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THE INKWELL QUARTERLY

The Perception of the American Dream in *Through the Night*

By Mya Corcoran

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Our country is known for the idea of the American Dream, which states that no matter who you are or where you come from, you can achieve your greatest hopes and dreams in the United States. However, is it actually true that anyone can make it if they try? This question is raised in the documentary *Through the Night* which details the stories of working parents who are forced to send their children to a 24-hour daycare. A virtual screening of this documentary was held on December 8, 2021 for students across the Wilkes campus. Immediately following the film, Dr. Ellen Newell, Associate Professor of Psychology at Wilkes, hosted an insightful discussion where students were able to express their opinions on several of the topics examined in the film.

The documentary follows the stories of parents who send their children to Dee's Tots, a 24-hour daycare center. The daycare is run by Deloris and Patrick Hogan who are affectionately called Nunu and Pop-Pop by the children they care for. Many of the parents who send their kids to Dee's Tots work multiple jobs or overnight shifts, and thus are forced to send their kids to daycare while they are at work. Deloris and Patrick have some kids that they care for during the day and some that come in overnight, so they constantly have children in their home that they are caring for.

One of the mothers highlighted in the film, Shanona, is a pediatric nurse who works overnight shifts in the hospital, so she is forced to send her two children to Dee's Tots each night. Shanona works all night and takes care of her children during the day, which leaves her with barely any time to rest. This dynamic brings up the question: is Shanona living the American Dream? She is a nurse, which is a very important job that is essential to the function of our society. But she barely gets any sleep as she tirelessly works to provide for her family and to care for her kids. Shanona's work ethic is exactly what the American Dream calls for. But even though Shanona is putting in the work and the effort, she is barely able to keep her head above water. This reality surely does not seem like the American Dream, so how much harder does Shanona have to work until she achieves it?

Marisol, another mother highlighted in the film, works three jobs to provide for her family. The long hours she spends working mean that her two kids spend a considerable amount of time at Dee's Tots each day. Marisol's busy work schedule leaves her very little time to spend with her children. Working a single full-time job would free up time in her schedule to spend more time at home, but Marisol has never been offered a full-time position with a high enough salary. Even with the combined incomes of her three part-time jobs, Marisol still barely makes enough to provide for her family. Is it true that anyone can work their way up in social class if Marisol's three jobs are barely keeping her afloat?

The film does a great job of depicting the inadequacies of the American Dream; however, this is not to

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say that the American Dream is completely infeasible. There are many success stories from people in contemporary America who came from disadvantaged starting points, but who were still able to work their way up to reach their dreams. Thus, the notion of the American Dream is not impossible, but it is definitely more difficult than it is made out to seem. In order to truly bolster the rate of success in America, we need more people like Deloris and Patrick who are willing to selflessly devote themselves to helping others. Shanona and Marisol's experiences prove that the American Dream requires not only hard work, but also a strong support system from those around you. This support may come in the form of child care, such as that provided by Dee's Tots, or in the form of emotional support that can help one as they overcome the adversities in their life. It is only when we as a society become more generous and loving towards each other that we can truly help each other thrive in our great country.

Accessed from PBS.org

Shakespeare in the Modern Day

By Rudy Urenovich

This semester I had the opportunity to take a class where we read and studied only works by William Shakespeare - English 342. I quite liked having the option to take a class where he and his masterpieces were the only thing we read and analyzed; it really puts into perspective just how iconic Shakespeare was and how much of an impact he made on literature and the way we understand and produce it. I can totally see why there was a whole class devoted to him and his legacy. Almost all of the English courses here at Wilkes really focus on writing and different types and eras of literature, very broadly so I thought it would be a nice, educational change to take a class that honed in on a specific writer, whot, let's face it, probably changed entertainment and written works forever. I think prior to taking this course I did not realize the depth of William Shakespeare's work, how intricate and at times heavy his work could be. I read a few of his more well-known works in high school, like *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*. I obviously felt that they were very complex, iconic works that altered how we consume literature today, but I feel we only touched a surface to the meanings and representations in them. One thing that did sort of catch me off guard was the darkness and seriousness of all the plays, even those regarded as comedies. I guess this can be chalked up to the fact that what were considered comedic relief and comical moments back then are very different from what would be considered that in the present day.

