the great friends you'll make.
It's the great times you'll have.
It's the building a better relationship with your roommate.

It's the peer pressure.
It's the saying "hello" to a kid one day, and the next finding out he
hung himself
from the ceiling.
It's the depression.
It's the insane amount of stress.
It's the saying "I'm okay" when people ask how you are, even
though you're obviously not.
It's the wishing you could talk to someone, even when you're
constantly surrounded.
It's the being shamed for being gay.
It's the feeling of your throat being crushed because you want to cry
but don't want people to see you cry.
It's the sexual assault.
It's the constant stares of unknown people.
It's the whores.
It's the sluts.
It's all these derogatory terms to call someone.
It's the jocks.
It's the nerds.
It's Hockey.
It's Baseball.
It's the card readings.
It's the music blasting at 2am.
It's the moaning of your neighbor having sex.
It's the "mmmmmmhm ramen again."
It's what you make of it.
It's all these things that make up a college experience.
It's the fact that not every single person will have the same
collective experience, and that's okay. It's the fact that some people
might not even go to college.
It's the fact that some people might take 5 years to get their
bachelor's degree.
It's the fact that some people might take 4 years to get their
bachelor's degree.
It's the fact that some people might take 3 years to get their

bachelor's degree.

It's the fact that we all go at our own pace.

It's college.

So, what's the life of a college student, you may ask?

It's the I don't know, because for every person it's different. It depends

on what mask you have on.

It's the covid mask, the personality mask, the happy mask.

We all wear masks unintentionally.

Noah Garofalo

Masks

Masks are something people hide behind. Identity can be concealed. No one knows what lies underneath. A negative connotation seems to follow things that are tucked away. But masks protect us. A goalie's mask, a disposable covid mask, Darth Vader, they all keep the inside from the harsh outside. Is it so bad when only the unhealthy and dangerous are being turned away? They are semipermeable; only things the wearer wants can penetrate. A certain power is awarded to the beholder. Masks can also create. Confidence is manufactured, they only see what you project. "No one cared who I was until I put on the mask."

Alexis Briggs

Seven Masks

Student. Athlete. Friend. Teammate. Daughter. Sister. A voice. The mask helps convey what character I want every morning I wake up. The mask protects me from feelings that I try to avoid letting in. The mask creates an invisible barrier between my true self and who I'm cast in that day. Making sure my audience never sees my true face because I'm scared of the ridicule.

The student is a character I've been taught to inhabit like a businessman wearing the same tie, briefcase, and mindset of working from nine to five then heading home. Going in with a blank slate of mind and robotically making it through their day. The athlete is a cast member I have been groomed to become since I first touched the field. From the pressures from my father and the constant self-doubt, it fueled me to move on to the next level thinking it would be better. I was wrong. The physical, emotional, and mental tolls those four isolated hours of grind tugs at my body slowly like a lumberjack in the woods. My body is a tree, sturdy and confidently standing, only to be slowly chipped day by day until one day it falls.

The teammate character is full of support and sometimes false happiness for another in the spotlight. Not for the reason of resentment but more of confusion and questioning. Why am I not the lead? What can I do to get that same opportunity? But the coach is the director and sometimes those choices have no explanation, so you're always left wondering when you'll get your call back.

The daughter and sister characters are casted roles in which I partake in whilst at home. Whether it's chauffeuring my younger siblings, fixing rifts between my other kin while trying to still find time to breathe. Pressure and laughs are polar opposites but necessities within my childhood home.

A voice is a role I wish I take more seriously. Sometimes I refrain myself from being my true self and tighten my mask just a little bit tighter. Adjusting it so the invisible cracks don't become visible.

I want my voice to be heard and taken in by my audience but sometimes I forget which mask I'm wearing.

The friend is a role I find myself frequently playing as part time therapist, part time fort knox, and comedic relief for most of my home movies. I prescribe artificial diagnosis for my heart broken companions, a shoulder to cry on, and a counseling hugger. Only a few have seen a few cracks in my mask but not the whole face behind it.

Alexis Briggs

The Jester

A joke. A laugh. Someone only added to other people's movies just for comedic relief. Smiles give me confidence but scowls give me shivers. Being serious is an unknown concept to those not closely familiar with my persona. I feel like everyday is a performance and if I don't show up on my A-game I have failed. I don't even matter in the sense that I am only remembered when someone needs a pick-me-up. My person is made up of the belly rumbles expelled out of the body allowing for a smile to spread while my soul cracks. Going through the motions until someone new takes my role. No end in sight, my show must go on. Cue the curtains. It's showtime.



