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## Payton's Final Master's Portfolio

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Final MA Portfolio

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A Final Portfolio

Submitted to the English Department of Bowling Green

State University in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the field of English

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Dr. Susan Cruea, First Reader

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## **Analytical Narrative**

Throughout my college experience I have always tried to find schools that fit my criteria. Small class sizes, and flexible course selections for the English Program. BGSU met both of those criterias and more, so when it came time to start my Master's degree, I knew I chose the right school/program for me. When I began working on my Masters, I wasn't sure which program was the right fit for me. I didn't want to strictly go the education route, nor did I want to go the technical/rhetoric writing way. Truthfully, I wanted to be able to learn new skills that could be helpful in the educational field, but also skills that could help me if I chose to go a path based more on writing and technical skills. This is why I chose to do the Individualized program. By joining this program I was able to take a variety of courses that helped to develop many different skills from research, analysis, unit planning, teaching styles, writing workshops, and even technical/persuasive writing.

Since I was able to learn a wide range of new skills over the course of 15 months, it was rather difficult when I was choosing projects that would represent me in the final portfolio. Even though I knew anything I chose would need plenty of revision, I still wanted to choose works that best represented me and what I wanted to achieve. For my four projects I chose ENG 6070- Mulvey and the Female Gaze essay, ENG 6040- Teaching Shakespeare essay, ENG 6320- Fiction Piece (Novel in the making), and ENG 6400- Manual project. Each project represents a different aspect of the program and what I was hoping to achieve when I started my courses.

For my project one, I knew this had to be something strong and researched based. This is why I chose my ENG 6070 final theory research essay "Instagram and the Female Gaze". Early into this course we learned about Laura Mulvey and her theory about "the gaze". Her theory was focused on the idea of visual pleasure through films, photos, and everyday life. The only problem

was that her thoughts were based only through a male's perspective. There were no thoughts about how this could be perspective through a female. This interested my curiosity as to why the female gaze was not talked about more since we also seek visual pleasures the same as men. So, I decided I would do research, and find whatever articles I could that could help me demonstrate the female gaze. Sadly there are not many articles written in reference to the female gaze, so this made the research part difficult. Since the research was limited I decided to go onto social media; specifically instagram, and find social influencers that represented what visual pleasures would be sought out according to Mulvey's theory. I opened my mind and used the media as a form of research to help prove my argument. Even as I started revising this essay, articles are still difficult to find. However I was able to find two other sources that I think helped strengthen the essay. Not only this, but I separated the sections of my essay and worked on them as if they were their own mini essays. There were several moments in the essay where I lost focus, or didn't truly tie my sources to my argument, so by separating the sections it was easier for me to go through them one by one and revamp them. Sometimes I tend to rush my analysis causing my arguments to falter and not be as strong as they should be. By doing the revision process this way I was able to pinpoint the weak spots, edit them so that my argument is concise throughout, and my sources/examples further explain why they prove the argument. Revising this essay did take the most time, but this one also allowed me to further develop my research and analytical skills. By using this research based essay as my project one, I think I was allowed to better my all around argument, and use my sources to a better standard.

Although the first project was rather easy for me to choose, the second one wasn't quite the same. The first piece I had initially chosen was my literacy narrative, but when it came to revising it I wasn't sure how. It was introduced to me that I should try to critically analyze it and

break down my writing process, but I didn't know how to do that since whenever I write something creatively I don't think about the process. I just write. Therefore I chose to use a different assignment to use for the second part of the portfolio. I wasn't able to spend as much time working on this paper, but my main focus was to keep my argument consistent. Throughout my education Shakespeare has been a constant topic of study in every English class. However this topic is not always the easiest to study especially if the material provided, or the teaching style doesn't make sense. In this paper from my ENG 6040 class, I wrote on how to use different techniques to teach the themes and meanings behind Shakespearean plays. Shakespeare is one of the more difficult studies in English and many students, particularly in high school struggle with interpreting these plays. Since I've seen how some students struggle with it, I wanted to research ways for teachers to better instruct and teach their students. I found several articles on this topic, and I selected the ones that I believed showed the argument I wanted. As I went through the revision process for this paper, I did the same process as I did with project one. I separated the sections into different documents and went through each one by one. By going through each section individually, I was able to keep them more concrete and remove unnecessary information.

Now the revision process was different for the last two projects that I chose. For my project 3 I chose a project that I've had the chance to work on multiple times throughout the year. I chose a fictional piece from my ENG 6320 course titled "Beast of Flames". This piece is a portion of a novel that I am working on, but for the purpose of this assignment I have decided to form it into a short story. To revise this piece I had to do some more planning, I also had to think about all the comments and suggestions that my fellow peers had left for me. In the end I chose to add in the prophecy and some insight to the main character's background. After that I time skipped to the battle scene that everyone has already seen. By doing this I get to add in more

parts of the world and build up the characters without having to finish the whole novel. I can keep it a short story for now and use the time skips as a way of piecing the story together. It was difficult to decide how long I wanted the time skip to be, or if I wanted to do multiple since they do define the ages of the characters. It was also hard to figure out what scene(s) would be most valuable to the story in order to help pull everything together. However I think after looking through my novel layout I was able to pick the small, but still significant scene(s) to share with my peers to provide a good story.

For my final project, I chose to use my ENG 6400 manual project. This is the easiest one for me to revise, yet it still demonstrates how I learned new technical writing skills. My manual, The Spot Restaurant manual, was created for my place of work. I created this manual because we were doing a lot of hiring and I wanted to make a simpler way for us to train them. I talked about different positions that we have in the restaurant, and provided a description of the workload/other duties that would need to be completed. The manual also includes time frames for training, and how the training is broken down. When I put my manual through trials it did well in simplifying the job itself, and it was positively received. Yet for the revisions of the manual, I went through and did lots of proofreading, and edited the pictures/examples that were there. I also added in a picture or two in a couple sections because some people thought it would be helpful.

Out of all the projects I could've chosen for my portfolio, these were the ones that I believed show the variety of skills I have learned throughout my time in the program. I hope to be able to use the knowledge I gained from these projects to either pursue a career teaching at the community college level as an adjunct teacher, or I will continue to pursue a writing career (editing, writing, and selling novels). Both careers are ones that I'm passionate about. ENG 6320

allowed me to express my creativity, and passion to write stories for others to enjoy. ENG 6040 and ENG 6070 both help to prepare me for the classroom setting. They show how I need to be wise when it comes to analyzing research, so if my students need help finding valid research I know the quality they need. I even know how to change my lessons in order to keep all of my students engaged despite where they are on the learning journey. Finally with my ENG 6400 manual project, it shows that I can be creative, short, neat, and concise with vital information about a company. I'm excited to see where all this knowledge takes me in the future. Now it's just determining which path will allow me to share the knowledge and creativity I have had the privilege to learn the most.



## **Instagram and “the Gaze”**

### **Introduction**

Theories have become a pesilent part of our lives throughout history. Creating ideas to distinguish a reason behind a behavior, or to allow scholars to further deepen their knowledge, theories have provided our society with a new lens to gaze through. As we take on the challenge of deciphering the purpose and meaning behind each theory, we also have the challenge of connecting the theory to relevant moments in our lives today. Whether the theory dealt with a male’s gaze to the value of women, or how we question what’s true reality, there was never a moment where our minds weren’t in constant wonder of how these theories should be taken. Yet it is thanks to these theorists and their theories that we are able to dive into new ideas, and see events happening in the world through more conspiracy focused eyes. One theory in particular has me rethinking the ideals and purposes behind a certain social media platform that I look through multiple times a day. That theory would be Laura Mulvey’s Theory on “The Gaze”. Laura Mulvey in her essay titled “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”, she dissects the identity of “the gaze” using films, however with her focus being only on one form of an imagery platform, her thoughts feel limited. Since in her essay she chose to focus on the visual pleasure through the screen, I decided I wanted to look at her theory through a different lens.

Social Media has become a huge component for several of us in our daily lives, whether it is actually posting or just gazing through others posts. There are several different social media platforms that are used constantly in a day ranging from Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, or TikTok. However the one I believe can reflect Mulvey’s theory of “the gaze” is Instagram. Instagram is a rather newer social media platform that came out in the year 2014. The idea behind this platform is for people to be able to share photos, or short videos with their followers.

Instagram has become a more positive social media platform, providing a safer space for people to post their beliefs, hobbies, culture, and other parts of their personality. Many day to day influencers can be found on Instagram where they demonstrate a positive outlook when dealing with day to day life and goals.