A big part of how I examined the Shakespearean

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canon was asking, How are the issues and problems presented in the works relevant and applicable today? On one hand, that was a nice connection for me and made me understand and resonate with the material on a greater level, but on the other hand it was somewhat jarring that certain issues, like racism and misogyny, are still some issues that poison society in the 21st Century. Issues like these are illustrated in many of Shakespeare's plays, but one that is particularly notable where misogyny and racism are concerned, is *Titus Andronicus*. That specific play is regarded as Shakespeare's most brutal and graphic, and many intellectuals choose to disregard it as being part of his canon all together. One can argue that these issues have become less prevalent, or that we have made some progress, but they still plague the human race. Perhaps that is another reason why reading and examining the work of Shakespaere is so important today: to acknowledge, address, and have conversations regarding these dangerous issues; to realize they happened and that people thought and felt a certain way back them; and to learn from them, pushing to move forward rather than backwards.

On a lighter note, it was quite interesting to see how interactions between romantic partners, as well as platonic friendships, have not changed much since the 1600s; people were just as annoying and awkward back then as they are today. Also another timeless theme I noticed was how these two different dynamic relationships almost always have an impact on each other. I never thought Shakespeare plays would be so relatable in that matter. This notion makes his works timeless in a sense, unless evolution changes human behavior considerably in its next phase.

My final thoughts are that I feel I have a thorough understanding of why the works of William Shakespeare are regarded with such esteem in the literary world, as the dilemmas and misfortunes in his catalogue, while the specifics may change, can still be seen in society today.

William Shakespeare - accessed from History.com

Taylor Swift's New *Red*

By Alexis Charowsky

As many Taylor Swift fans have heard, she has rerecorded her album titled *Red*. Many fans were put into shock from this after she stated in June that she was rerecording the album. Swift has created music for her friends, family, and fans since 2006, first dropping her hit album *Taylor Swift* with well-known songs such as "Teardrops on My Guitar" and "Our Song." Since that time, Swift has nine albums from her previous record deal and two rerecorded ones that she has just dropped. She is featured in other artists' albums such as Ed Sheeran and Tim McGraw.

For those who don't know, Taylor Swift signed with a record company known as Big Machine Records. There was a fight between both and Swift wanted the rights to her music back. Swift agreed to a contract when signing her record deal stating that Big Machine Records owns any rights to her music. There is now a fight for

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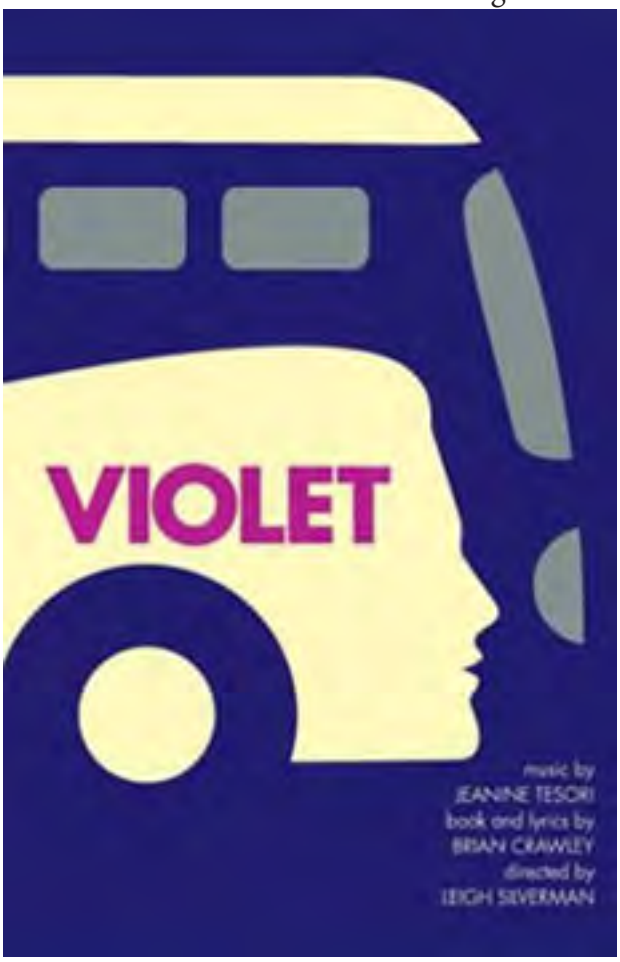
Violet: A Stunning, Heartwarming Story of Inner Beauty