@knechell1

Sarah McLaughlin

Creating Myself

I see no distinct features in my face,
The mirror merely showing a blank canvas.
When the mirror is away, the features return, or so I've been told.
The headphones are always on
Music flowing freely as my eyes adjust,
Spotting the colors in the air
And the fairies in the fields.
Pencils, pens, and markers
Attempt to capture this unseen world.
I create the building blocks of my own worlds
Spending hours at a piece of paper
Or a computer to write.
They sit with me as I draw them
Posing in my mind as I help them
Into my reality.
Some I've abandoned,
Unable to see them clear enough to bring them to life. But they're
never forgotten.
As I continue to chase this world
And attempt to capture its beauty I look again in the mirror,
And slowly start to see
The wonder in my eyes.

Parker Bosse

Being Trans Sucks

Being transgender is great
Everybody loves you
Everybody accepts you
Nobody makes fun of you
And everyone is kind
You like to wear dresses
You like cute things
You have a high voice
In a perfect fucking world, sure
And nobody sees you The way you see you
They say they see you as a boy
But in their heads, You're still a girl
No matter how hard you try

Parker Bosse

The Eagle's Talons

The eagle has me in his grasp
His talons sink
Deep into my back
He has me in a death grip
He won't let go
"This is how it is" he screeches
I fight, and I struggle
With all my might
I scream into the abyss
Hoping somebody will hear me
Thousands of voices call out to me "I'm here"
They say
But I cannot reach them

Nevaeh Chansouk

Re-member

Do you remember the warm sun kissing your cheeks?
The cool breeze from the top of Mt. Monadnock against your bare arms?

Do you remember how winter was coming to an end? It was like we were all starting to wake up from a long sleep, blurry eyed and confused, but hopeful for a new day.

Do you remember walking to classes, smiling at peers as the sweet promise of spring lingered on all of our lips?

Do you remember the feeling of being blindsided? None of us saw it coming.

The excitement of the blooming just around the corner, covered our faces.

The chance for a final goodbye, and a proper end of the year was suddenly out of reach.

The sweet taste of spring quickly turned bitter.

Do you remember being left with nothing but your own thoughts? Floating in this space where we had the time to reflect on everything. All of us, grappling with the idea of normality.

Do you remember the feeling of sweltering ease and decent pleasure with no explanation? You know, the pockets of space where you're so happy, you don't want to think about the moment ever fleeing you, so you just ignore the fact that it will pass.

Do you remember acting like you were ok underneath the mask, but inside you found yourself screaming?

Do you remember hoping that someone would come along just to help you feel something again? Hoping someone would be able to

make you remember what “normal” felt like.

Do you remember when this incomprehensible notion of reality became our actual reality, our new normal?

Remember, with things around us constantly shifting and changing we will always find ourselves with no choice but to adapt and overcome. Focusing on the things we can control will be our savior.

I urge you to close your eyes. Feel the sun wrap you up like a lover’s warm embrace.

Allow the breeze to fill your lungs with new promise once more.

Parker Bosse

The Saddest For Last

I save the saddest song for last. My playlist of sad songs; songs that make me cry. Sometimes you just need a good cry. This last song hits the hardest. It touches all the wrong places and plucks at the wrong [heart] strings. I try to keep this song out of other people's lives in fear of what it might make them feel. It's the most depressing song if you listen to the lyrics. It never fails to make me feel bad. That's why I save it for last. It gives me enough time to get all my tears and sadness out before it plays. I can choose to be over whatever I'm upset about before the time the song comes on. Sometimes I'm not over it. Sometimes the song only makes me sob harder, and I start the playlist all over again until I can stop crying before it comes on the next round.

I encourage crying because it makes me stronger. I'm like a rain cloud. I can only hold so much rain before it comes pouring out of me. Sometimes it doesn't take much for me to lose my shit. It can be something as simple as a look or gesture. Sometimes it can take words or actions. Sometimes I cry when I have no reason to be upset or sad. That's when I lose myself the most. That's when I truly feel lost. That's when I feel my worst. If I can't figure out what's wrong with me, how will anybody else figure it out?

***Nevermore* Spring 2022 Editorial Board Notes**

Parker Bosseis is a senior at Franklin Pierce University who graduated in May, 2022. Their hobbies include reading, writing, live streaming, and playing video games. After graduation, they would like to go on to be an editor and a well-known author.

Nevaeh Chansoukis is a Junior at Franklin Pierce University majoring in English Creative Writing. With an interest in culture and photography, Nevaeh hopes to become a travel journalist, exploring the human experience in all its vastness.

Dylan Kluepfel is a Sophomore at Franklin Pierce University. Majoring in English, Dylan strives to be a writer himself one day, and enjoys being around the field of reading, writing and all things English related.

Jenna Parent is a sophomore at Franklin Pierce University. She is an English Major with a minor in public relations and a certificate in women, gender and leadership. Jenna is on the cross country and track and field team. She is also a community assistant in the Freshman area on campus.

Sarah McLaughlin is a Junior at Franklin Pierce as of Spring 2022. With a Creative Writing Major and Fine Arts Minor, she hopes to spread her experiences through art and stories, as well as give comfort to those who may feel they are alone.