Usually when you scroll through Instagram, you're looking at captured moments of someone, or a group of people. Through these captured moments it's as if you're looking at a screenshot of that person's biography film. Our lives could be seen as a film that changes plot and develops each day. With the help of Instagram we're able to share a specific image of ourselves captured in a memorable moment that most people weren't able to experience with you. As you share this with others through a picture format, people are able to see it and experience a form of pleasure through the visual aesthetics of the photo, and the person captured in it. Even though I see Instagram as a unique way to view Mulvey's theory, I also think it helps to distinguish another theorist's ideals.

In this paper I hope to explain in greater detail my thoughts on Mulvey's theory of "the gaze" through the social media experience of Instagram. In order to do this though, I will need to dive in deeper to the ideas on "the gaze" theory, and the use of Instagram as a whole. Initially Mulvey's theory on "the gaze" is based solely on the visual pleasures received by men, but she never compares the theory through a woman's perspective. The female gaze is another form of the gaze, and has different/similar visual pleasing aspects related to it. This form of the gaze is rarely discussed because some people don't believe most theorists want to dive into the minds of women, and our more complicated brain network (Riebe). Women can find visual pleasure from both men and other women, so this tends to complicate matters. Pleasure from women will come more from the effect of desire, and wanting to look beautiful like other women seen (especially

celebrities or popular life influencers). Women can find pleasure in desiring different aspects of other women, but then they also find pleasure by looking at attractive men. These are a couple of the similarities/differences that will be explored.

However, since the female gaze is rarely discussed I want to explore how the female gaze is different but also similar to the male's by using Instagram and possibly references to movies that please a female's obsessions. Taking a look at the original theory itself and how the female gaze can be implicated is one way to begin my thoughts.

### **Mulvey's Gaze Theory: Female Gaze in Films**

Laura Mulvey in her essay discusses greatly on the visual pleasure that can be achieved through the cinematic scene. In many films it's usually clear to see which gender of audience film makers are trying to please the most. In many cases it's men that are pleased the most when watching cinematic films. Without even realizing it, film makers will cast female characters of a particular body image. Often it feels that it has become a custom of film producing to select actresses that fit the image of a perfectly shaped woman. A woman that has that hourglass physique, pretty face, and can play the part of a perfect helpless character. By having female characters like this, it becomes easy to please the male audience because they are visually pleased by the women, and pleased from the cinematic narrative at work. I think the only time body image is cast aside in the film industry is when it's either a comedy or a feel-good teen movie. Typically films that are trying to display a particular message will shy away from casting all the female characters from one specific body image.

These types of films are more appealing to women because they appeal to "the gaze" from a woman's perspective. A woman's "gaze" differs from that of men because we are pressured to fit into that perfect physique category, but for some women that's hard to do.

Women are expected to be small, skinny, and fit so often in movies they recruit actresses that fit those three main criterias. If they do display a woman that's heavier set or unfit, they are seen for a brief moment and then gone the rest of the time. This appeals to the female gaze because as women we see the pretty, skinny, and fit women on screen, and can't help but want to look the same. However, filmmakers are trying to stray away from this stereotypical form of tv. Now films/tv shows are starting to introduce a wide variety of female actresses that display various body types. This new form of film is appealing to the female gaze because women are able to now escape the stereotypical ideology that only fit, skinny, and pretty women find success/love (Riebe). The female gaze in films is now changing because now there are women of all types on the screen, and women are now able to find characters that represent them, or that they can correlate with.

There is a film that came out recently that goes against stereotypical norms of women in films. On Netflix there is a film called *Dumplin*, although this is based off a book of the same title, the film is about a heavier set girl. She must learn to accept herself as she is and not let a world of perfect barbie dolls deteriorate her. The girl's name is Willowdean, but some people call her Dumplin. All her life she's been heavier, and the only person that accepted her for that was her aunt. Her aunt tries to teach her that her size does not define her, but how she chooses to live does. Willowdean decides to break the chain by joining her mother's beauty pageant, competing against the typical skinny, prett, fit teenage girls. She shows her mother, and many others that their size shouldn't matter, and anyone should be allowed to compete (although willowdean does not win the pageant). This is a film that appeals to the female gaze. Since the female gaze is different from the male gaze, women can also find pleasure in seeing other women on screen. Females are locked on this obsession of having to be perfect, and feeling as if

we don't fit into this world full of barbies (barbies meaning perfect girls). The film *Dumplin* breaks this obsession. This film allows women to find pleasure in this heavier set actress that several women can relate too. Women will probably struggle with physical acceptance for the rest of eternity, but films like *Dumplin* demonstrate to women that there's a chance for change. Their desire to be accepted as they are is part of the female gaze, therefore; by having films that introduce female characters of various body types allow women to visually see their desire played out.

Even though females also “arise from pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight” (Mulvey 2185), but also by “reacting against these obsessions and assumptions” they live through daily (Mulvey 2183). There are many films out there that meet the original ideas of Mulvey's theory on “the gaze”, but for a female gaze. One film in particular is the *Magic Mike* films. Gary Ettari in his article “That's a lot of ones: Labor, Fractured Masculinity, and the Commodification of Flesh in Steven Soderbergh's *Magic Mike*”, he focuses on male characters that are nothing more than people who fulfill a female's sexual desires. In the article Ettari makes several references to the main lead character of the film, Mike, and how he and his fellow stripper friends are “objectified by the female gaze and instead is far more interested in the male body as a locus of and catalyst for consumer desires” (Ettari 95). Meaning just as the male gaze objectifies women on screen and gives them visual pleasure of seeing their sexual desires, women can experience a sense of visual pleasure by objectifying male characters. In the film the men do perform “live” for audiences of women, so females watching the film at home can have a somewhat similar experience at home. This can happen because of the way the film is shot and angled, there are some scenes that feel more “right in front of you” than others.

Another aspect that Ettari points out is that women have a multitude of desires when it comes to visually pleasing men. As female's we can have several sexual desires that we hope to one day have fulfilled just as men do, but because more thoughts on this are geared towards men, it's not always to find people that speak out on the female view. In *Magic Mike* it shows how these male strippers perform and try to be these women's deepest desires. Ettari states that "the fact that when any stripper steps on stage, he is no longer himself, nor even a specific, coherent character, but merely the representation of a multiplicity of female fantasies" (Ettari 98). The moment those men step on stage they no longer belong to themselves. They belong to the female audience awaiting them to give them the performance that no other man has provided before. There are moments when as women we fantasize about our significant other or even a crush dressing up or performing some sort of cosplay, but when they don't agree it leaves us still wanting to experience that desire. In the film that is exactly what these men do. Then women want them to be a cop and "arrest" them, then they will. As I said before the moment these men step on that stage they belong to the women and must appease the sexual desires they wish to experience. It's the same concept for the male gaze as Mulvey has stated "women displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif of erotic spectacle" (Mulvey 2186). Basically anything a woman does on screen even something as simple as fixing her hair can make her the object of sexual desire. Women are seen strictly as objective sexual objects in several films across of genres, but Ettari took it upon himself to venture into the female gaze. Through his thoughts it can be seen that both gazes view each other as sexual objects on screen, but it's the social norm that women are subjected to being the object of visual pleasure. This is why it's hard to find more people that have written articles on how the female gaze is the same as the males in some aspects.

Even though there are several other films that can be used to depict not only the male gaze, but also the female gaze, I think it's important to look at other aspects of our lives that could demonstrate the gazes. Everyday we use more and more platforms of social media. Yet has anyone ever questioned whether the social media we use helps us to relieve our visual pleasures? I believe that social media can be a different way of looking at the female because looking at an image is similar to viewing a scene in a film, the only difference is that the image is a single captured moment whereas a scene is played out and you see farther beyond.

### **Instagram a Place to display the Self**

As social media continues to expand and grow at an accelerated speed, there will always be those that remain. Instagram is a social media platform that will mostly stay around for sometime simply because it's a safe environment for people to post images of themselves, or things they are passionate about. However, how exactly are we supposed to use Instagram? Is there a set way that we are supposed to see this app? I say there is no set way you're supposed to use this media. Personally, Instagram to me represents a way for people to be able to express themselves through images and the occasional text. Through Instagram people are able to be influencers, or business people. A person can also just be your average person showing themselves through various images that reflect moments of their lives they chose to capture and share. In Derek Murray's article "On Photographic Ubiquity in the Age of Online Self-Imaging", he discusses the matter of people's desire for the self through digitalism (pictures). This goes with the female gaze because it's focusing their desire through images. Images are similar to films as they are captured through cameras. However an image is a frozen moment captured by the camera, so instead of searching for pleasure through a group of scenes, pleasure is found in a

single image. Therefore the female gaze can be affected by the desire formed from a woman's image or a man's.