By Hannah Simerson

Wilkes University's Theatre Department took the stage once again on the weekend of November 18th with the heartwarming *Violet*. The musical, which is based upon the short story titled "The Ugliest Pilgrim" by Doris Betts, follows the journey of a disfigured young woman, Violet, who embarks on a bus ride from North Carolina to Oklahoma to see a televangelist that she hopes will heal her. Going into *Violet*, I had almost no idea what the show was about. I knew that there was a journey via a bus that would be taking place, but that was the extent of my knowledge about the show. After seeing the show, I can confidently say that it is so much more than just a mere traveling journey; *Violet* is a beautifully crafted exploration of the meaning of self-love and forgiveness.



Accessed from broadwaymusicalhome.com

From the moment that the lights dimmed and the show began, I was hooked. First and foremost, I must give praise to Raven Wesley's performance as Violet. I have never seen Wesley in another production before and this was such a strong first impression. Everything from Wesley's vocals to her delivery and stage presence was utterly phenomenal. Throughout the show, I often found myself feeling as if I was looking at a Broadway stage–the performance was that strong. Wesley certainly is a great asset to the theatre department and casting her as the lead was the right move.

Although casting Wesley as Violet was a perfect choice, having the character play a disfigured woman without applying any practical makeup was not. When attending a live performance, there is the expectation that the audience will have to suspend their disbelief in some ways. Unlike movies, live theatre cannot always make things appear hyper-realistic, but there are some decisions that can be made to minimize audience's disbelief to really engulf them into what is unraveling on stage- this should have been one of those decisions. By not applying any kind of scar or physical abnormality on Violet's face, it was not only hard to believe the story, but also hard to follow it at times.

At the end of the second act, Violet believes that her face is healed and that she looks normal again. However, she quickly finds out that this is not the case and becomes very upset. This entire scene was confusing, as the audience could not tell what her face was supposed to look like. I even found myself asking the person next to me what was happening, as I couldn't tell if Violet's face had been healed or not. Had the show decided to use makeup to emphasize Violet's scar, this confusion could have been avoided. Visually, as well, the show would have been stronger.

Wesley's performance was certainly strengthened by the supporting roles of Flick, played by Jahel Duran-Diaz and Monty, played by Jack Flynn. The two are United States soldiers that are traveling on the same route as Violet. The chemistry among all three characters was so organic that it aided in my suspension of disbelief. I laughed with them, I was frustrated with them, and I rejoiced with them. Once again, I think the casting in this show was spot on. Had anybody else played the role of these characters, I'm not sure that I would have been so

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Taylor Swift's New *Red*

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rights of ownership between the two parties, and Big Machine Records owes Taylor Swift millions of dollars for the assets that she has made. In light of these legal and copyright issues, Swift has rerecorded her albums, making all copyrights in her own name. Swift has only rerecorded two albums so far, *Fearless* and *Red*. Big Machine Records had in their contract a clause known as "original production clause" that forbids Swift from creating any songs that sound exactly like ones she has created. This pushed her to change sounds and words in her rerecorded songs to face any lawsuits against the company. An example of this is shown in her new song "All Too Well" (10 Minute Version). Swift took her original song "All Too Well" and added almost an additional five minutes to it. Listeners came to the conclusion that Taylor wrote this song about her ex lover Jake Gyllenhaal, adding lyrics such as "You said if we had been closer in age maybe we would have been fine. And that made me want to die." Adding further lyrics to her songs in her new album *Red* allowed Swift to have her own rights to her songs. She also made changes from her previous album *Red* to the new one by changing the beat of her music, slowing down the tempo and adding a new rhythm to her songs.