When it comes to posting on Instagram it all becomes a matter of identifying oneself. Murray believes that when we go to post an image ourselves in the media we first try to decide what kind of image we are wanting to post. There are several different versions of ourselves that we must shift between and ask ourselves are we trying to be cute, athletic, smart, or are we just trying to show the purest forms of ourselves? Murray believes that we mostly “Position the selfie as one of intense intimacy: as a form of self-fashioning that is often about attempting to assuage feelings of lack, of isolation, and of alienation— as a means to love oneself” (Murray 181). When making a post we search for images of ourselves that represent our personalities best. The form of ourselves that we love the most is the version we wish to share with others. We shouldn't have to post ourselves in a form that doesn't feel comfortable or show an accurate representation of who we are as an individual. To capture the real us in a photo isn't always the easiest because it means breaking out of our comfort zones, and being willing to openly be self expressive. Being able to break free of our comfort zones allows us to be more free, and give ourselves a new purpose behind the post we share. Yet some may wonder exactly what it means to show your self love. The version that you want to show is the version that makes you the proudest. It's hard to find anyone performing hate comments on this social media platform. Another thing that makes this a great thing to do is the fact that Instagram is a safe internet community. People tend to be willing to accept those who embrace themselves and show the version of themselves that they love.

Instagram not only represents a safe place to show our real selves, but it connects to technology and our current culture. Our selfies bring out a unique concept that causes the image



to have “an interesting relationship with both technology and culture” (Murray 181). The technology that we use the most to share these selfies on is our cellphone. An easy to carry and hold camera that we take everywhere snapping selfies of ourselves in beautiful places experiencing nothing but joy and happiness. It is amazing I think what all you can capture inside a selfie. In one selfie you can tell so much about a person by looking at their eyes, facial expression, scenery behind them, and even the style the selfie is taken in. Someone I went to highschool with, she posts selfies frequently enough, but she posts images of herself that show us how she’s doing in life. Recent selfie that she posted doesn't show her face. It’s an image of her looking down the sidewalk as she stands outside beside extraordinary brick houses. She’s dressed as a sophisticated casual young woman. As you look at the image you can tell that she's walking down a successful path. She’s finally starting to reach those dreams of hers and live a life she enjoys. It’s easy to see all of that through the photo based on all the details surrounding her. The houses, her clothes, and the direction she’s looking all tell the story that’s being told in the photo. A girl from a small urban town making her dreams come true, and she’s never looking back.

Yet Murray has another thought on selfies that are posted on Instagram. He also believes that “The selfie is implicitly consensual, or perhaps it encourages what could be called, following Metz, an authorized scopophilia” (183). This means that since we post the image we are then giving other people consent to look at your images. We want them to look at them because that's the whole reason for even posting the selfie to begin with. If I were to post an image of myself on my weight loss journey I would want people to see how my body looked when I started. By showing people where I started verses where I’ll end, they are able to get a full grasp of my story. I would want them to see my story, so that I could share the overwhelming sensation of reaching towards a better version of myself.

Since the female gaze is researched, and examined to a limited extent, venturing to other platforms is the only way to gather more examples. Instagram is a media platform that fits the meaning behind the gaze theory by allowing women to follow their obsessive desires through images. With there being a wide variety of accounts on Instagram, women can follow anyone, and appease their needs. Whether it's a popular influencer, movie star, or realtive anyone on this social media site can become the object of the female gaze.

### **Mulvey's "Gaze" on Instagram The Female gaze**

Although Mulvey's theory is justified on its own, it is important to see how it's reflected in today's social media source of Instagram. Even though we focus more on the male's gaze when it comes to Mulvey's theory, we also have to look at the idea of how the female gaze is represented through social media. The female gaze is the same as the male gaze except obviously from a woman's perspective. Visual pleasure for a female is based on desires and obsession, but it can be from looking at other women or men. Although there are several social media platforms in today's society, Instagram demonstrates the gaze because there are millions of accounts that can fill a woman's desires.

Through Instagram, everyday we are able to demonstrate "the gaze", and have it perceived through both men and women. Instagram allows both genders to experience pleasure through visuals because they are able to follow people that most fulfill this pleasurable desire. There's no limit to the number of people you can follow, therefore allowing people to have endless options of people to see, and posts to observe that capture a visibly pleasing image. In Natalie Daher with her blog "Instagram's Female Gaze" and Sophia Caldeira's article "Exploring the Politics of Gender Representation on Instagram: Self-Representations of Femininity.", they both take into account that the female gaze is present on Instagram. The

female gaze allows us to experience Mulvey's theory through the gaze of the opposite gender that she discusses the most about.

Daher begins her thoughts by reflecting on the original meaning of Mulvey's theory. She explains that the original "gaze" theory reflects on how the "objectification of women by literally making them the target of a man's eyes — and turn it on its head" (Daher), while never mentioning a hint about the female gaze. Since the world we live in is run by the gender that sweats testosterone, acknowledging the existence of the female gaze seemed almost unnecessary. It feels as though the male gaze should be the only way the gaze is interpreted, but it seems unfair that women must be the only ones subjected to being objects of visual pleasure. Daher states that the female gaze is similar to that of the male gaze in the fact that the female gaze represents what it is that women want to see, or feel attracted to.

Throughout the course of time women have been subjected to poor treatment and only being able to be seen through a man's eyes. Since this was the case women were often being told how they should represent the idea of women as a whole. This problem has arisen because there is a lack in acknowledging the female gaze. Knowing how women are supposed to be seen in society shows that there has been "damage done by the male gaze", as it "has long gone unchallenged, or at least without a real, consequential reckoning" (Daher). If people were able to acknowledge the idea of the female gaze then there could be less controversy in society because women would be able to freely experience what visually gives them pleasure. Men should be justified by being the subject to a woman's objective desires just as women are to men. Although the male gaze has gone unchallenged for a long period of time, now there is a social media platform out there that helps women to show the female gaze.

Instagram has become a safe place for anyone and everyone to post, and see things they wish to see. This is also the safest place for women to be able to demonstrate the female gaze. On Instagram women are able to fully thrive and not be worried about being criticized or forced to show themselves in a way that only pleases others. It's through this form of social media that women are able to publicly come together. In other media women would only be able to communicate through often private groups that were sometimes hard to get into. However on Instagram women are able to create public accounts that are open to all women. Most of the time when someone decides to create a safe place pge for women it's a public account so there are no complications with being able to see the content. With these public accounts women are able to post freely and there are no fears of people negatively commenting on their posts. Instagram is probably the nicest social media platform that negativity is least likely to be seen on.

Although Instagram is a safer social media than most, there are still moments when the negative comments are seen. For instance, celebrity pop/hip hop singer, Lizzo posted an image of a comment a man had made on one of her other media accounts that disgraced her figure, but at the same time was trying to flirt with her. Lizzo took that comment and posted it to her Instagram and let her followers (who are mainly female) decide that she would give the guy a chance or take a little revenge on the comment that he made. She gave her followers the choice 5k comments meant she would take a little revenge while 10k likes meant giving the guy a chance. Since it's a page followed by mainly females hardly anyone liked the post and rather commented on it instead. The reason they chose to comment was because they all believed that women shouldn't be subjected to hear or see such crude remarks or have them said on their public media.

Lizzo's page is able to represent the female gaze because it shows women fighting against the male gaze. The man's comment was him displaying the male gaze objectifying Lizzo

as only being visibly pleasing for his sexual desires. However the way Lizzo allowed her followers to take control and demonstrate their thoughts on the situation showed that a part of the female gaze is that we don't always want to be seen as objects for a man's sexual desires. Her followers demonstrated the female gaze because they commented about Lizzo's success, and how she is an empowering woman. She is a heavy set artist, and that's outside the typical female artist body type. However, she shows that she can be beautiful, successful, and inspiring. Lizzo is a fighter of body positivity, so her images on instagram tend to be bold, sexy, and out of the ordinary. This is why the man made the sexual comments that he did, but at the same time her posts feed the female gaze. They fill a woman's obsession with wanting to be accepted for the body they have, and thanks to Lizzo more women are having that pleasure satisfied.

Another individual on Instagram that helps to demonstrate the female gaze is Linda Sun. Linda Sun is a young health and fitness influencer on Instagram and also has a YouTube channel. On her page, she tries to focus on making sure followers choose to be healthy for themselves. She stresses that it's important that when we choose to make a healthy lifestyle change, that we are doing it for ourselves and that others' opinions don't force us into it. Linda expresses to her followers that it's valuable to pick works that you enjoy doing. Her thoughts are that the more you enjoy taking part in an exercise, then the more you'll be likely to constantly workout and begin a routine. Linda also makes a point to show that you don't have to follow any form of a strict diet when you are beginning your journey to becoming a better and healthier you. She believes in being able to eat what you want and how much you want. Most often this advice leads people to finding and creating all sorts of healthy recipes that don't take away from what they desire to eat, nor does it restrict them from enjoying a large quantity.

Linda Sun represents the female gaze because she represents our desire to be healthy and fit without forcing ourselves to bend to these ridiculous diets and strict gym routines. She shows us it's more important to do the things we want to do and that we'll enjoy being a part of. In today's society it's an obsessive desire that women have to be healthy and fit, but this obsession does stem from the male gaze. Women are pressured to look a certain way in order to please a man visually, but this causes women to become mentally strained, and unsure of themselves on all occasions. In another article *The Feminine Gaze: The Re-imagination of Cinematic Female Sexual Experiences in a Post #MeToo World* by Emily Riebe, she argues about the female gaze. Riebe argues that the female gaze is hidden and deprived because of the patriarchal outlook of women through the male gaze. She goes on to prove her theory by doing tests and creating a project inspired by hashtags, so that women can use these hashtags and share their stories about their sexualities/pleasures. This ties into the women being pressured to fill a desire to meet these patriarchal standards because the project demonstrated how women "identified how patriarchal views of female sexuality in media have caused audiences to have a narrow understanding of how one can perform sexuality as a woman" (Riebe). This ties to the female gaze because it allows women to watch videos and see images that satisfy their need to find an example of a healthy body/mind person. Linda shares her struggles with food and accepting her body. She shares with her followers that it's okay to have bad bays because it's part of being human. Her followers find visual pleasure from her because we physically see her struggle, and can connect with her on a deeper level. Linda is a good representation of the female obsessive struggle with healthy lifestyles.

Representation is important when it comes to images. It's hard to find visual pleasure through the gaze, if you don't understand the representation. In Sophia Caldeira's article, she

discusses more on how gender representation is visible through Instagram. Sophia takes a look at everyday politics and everyday activism on Instagram to explore the political potential of self-representation on Instagram, and Instagram is able to enable more diverse forms of gender representation. In order to depict how Instagram performs gender representations, Sophia looks at whether Instagram acknowledges traditional gender normalities. Although she wants to demonstrate gender representations, in her article she focuses mainly on the feminine aspects of gender roles.

Gender representations often have to deal with our own self-representation. It's through how we represent ourselves that gender representations are able to be formed. In a way "Self-representation has the potential to create greater visibility for demographics that are usually underrepresented or misrepresented in traditional mainstream media" (Caldeira 25). This means that the things we normally wouldn't post about ourselves aren't always appropriate for mainstream media. However, on Instagram users are able to post more freely about certain content and allow themselves to be completely out in the open in their posts. On Instagram there are only limited restrictions on what you can post and even then unless someone reports the post, content can be pretty wide ranged when it comes to Instagram posts.

By having a social media platform that displays gender representations there can sometimes be issues with how certain ways are posted. Yet since Instagram is a safe place for women to create posts and share content "self-representation on Instagram can normalize diversity and challenge restrictive views of the representation of women, acknowledging differences of age, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and culture" (Cadeira 25). This means women are free to create account pages to help reach out to particular communities of other women or create a massive public space where they can all share and create content together. During the BLM

protests there were several accounts created that were completely dedicated towards gaining representation and recognition from the community. There was even one that was a dedicated page for women of the black community. This page was a place where colored women were able to gather on a public page and display peaceful posts and demonstrate in a peaceful manner their beliefs and concerns. It was actually an interesting account page, but when the protests died down the account was deleted.

Another aspect of Instagram that Sophia was able to draw upon was how the male and female posts were treated. The “Representations of femininity or masculinity carry different meanings and are thus treated differently by Instagram” ( Caldeira 29), and this is simply because of the gender norms that have been placed amongst society over time. Even though women are free to post whatever they wish, if their post is considered too revealing it could break the rules indicated in the “terms of acknowledgment” for Instagram. However despite that, men can post a selfie of themselves without a shirt on and there is no issue with that. Moments like this make it difficult to show the female gaze because even though a girl in a bikini is the equivalent to a guy without a shirt we cannot change the minds of everyone or get them to understand that we should be able to have the same level of restrictions.

## **Conclusion**

Introducing Mulvey’s theory to Instagram was a different way for me to understand the ideas presented in the theory. In Mulvey’s essay, she does focus mainly on “the gaze” for men, but doesn’t really touch on “the gaze” for women. I do believe that women experience this gaze differently from men. Women can be pleased by a physically attractive man on camera, but there are also other things we find visually pleasing. Mulvey’s theory on “the gaze” can be applied to both genders, however, we do live in society the idealizes placing mainly women in this position



to be seen as the object for any sort of visual pleasure that meets the criteria of the male sexual desires. Although this is the case I did find it interesting when I did find articles that showed that there were a few instances where the female gaze was plausible. Yet when looking at this theory I didn't only want to focus on the sexual desire aspect of the gaze. There are other ways to view pleasure than through the opposite sex. I believe that "the gaze" can also be used to describe other aspects of life that we witness.

People reaching their health goals is pleasing, seeing different aspects of nature is pleasing, experiencing someone's business growing is pleasing, and there are several other things that are pleasing to see through images. I believe that Mulvey's ideas of the gaze can mean more than just being pleased by the sight of an attractive person on screen. Visual pleasure can also come from seeing people achieve their ambitious goals. It's not always easy in today's society to achieve our goals and live the way we dream of. There are several things that keep us from attaining these goals, one being that it's easier for men to achieve their goals over women. However whenever we get to visually experience someone else making things work there's a form of pleasure that arises. We stem the feeling of joy when seeing others happy causing us to feel as though we can also achieve our goals. There's a release of pleasure when we realize that we can also experience captivating moments of happiness. Even if this does sound wrong, there are people that do feel pleasure through seeing those they despise not achieving their goals as well.

Through social media we are able to experience several forms of pleasure through posts and comments, especially on the platform of Instagram. Instagram allows us to have these sorts of pleasures because we are able to visually see the moment captured in the image. Although the captions sometimes help us to really understand what's happening in the image, I still think that

we're able to interpret the scene and gain a new insight to the person. Celebrities, influencers, and regular people all share their experiences on Instagram allowing the world to take them for who they are, and make their own thoughts on them. It's also because of our own thoughts that we're able to determine what or who we see through "the gaze".

In Mulvey's original theory she doesn't establish the female gaze, but through some searching and a deeper analysis of her theory there were hints of it buried away. Instagram provides a unique way to visualize the female gaze which is different from that of the male's. Even as we gain a better understanding of Mulvey's theory, and how the female gaze can be seen through Instagram, there is still much we don't know. However, by interpreting thoughts of the female gaze and how it functions similarly to that of the male gaze, I think I was able to show that the world doesn't need to be acknowledged through a males view. The female gaze helps women to experience objective sexual desires the same way the male gaze allows men to objectify women for visual sexual desire.

With the female gaze I was also able to see how the images and the way we post images differs. Women aim to post about accomplishments in life or aesthetic selfies, not just boring posts that represent nothing important. By analyzing Mulvey and the female gaze I was able to open my mind to how this theory affects moments in our lives today and how it can be seen in our use of technology.

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## The Teaching of Shakespeare; Themes, Teaching Methods, and Difficulties

### Introduction

Shakespeare, something we have all had to read whether it be for a week or two perhaps maybe even for an entire semester. Regardless, this form of Modern English is one we must all experience. Although this is something we all must learn, the younger generations cannot seem to understand why they must learn from Shakespeare. If you were to ask a high school student today to read Shakespeare, let's just say it's *Romeo and Juliet* because that's a classic one, they would then question you on why it's important to read it or not. Shakespeare and his plays bring us a variety of entertainment ranging from love to tragedy and heroism to villainism. Even though Shakespeare is taught from the moment someone reaches high school, it's not exactly the easiest topic to be studied.