Album cover to *Red(Taylor's Version)* on taylorswift.com

Speaking about her new album *Red*, Swift has added an additional ten tracks that were unreleased. She labeled some of her new songs as "from the vault" expressing that these songs didn't make the cut. The song known as "Better Man" which was released by Little Big Town in 2016 was actually written by Swift, but Swift gave them the rights to use her song. She added her original version of this song to her album and an additional "All Too Well" (10 Minute Version). Swift displays implications of not being allowed ownership over her own songs and lyrics, just like many writers, authors, and poets have had to face. It's interesting to see that Swift has multiple comparisons to others who want to put their music and writings out there. She shouldn't have boundaries over music she has created, if it's what she came up with then it's hers. Being unable to have ownership of her music and the interferences that come with it caused chaos and further problems that Taylor has to deal with. Debating on whether or not Taylor has the right to her music, she began rerecording everything to iron out any misunderstandings.

Each rerecorded release has had Swifties everywhere obsessed. If you go into the app Spotify, you can see that many of her rerecordings have millions of listens. This doesn't even compare to the billions of listens she has on her music throughout. Fan favorites of her new album Red includes "Red" (Taylor's Version), "All Too Well" (Taylor's Version), and "All Too Well" (10 Minute Version) (From The Vault). My personal favorite from her recent album has to be "All Too Well" (10 Minute Version), "Better Man," or "I Almost Do."

If you had to pick one of Taylor Swift's songs, what would be your favorite?

Accessed from michelmores.com

Violet: A Stunning, Heartwarming Story of Inner Beauty

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invested in the story.

In fact, I think there were no "bad" roles in *Violet*. Each character, no matter how often they were on the stage, knocked it out of the park. The energy was there from the entire cast, and this is one of the main reasons that I enjoyed the show so much. In the second act, there is a dance sequence in the chapel that had the entire theater dancing in their seats. Almost everyone was moving in some way, and there was that electricity in the air that seems to only exist when watching a live performance. To get such a reaction in live theatre is highly sought after, but not easily done, and the show's ability to do this certainly speaks to the cast's dedication to their performance and the energy that they brought to the table.

The entire musical score in *Violet* exceeded my expectations by far. I'm not typically a musical fan; I tend to stick more with plays. Musicals usually feel awkward for me, but the songs in *Violet* were so entertaining that I found myself wanting more. My only gripe was that the music was at times so loud that it made it hard to hear the performers. There were occasions where their voices were completely drowned out by the volume of the music, and it was even visible on their faces that they knew it was happening. Although the music was wonderful, it would have been better had it been balanced with the voices of the performers.

Violet had many "quirks" that truly brought it to life for me. Although the set left much to be desired in terms of believability, these little nuisances certainly made up for it. In the opening scene, the characters are just beginning their journey on the bus. During this scene, the actors simultaneously moved in various directions as if they were being jostled by an actual bus ride. It was obvious that this stage direction was well-rehearsed, as every actor was right on cue with the others. Although the setting did not look like an actual bus in any way, this quirk reminded me of where the story was actively taking place. In this way, it grounded the audience and subtly reinforced the setting.

The show had many aspects that drew me in, but also a few that sucked me out as well. The lighting, specifically the spotlights, was scattered and disorienting, although this could have just been the show that I attended. There were times when the spotlight was trailing behind the actor and the audience could not see them. When this happened, it was distracting and immediately took me out of the story. The lighting of a show is often overlooked in terms of show success, but it truly is the backbone of any show. When it goes awry, this is when the importance of it is truly revealed. Again, this most likely just happened during my show as it was one of the first shows, but I did find that it took away from the overall experience of *Violet*.

Violet was unlike any other show I had seen before. Many aspects of the show were new and, therefore, exciting to me. However, the one aspect of *Violet* that truly impressed me the most was the show's use of duality. During *Violet*, there were a few scenes where a younger version of Violet was performing at the same time as the older, current version. Often, what each Violet was doing or saying would be paralleled by the other, and the two would eventually say the same thing (in different contexts). Each time this happened and past and present collided, I got chills. These moments in the show were the most powerful, and I won't forget them for quite some time.

From the performances and story to the music and stage direction, *Violet* thoroughly impressed me. It has been some time since I have seen a show on the Darte Center stage, but it was refreshing to see such new talent. The theatre department always impresses me, but this time was something special. If you missed *Violet*, the Wilkes University Theatre Department will be presenting *Radium Girls*, a drama about a female factory worker who battles for compensation after suffering radiation poisoning from luminous paint, from **February 24th to February 27th, 2022**.