Over the years as you learn more and more Shakespeare it's easy to see that it's taught in similar ways across the board. The usual layout when going about this topic starts with a little background about the play, getting a synopsis of the play, and reading a small excerpt on why Shakespeare wrote the play. When it comes to Shakespeare, something many people don't know is that he wrote his plays based on things he was experiencing during the 16th century. By acknowledging that his plays are based on events during his time, students can begin to get their wheels turning, deciding what the purpose behind the play is. Once there's some background given on the play and author, the teacher will then move on to introducing the actual play itself. Something that may differ from teacher to teacher is whether they choose to read the entire play or just one act. Depending on this factor it will vary on how long you cover this topic of Shakespeare, and what kind of assignments you do. Everything you do when learning Shakespeare will eventually help you to understand something deeper about the plays as a whole.

Even though we believe them to be extremely fictitious, they do have some sort of truth to them. In several of his plays there are many themes and messages that can relate to occurrences and social values that we still experience today. However, throughout this paper I will be discussing different methods to teach, and the difficulties in studying Shakespeare. There have been studies that show a variety of different ways to teach Shakespeare, and several of these methods have been successful. Some students need a different method of learning that doesn't follow the simple read/pen and paper strategy. Shakespeare can be taught by films, worksheets, creative assignments, etc all of which can help with student engagement. However, sometimes students still have difficulties understanding this topic, so it's important that teachers also understand different versions of the plays. There are modernized versions of all the plays, and for some students they may need these versions instead of the original one. It's up to teachers though to know which classes, or individual students have learning difficulties. In this paper I hope to demonstrate some more fun teaching methods, and ways to solve the difficulties in learning Shakespeare.

### **Methods of Teaching**

Teaching Shakespeare has become bland and less engaging for students. In today's classrooms teachers have trouble getting their students to be fully engaged in reading Shakespeare's plays, even when they believe they've picked an interesting one. Traditionally reading the play, and answering questions no longer allow students to fully engage in the aspects of the play. This form of teaching doesn't give students the chance to compare traits or scenes from the plays to objects that they view in their modern day lives. Often you find the teachers having to pull teeth in order to get even a hint of an answer from students, yet even then the teacher had to basically lay the answer in front of them. Yet in the articles "Using Films to Teach

Shakespeare” by Micheal Collins and “Using *The Original Approach* to Teach Shakespeare” by Bruce Robbins, they provide engaging methods of teaching Shakespeare that allow students to fully dive into scenes, and form their own ideas on the plays.

In the article “Using Films to Teach Shakespeare”, Collins tests the idea of using common day films to help students imagine and reflect on what the motions, actions, and tones of particular scenes in plays from Shakespeare. He believes that by showing students films that are relevant in their lives it will help them to reflect on the genre traits of Shakespeare’s plays beside the modern day film of the same genre. This will help them to observe what aspects of both sources of entertainment draw them in, and then identify the differences that can be depicted through Shakespeare as some of his ending tropes can differ from the modern day ending of specific genre related films.

When it comes to teaching Shakespeare, Collins likes to begin by “trying to direct the attention of my students to the ways in which a play comes to life on the stage, to the various choices it offers actors and directors, and to the effects their specific choices” (Collins 228). Thinking about the play as a live performance allows students to engage in the visual aspects of seeing the play performed. They are able to see the actions, tones, and interactions of the characters. Sometimes it is difficult to visualize certain aspects when just reading the play in class. Yet this isn’t the only way Collins gets his students to interact with the play. He has his students act out scenes of the play themselves, but the way he has them do this is interesting.

In Shakespeare's plays there is quite a bit of room for the reader to imagine and decide how they believe characters will behave, or how the tone will be based on only the words spoken by the characters. For the students in Collin’s class they are put into small groups and given a scene to act out on their own based on how they feel the scene should be performed. The

students go through their individual line(s) several times before coming together in their group. By allowing the students to practice their lines individually they are able to change how they perform the line each time until they decide on how they perceive it to be interpreted. After this he lets the students go back to their groups, and lets one group at a time perform their lines together. However it's when they read their lines as a group that they begin to find the rhythm of the play. They discover how the characters interact with each other through this process, and how the tone in the scene should be demonstrated. While the groups perform the rest of the class is observing, and dissecting their own interpretations of the scene. Once Collins believed the students have a firm grasp on how they believe the scene is interpreted, then he would pull a film of the play to show. The film version of the scenes they acted out themselves put to life again. It's through this acting exercise, followed by a film viewing that allowed "students to see both their own choices confirmed and choices they either rejected or did not imagine" (Collins 229) to be played out on the screen.

Something else Collins will do to help his students understand Shakespeare's play will be to compare the play characters to the characters in more recent films. An example that he provides in his article is how we look at the evil forces found in these comedy plays. Collins argues that there's a "theatrical power and attraction" (Collins 231) to the appeal of evil, so characters such as Macbeth, Iago, Edmund, and Richard meet this appeal. There's an appeal to them because even though they are the ultimate evils in their respective plays we forget about our morals, and feel a strain of remorse towards them. We know they went through a traumatic event that caused them to be evil and because of this we have this urge to feel remorse for them, although they are anything but good. Collins relates these characters to the ultimate bad guy from *Batman*, The Joker. The Joker "murders with great glee" (Collins 231) just the same way the

characters above murder those who stand in their way with great joy. Even though we can relate characters from the plays to more relevant film characters, however; students can greatly understand the plays when they compare the endings of comedy films to these comedy plays.

Looking at comedies both in play and film form, there's always a central question we must ask ourselves about them: "why do we want, or at least seem to want, that same implausible story told to us—why do we want to encounter it in performance over and over again?" (Collins 231). As students go through common traits of conclusions for films they can begin to piece together what it is exactly that keeps drawing them into this genre of entertainment. Students discover that we are most drawn to our desire to finally see the man and woman together at the end of the film, and the release of the feeling of joy when we see this. Taking this discovery and applying it to Shakespeare's plays, we realize that Shakespeare does the same thing (except in his tragic comedies, typically one if not both of the main characters die). However in Shakespeare's plays there are heavier feelings put into place that we don't experience in comedy films. Since this is how the plays are, it helps "students to the power of Shakespeare's plays to evoke complex feelings" (Collin 232). By using the methods that Collins uses in his classroom, students will be able to recognize and understand aspects of the plays on their own without the teacher having to describe or explain those aspects.

Bruce Robbins is another person that reflects on methods that can be used to teach Shakespeare in the classroom, and allow students to be more engaged, while achieving a better understanding of the plays. In his article "Using *The Original Approach* to Teach Shakespeare", Robbins discusses how this approach allows students to analyze particular scenes performed in the play, and use their own theories of observation to discover the theme, message, or importance of the piece. In order to discuss the original approach first we need to know what it is. The



original approach to teaching Shakespeare is simply active learning or in this case active performing. To create this article, and discover this teaching method, Robbins actually used Patrick Tucker's approach to acting Shakespeare's plays, slightly changing it to fit in a classroom setting.

Tucker's main goal was to "help actors better comprehend Shakespeare's text and make inferences about what is happening in the scenes" (Robbins 65-66). This is basically the same goal many teachers have when they initially begin teaching Shakespeare. However, in order to use this method in the classroom, Robbins had to make some tweaks to this approach. The first thing he did was add verse nursing. Verse nursing was basically when he would take the time to make sure that if students had any questions or comments on any confusing aspects of their lines, he would clarify them and point out key cues. Something else he would do is have his students look for a particular feature about their lines. An example of this feature would be to look for "when their lines are in poetry and when they are in prose" (Robbins 66). When students are able to notice that their lines change or switch they are then able to identify that something shifts for their character. At the time of the shift change of their character, the students must be able to show this change.

Another feature of the text that Robbins has his students search for is interaction with other characters. By identifying the form of interaction that is occurring between characters, students are then able to make interpretations on how they should reenact their character. Students are also able to determine spot cues amongst each other, those spot cues will help them to know when it's their turn to perform their lines. Much like in regular acting, the students will follow certain stage rules which are slightly different considering they are performing in the classroom. In order to keep all the students engaged during group performances, Robbins would

allow the students that weren't performing to make suggestions, interpret the scene their own way, and let the students self-lead in discussions over particular parts of a scene that may have left the questioning.