Sophomore Spotlight

By Emily Cherkauskas

Juliana Lueders

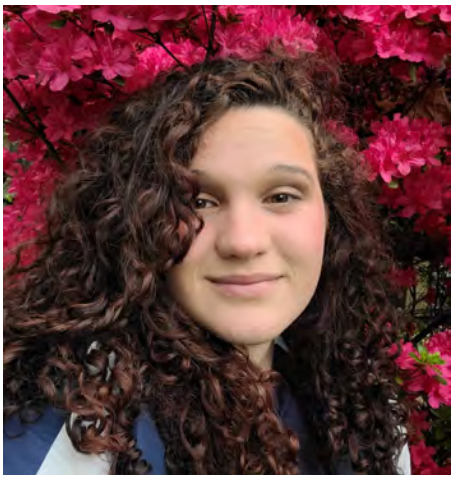

Photo courtesy of Juliana Lueders

Q: What are your major(s), minor(s), and area of concentration?
A: I am an English major with a concentration in creative and business writing. I am also minoring in philosophy and ethics.

Q: What inspired you to major in English?
A: English has been my favorite subject throughout my entire academic career, I really couldn't see myself pursuing anything else. I think what inspires me the most about it is all the possibilities that writing can have.

Q: Where are you from?
A: I'm from Lancaster, PA.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years?
A: Frankly, I have no idea. Being able to write is a very versatile and useful skill that lends itself to many fields. My goal is to find a career that I actually enjoy and that allows me to be creative.

Q: What has been your favorite English class so far? Why?
A: My favorite English class so far is probably one I'm currently taking called History of the English language (ENG 324). This class takes one through the development of English from its origins to the present, explains the changes that it has gone through, and how these changes affect pronunciation. You also learn how to read Middle English which is challenging but the small class size makes it fun.

Q: If you could be any fictional character, who would you be, and why?
A: Given the choice, I would want to be Cecil Palmer the Welcome to Nightvale narrator and radio show host. He's a character that is unafraid to express his emotions even when live on air. Along with being caring, his humor and Eldridge-vibe are unmatched. The ambiguity of his character leaves a lot open to the imagination and I think it's incredible how much life the creators were able to put in such a niche format. His voice has meant so much to me over the years so he would be my top pick.

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MANUSCRIPT UPDATE

The *Manuscript* Society will be publishing one issue of The *Manuscript* this 2021-2020 Academic Year.

The submission period for the general issue will be open through the Fall semester and will reopen again at the start of the Spring term.

If you're interested, please submit your work to magazine@wilkes.edu with your Wilkes email.

If you would like to learn more about The *Manuscript* Society or about upcoming *Manusript* events, please contact magazine@wilkes.edu. You can also stay connected to *Manuscript* by folloiwing our social media on Facebook (Mauscript @ Wilkes University), Twitter (@WilkesMag), and Instagram (@wilkes_manuscript_).

Writing Center Hours

The Writing Center, located in the Alden Learning Commons, is open and offering support to student writers across the Wilkes curriculum.

Throughout the Fall 2021 semester The Writing Center is hosting virtual drop-in hours from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, for any member of the Wilkes community who needs writing assistance.

To access the Zoom links, please go to the Student Services tab in the Wilkes Portal.

For more information, contact:
Dr. Chad Stanley
email: *chad.stanley@wilkes.edu*

Spring 2022 Upper-Level Class Listings

Course Number/Name	Date/Time		Instructor
ENG 202: Technical Writing	MWF	11:00-11:50	Prof. Brown
ENG 234: Survey of English Lit. II /WGS/&H	TR	1:00-2:15	Dr. Davis
ENG 281: American Lit. / WGS	TR	9:30-10:45	Dr. Anthony
ENG 298: Adv. Wrkshp Creative NonF /WGS	MW	4:30-5:45	Prof. Howey
ENG 324: History of English Lang. /DH	MWF	1:00-1:50	Dr. Hamill
ENG 334: Studies in 18thC. Life Writing	TR	2:30-3:45	Dr. Anthony
ENG 397: Sem. The Uncanny in Literature	MW	3:00-4:15	Dr. Kelly