Both articles provided similar, yet different methods to teaching Shakespeare in the classroom. These methods not only keep the students engaged in reading the play, but they are able to act out scenes and grow a deeper understanding of the characters and layout of the scenes.

### **Difficulties**

Teaching and learning Shakespeare can have its difficulties simply because it's not always the easiest form of reading. There are many different difficulties when it comes to learning Shakespeare that include learning disabilities, a student's reading level, the language itself, and even just the method it's being taught can all make it hard for a student to fully learn and understand Shakespearean plays. It's important that teachers take note of their students that may have difficulties when connecting or understanding the readings. By having a teacher that notices students with any of these difficulties, they'll be able to form a special way of teaching for those particular students. From the articles "The Riddle in *Twelfth Night* Simplified" by Chris Hassel and "Students with learning difficulties meet Shakespeare: Using a scaffolded reading experience" by Sally Rothenberg, they will simplify a difficult scene from one of Shakespeare's plays. They'll demonstrate a way to help students with learning difficulties understand Shakespeare through a different experience.

In Chris Hassel's article "The Riddle in *Twelfth Night* Simplified", the main purpose is to demonstrate that in order to understand Shakespeare you sometimes have to break down important scenes or phrases to make them easier to interpret. In this article he mainly discusses Maria's fustian riddle at the beginning of the play that everyone except for one character was

able to figure out. The riddle was M.O.A.I, which were the initials of a particular character that was filled with a great deal of self-love that he was able to convince himself of many lies. The riddle is about the character Malvolio. This character “is already so taken with his own attractiveness that he can convince himself Olivia loves him with neither wit nor humor enough to unravel the fustian” (Hassel 356). Malvolio is unable to identify when other characters even give him clues as to what the fustian riddle means. One character even sarcastically points out that he would not be able to identify the true interpretation of the riddle. The only reason this character is unable to do so is because “the riddle’s simplicity makes his failure become so hilarious and his concurrent self-esteem so laughable” (Hassel 356). Meaning that he was too blinded by his own self-love of his attractiveness to truly see that the fustian riddle was interpreting to him that other characters such as Olivia did not love him especially since he was only trying to be with her, for the money she would have. Unlike Malvolio, students and teachers were able to understand the simplicity of this riddle by going through each letter and line. They broke down each line, and were then able to interpret the true intention behind each line to discover that it was simply a rejection from other characters to Malvolio.

In Sally Rothenberg’s article, “Students with learning difficulties meet Shakespeare: Using a scaffolded reading experience”, she discusses how to help those students with a learning disability to better understand Shakespeare. Sally knew that the teaching of Shakespeare successfully would rely on her being able to “sufficiently facilitate the reading so that her students would be successful in their tasks and consequently, gain an appreciation for the play” (Rothenberg 533). The best way to do this for students with learning disabilities is to use a scaffolded reading experience. In this article, Sally breaks this experience into 3 parts.

The first part of this reading experience is to do pre-reading activities. A couple of these activities that you could do for Shakespeare could be pre teaching vocabulary, pre questioning, and pre teaching concepts. By doing these activities before jumping into the play the students are able to understand certain things they should look out for, or have better knowledge of what to expect. The next part of the scaffolded reading experience is to have activities planned out while your students are reading the play. A good example of an activity the students can do while reading the play is guided reading. Guided reading allows the students to read at their pace, but a question sheet helps them focus on the more important aspects of the reading. The final part of this helpful learning experience is post reading activities. With post reading activities this allows students to prove what they were able to comprehend throughout the duration of the play. Artistic activities are an example of something students can do after finishing the play. The teacher could have them create posters or draw a particular scene that they enjoyed from the play, and have them write a brief description on why this scene is important in the play.

By doing a scaffolded reading experience it not only allows students with learning disabilities to learn the same material as regular students, but they are also able to engage fully in the play, successfully comprehending the themes/messages. Teachers could possibly use this to teach regular students as well, but it's mainly used for those who need the extra help.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout our years, we come across Shakespeare time and time again. Each time we come across these various plays we must come to terms with the fact that there will always be something new to learn from them. Whether we learn more about social values to political cues, or identity confusion to be scared to be open, or we just learn more about the environment

around us. No matter how we look at Shakespeare it's apparent that it brings something new to the table each time we discuss it in class.

Even though these plays bring us new learning opportunities, it's not always easy to teach. Yet with the help of these articles, I was able to demonstrate different methods of teaching that allowed for more student engagement. This engagement allowed the students to be imaginative, and interpret the scenes of the plays in how they perceive them to be. The articles helped to show a few different themes that Shakespeare spreads throughout his plays, although these ones were more focused on his more comedic plays. However the themes that were discussed were ones that students would be able to easily acknowledge and understand especially when the theme of education and identity confusion can be related to recent occurrences today. I was also able to identify and share a couple of the difficulties that can arise when trying to teach/learn Shakespeare. Sometimes the language used in the plays is not always the easiest to read and needs to be broken down piece by piece before getting the whole picture of the scene. There are also those students that have a learning disability and need more time and care when it comes to being taught something new.

Yet no matter how you look at it, Shakespeare will always be an important aspect of learning in the English classroom. My hopes are that teachers will take the time to learn new teaching methods. They do not have to use the ones that I displayed in the paper, but student engagement is important in the classroom setting. By changing up the teaching strategy, and using a more engaging method students are more likely to retain what they learn. All teachers want is for their students to grow and learn. I believe these ideas will help with that. It's also important that teachers delegate their students' needs. Some students will be at a disadvantage when it comes to learning, and it's up to the teacher to help come up with a solution. Therefore the

examples I provided to help those with learning difficulties could be crucial to the student's success. In all I hope this paper helps teachers to keep an open mind and constantly be looking for the next best teaching strategy, so that their students receive the best education possible.

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**Beast of Flames**

*Winter is never merciful here. The winds are ravaging against the log walls. At any moment the cabin might come crashing down on us, breaking all our bones and flattening us into bloody pancakes. Along with the wind is snow, the flakes coming down the size of the rocks me and my brother like to throw into the pond by our small cabin.*

*Our cabin is nothing spectacular to the modern villager eye. Four plain walls built of large oak logs, a single door and window signal the front of the cabin. We have a small stone fireplace built into the back wall across from the front door. It's so small that only one pot can be placed inside to cook anything. Mother typically makes soups or porridge for our meals, so that we can always have something warm to eat -which is a blessing during the winter season- and it's simpler for Mother. We share a larger cot in the corner, but even though it's a larger size it's still a tight fit for me, my older brother, and our mother. In front of the fire there is a small table with only two chairs. The one closest to the fire is mine while the other one basked in shadows belongs to my brother.*

*“Alis! Kail! Come sit next to the fire and I'll tell you a story before bed”. Our mother grabbed the steel poker from beside the fireplace. She pokes and prods at the wood burning slowly in the pit. I grin as though mother had brought us a piece of salted candy from the village. Her stories before bed have always been my favorite, but behind me I hear my brother's insufferable groan. “Must you really tell us a story before bed? Don't you think I'm getting a little too old for those?”, my brother gives me a pointed look with his last statement. He only thinks he's old enough to no longer be told stories, but the truth is he's only two years above me and I'm already six. I think he secretly likes the stories, and just doesn't want to show it in front of me. Pfft. Silly boy.*



*We find our spots in front of the flames, and I watch as the reds, oranges, and yellows dance around each other creating a mash and swirl of beauty. The longer I gaze into the flames, I begin to feel a pull, the flames beckoning me to reach towards them, to be engulfed in them. Mother's soft voice points draws me out of the trance, guiding all my attention up to her gaze. Her eyes have always been soft and gentle, capturing us in her mini oceans. She has high cheekbones, but they don't make her look sharp or cutting. Her features still allow her to look calm, soft, and wholly motherly. Gazing at her you would never expect anything to go wrong.*

*"Are you children ready?"*

*I don't know why she even asks because she should already know the answer to that. We both scoot closer to her, giving an obvious answer of readiness and eagerness. Told ya my brother secretly likes being told stories. Ha! Sissy Boy! Our mother always tells the best stories, full of adventure, love, and bravery. I wonder what tonight's story will be about? Before I can dwell more on it, I heard the melody that was my mother's voice.*

*"Thousands of years ago before Broshiva was born, our territory was a part of a much greater nation. The whole continent that we reside - before the churches were formed and the priests took control- this was the Kingdom of Flamas. Flamas was a powerful Kingdom fueled by flames of all colors, each color representing a different aspect of life. Crimson flames represented the Light, the guidance and protection against the dark. Green flames were for Life, the ground we walk on, the forests we trek through, all created by the controller of these precious flames. Blue Flames created our oceans, the water we drink, and allow us to feel the Longing of freedom. White Flames as pure as the snow they bring, the Lifelessness of the cold. The last flames of this kingdom were that of absolute smoke, their color an ash gray bringing forth storms*

*and lightning like never seen before. These flames together protected, created, and destroyed keeping the nation in a constant balance”.*

*Vivid colors dance around in my mind as I picture this kingdom with various flames. Seeing as green fire skips across the dirt leaving behind trails of soft grass. I watch from high above as blue encircles our nation leaving behind deep oceans to protect us from foreign invaders. Shades of gray intertwine with the coldness of white above me, fighting whether it will be a blizzard or storm that graces the nation. I look over at my brother, and I can tell by the shine in his dark eyes that he’s imagining the same as me.*

*“The kingdom was ruled not by a king, but rather a queen. A queen with immense power. She controlled the crimson flame, but she was granted another power in secret. Her name was Maleese, and although she controls the brightest crimson flame, hers is different from others who also contain this flame. Hers was a crimson flame encased in flames of oranges and yellows creating a marble fire. These extra flames gave her the special power to transform into a beast, wolf-like with fur the same colors as her flames. With this ability came great responsibility for the queen because she was the only one capable of protecting the kingdom. You see, what many people leave out of this story is that the queen was able to harness her flame in both human and beast form, but there are whispers that she was also able to control the other flames as well. The flames that grant her shifting power also allow her to control the other flames, but the how is unknown, lost to the old kingdom”.*

*I wish I could be like the queen, able to control all the flames. Maybe I could make it better for us here in Broshiva. Perhaps we wouldn’t have to struggle for food or worry about whether we’ll be safe from the weather. Mother must’ve noticed a change in my expression because she dove into the action of the story, drawing my attention back to her.*

*“One day a cold drifted throughout the kingdom. This cold was different from that of the white flame, this cold was menacing, sending the chill deeper than your bones. The chill could be felt enclosing the flame of everyone in the kingdom, even the queen could feel the cold near her flame. The skies turned dark, growing darker and darker. Light was fading leaving the people blanketed in an abyss. Their flames gave them no indication of life being found around them. The dark was so thick that two people could be standing next to each other, but still think no one was there. Maleese stood atop one the towers to her castle watching as the darkness stopped short of completely taking her. Coming from the darkness she heard a voice that sent a spear of ice through her body. “How do you like my power Queen Maleese?” Emerging slowly from the darkness, a creature that looked like her beast self comes into the remaining light. Where she shines brightly, this creature is made completely of swaying shadows, his fur waving off of him in tendrils of smoke that disappear back into the dark behind him. His eyes a smoldering black, the only indication they’re his eyes are two tiny golden orbs floating on his face.*

*“Who are you?” Maleese ask the creature. The creature buckles, bones breaking and snapping into different places. Where the creature once stood, now there stands a man. A man with skin lighter than porcelain, his features sharp yet captivating. His eyes remained the same, and his hair was jet black and formed curls that drape down to his shoulders. The smile he offered the queen was one full of ice and evil going from ear to ear. “You may refer to me as the Necromancer King, and I’m your worst nightmare”. He raised one spiny boned hand into the sky, and snapped his fingers. The Queen felt the screams of her people before she heard them. Her flame grew with the need to protect them. Queen Males transformed into the beast of flames, letting her flames engulf her as she charged the Necromancer King. She almost had her jaws around his throat when something grabbed her tail pulling her away from him. She whittled on*

*the new opponent to realize she was fighting something not of this world. This creature was caked in shadows, droplets of darkness falling from its razor sharp claws. The droplets sizzling the ground burning away at the stone they stand on. Its body blended in with the abyss surrounding them, Maleese could still catch it moving around her light”.*

*The excitement was back, and I wanted to know what was going to happen next. Kail had his fists raised in anticipation as to what mother was going to say next. As excited as I am to know more, I can't help but feel this story won't be over when mother is done.*

*“The Queen and the creature fought on, more and more creatures joined the one the queen had initially begun fighting. As more and more shadows joined, Maleese's light began to falter. The shadow man locked eyes with the queen through the web of darkness he was weaving around her with his soldiers, “would you like more light dear?”. He waved his hand into the air again, snapping those bony fingers. The abyss began retreating, the sun breaking out casting light on the devastation the darkness was hiding. Out beyond her tower coating the streets and homes of her kingdom was blood. Blood ran...and ran...and ran down every street leaving no stone uncovered. Their bodies looked like they were floating down a crimson river. The Queen broke in a fit of rage like no other. Her flames grew to immense heights both in size and temperature. With what strength she had left she summoned what remained of the energy from the other flames. Small orbs of each flame circled the queen as she continued to blast her own heat. The Necromancer King's creatures didn't dare approach her, so she took the opportunity and pounced on him, trapping him between the stone and her body. Queen Maleese drew on her power and gave the shadow man one last thought to keep, “Your shadows will never win against the light, and you will pay for the deaths you have caused here today. This is a vow that will last for lifetimes. I may not be able to be rid of you today, but one day I will eradicate your darkness*

*from the world". With that final vow Queen Maleese released all her power, sending what remained of the flames including her own flying into different directions. Each flame landed in an unoccupied area of the continent. Maleese's fire burned so great that even the Necromancer King was broken, his body burning away, but his shadows escaped hiding in the darkest parts of the earth. The Queen's flames faded away leaving behind a dead white wolf and the scorched marks where the man's body once laid. Few hundred years after this event each of the flames were found by a group of priests from a foreign land, but they believe the flames to be a gift from the Gods. The new continent of Kolkata was formed and was divided into the five territories each one ruled by a priest containing the flame. Here in Broshiva we're ruled by Priest Talia and her white flame, that's why our winters are always the worst. Legend says that one day the rare flame will return, but with that return will also come the great darkness.``*

*Sadness filled me as mother finished her story. She never told us this story before, but for some reason this story felt real. Something deep in my belly told me so. I looked up at my mother to ask her a question, but tears were forming in her eyes. Why would she be crying? It's not like it's me and Kail in the story. "Mother, what's wrong?" She gave me an apologetic look, but before she could answer Kail stood up and threw his chair into the wall. Mother looked outright appalled. When Kail turned back to face us there was something new in his eyes, an anger that I've never seen before. That feeling in my stomach intensified. He didn't look like himself, there was a child in the air, and the shadows in the room seemed to move closer to him as if drawn to him. Right now at this moment this was not my brother. Mother took a step towards him, reaching out her hand towards him "Kail, sweetheart, I'm going to need you to calm down". She was almost to him when Kail swung his arm. The shadows sprung from the walls throwing mother into the door. She hit the wood with a hard thud, whacking her head hard enough to leave her*

*unconscious. Fear begins to creep into my core, that gut feeling now screaming at me to act, to run, to fight, to anything, but I'm frozen in place. What has happened to my brother??*

*Kail turns his eyes on me, a sadistic smile creeping onto his face, his features look sharper than they did a few moments ago. The rage was still in his obsidian eyes, but there was something else there too I just can't place what it is. "What's wrong, Alis? Didn't you like the story mother just told us? I know I didn't. That ending was terrible despite it being the truth". Kail stalks towards me as I remain curled up by the fire. I scoot as close to it as possible without getting burnt, but it's not enough distance between me and my brother. He reaches me in just a few steps and squats down so he can be eye level with me. He stares deep into my amber eyes, practically through them like he's looking at something way deeper, at something hidden in my soul. Kail must have found what he was looking for because the smile on his face grew, sending more chills into my bones, sealing me in place by the fire.*

*"Well there you... Queen Maleese". Kail stroked my cheek with his scrawny, cold hand. Something in me snapped free, I swung my hand to smack his away, and when I went to push him something hot and comforting swarmed through me. The fire in the pit intensified and seemed to dance in my presence. I jumped to my feet, turning to run towards the door. I made it all but three steps before Kail grabbed my arm. Whirling to face him, I tried to push him off with my free arm. Instead I saw the fire come to life and fly at my brother from the pit. The fire hit him square in the back catching his shirt on fire. He released me, and quickly went to take off his shirt in order to save himself. I took this chance to bolt to where mother is laying by the door. I get to her and shake her roughly, calling to her, wanting her to wake up. Kail got his shirt to stop burning, and was now breathing heavily with anger. The shadows on the walls were gathering around him, taunting him to do something. I turned my attention back to mother and put my hand on the back*

*of her head. There was a warm and thick liquid. When I pulled back my hand I saw it came back a dark red. Panic is starting to take over. My breathing turned irregular and quick. Looking around I can see that the fire has spread to cover all the floors and furniture behind Kail, smoke was filling the room. Tears formed and spilled from my eyes as I rose to my feet and grabbed my mother's limp hand. I began dragging her away from the door, using all the strength I had. I pulled her away enough for me to open the door for me to slip through. Once I was out I shut the door behind me and looked for anything I could use to block the door.*

*Over by the window there was a thick stick that looked long enough to hold the door in place. I ran over and grabbed it, returning to the door. I slid the stick through the handle until it was touching the stone outside of the door frame. I took a step back to admire the trusty piece of wood that kept my brother from chasing after me. With one last final look at the door I turned on my heels, and raced away from the house. The snow bit into the skin of my feet while frigid air tore at the rest of my exposed skin, but I had to get away. I had to escape. I left my mother behind. I left my brother... No, that was not my brother. My brother was kind and strong even though his body seemed weak. That person I left in my home to burn was someone cold and surrounded in darkness. I'm not sure how long I'll have to run, but I'm not stopping until I'm far away from this place, and this memory.*

### ***Twelve Years Later...***

When Alis was younger, her mother told her of a prophecy. In this prophecy is told of a great war that would engulf the whole world in darkness, and the Necromancer King would rule supreme. The Necromancer King is to be a person born with the blackest of souls, so black and

filled with evil that he can turn into a creature so fierce, and powerful that one strike will leave no remains behind. Everytime Alis's mother told her the prophecy, fear would curdle in the pit of her stomach, for the only thing she truly feared in this world was the leader of darkness.

However the prophecy also mentions a way to destroy the darkness and protect the world. The prophecy states that only the Beast of Flames had the power to destroy this wicked creature.

Unfortunately, no one has ever seen the Beast, but even so, the prophets describe the Beast as a wolf-like creature with fur that sparks like flames and eyes the color of burning ember.

For years, Alis has only ever thought this to be a story. A mere story used to scare children into being good, and never straying from the path of light. She never envisioned it being real, but maybe she should have believed it to be true all along. Alis was never a normal girl. Many of the other girls had fear, while she never had any fear of heat, or fire itself while her brother never feared the dark. He found comfort in the dark just as Alis did with her flames. Yet, now at the age of seventeen, everything became real. She never thought that the prophecy would be real, and that she herself was to be the Beast that saves all. Little did she know that her adored older brother of two years would become the darkness of destruction. In a million years would Alis ever think this would happen, but now here they are two months after finding out the truth of their identities. Brother and sister on opposite sides of a war with no clear knowledge of who will survive the oncoming battle.

Now night has fallen, covering everything with a shade of darkness with only the full moon to light the way. The air was turning frigid, suffering from the freezing temperatures that dictate the forests of Broshiva. The trees are tall and thick, but their branches are so small that it does nothing to keep the cold from creeping through. Cold and darkness that's all there is. Occasional coughs coming from the men that are volunteering their lives for Alis's cause. Some



were old while others young. They were as thick as some of the tree trunks, and some as skinny as a twig. Hundreds of men, but yet it couldn't be risked lighting fires, never knew when there would be an enemy. Most of the army huddled close together for warmth. They wished to light fires, but everyone knew that once they did the enemy would ferociously be upon them. The soldiers only dare to sleep for short periods of time in order to avoid freezing to death in their sleep. In the distance, a figure loomed by the trees, but with weeks of traveling together Alis knew exactly who the figure was. With Ray monitoring the trees watching for anything suspicious she was able to feel a little more at ease. Although she'd rather have him right beside her. He must have sensed her gaze because he turned his attention from the trees to Alis instead, his eyes softening from their usual icy glare. Taking a deep breath Alis slowly closed the distance of the field between them. With each step she could feel her body temperature rise.

Her body has taken to this reaction every time he's close by. Yet she couldn't tell if this was from the feelings she'd grown for him, or if the beast inside had taken an interest in him. Hell, maybe it's both reasons. Either way he has been by her side since the beginning of this whole mess. Honestly, if he wouldn't have saved her all those times Alis wouldn't be here to fight in this war.

"Ray, go take a rest. I can keep watch for a couple hours." His gaze shifted back to the trees. He stared for a few moments before turning back. He almost seemed hesitant to go, but even so Alis knew he needed rest. *When was the last time he'd actually had a good rest?* Ray was definitely a solid foot taller than she was, and was lean yet muscular at the same time. This really benefited him because he was fast and agile when fighting. He always held his own weapons or no weapons in a fight. Looking at him, his usual maple hair seemed almost blonde in the moonlight. His jaw and cheekbones were defined by casted shadows while his nose was

sharp and his eyes glowed gold. The only thing that will eventually be one of his downfalls is his unwillingness to rest every now and then.

“Alis if you’re going to keep watch I want you to shift into the beast because at least then you can protect yourself”, his face was stern. The concern in his eyes was convincing enough to persuade anyone into agreeing. Alis nodded in agreement, and reluctantly Ray returned to the soldiers to rest. Even though shifting is easier to do now, it still hurts like a bitch.

Letting the beast take control was as easy as breathing now, yet the pain was still unbearable. Bones breaking and reforming is definitely not pleasurable. Holding back a groan as Alis’s back started to arch, her spine breaking and reforming. Her hands and feet grew, growing longer with claws forming at the end. The claws were sharp enough to slice through flesh as easy as ripping grass. Her face morphs to grow a snout while her mouth changes shape turning into a snarl with razor sharp canines. Last thing to appear is her fur as it grows. It's the color of flame red with streaks and swirls of orange and gold. When the shifting is done Alis is the endless flame of a fire, never extinguishing.

With all senses heightened, keeping watch would be more accurate. Even though the beast was now out, Alis still had control over her consciousness, unlike the first time she shifted. Strong winds began blowing in from the east, bringing in thousands of scents, but the wind didn’t keep her from hearing it.

*Ssskkkkkk*. The sound of metal scraping against metal. Someone unsheathed a sword and Alis could hear the sounds of running footsteps. Letting out a growl she took off towards the direction of the attackers. Ray screamed for her in the background, but she ignored everything except her one instinct at the moment. To protect. She was determined to protect those soldiers,

to protect everyone in this world, and to protect the one she cares most about. Breaking through the trees she came to a clearing where she met her attackers.

Fur standing tall along her spine a low warning growl broke free from her throat. Across the field stood her brother with a delighted grin across his porcelain face. His eyes look hollow almost like mini blackholes carved into his face. Her brother had a long nose that kept his face a perfect balance. No feature stood out too greatly. Despite his darkness women would find him attractive, if only this was a different time. Only now did she realize what she had done. She had given into the beast's instincts. Alis gave her brother exactly what he wanted, for her to come to him alone. Now she was distanced from anyone who could save her. Although she was alone, she wouldn't go down here... at least not without taking her brother with her. Her brother raised his arm, snapping his fingers. A surge of necromancers rose from the shadows scattering the ground. With one forward sweep of his arms the creatures of darkness began their attack. They looked like shadow figures, but the closer she looked they appeared more like a thick oil. Oozing from the ends of their claws, claws as sharp as Alis'. Setting her fur a blaze she charged forward taking down two necromancers with the sweep of her claws. Some of them pulled out bows and arrows, reading their aim. Alis couldn't determine how many archers there were. her attention was too focused on the enemy with swords swarming around her. All she could do was pray that there weren't too many... *Whoosh!*

Pain flared near her left ribs. Trying to see the wound all she could make out was the back of an arrow. She raised the temperature of her flames, burning away the arrow, but the wound wouldn't heal. None of her wounds would be able to heal while she was in this state. She felt flesh being split before the pain flared. One of them managed to put a large gash in her back leg. Alis didn't think she could take another attack if they got to her again. She couldn't think.

There were too many thoughts rushing through her mind. The voice of the beast began crying out louder and louder over her own thoughts. Finally she decided to give into the beast's growing cry. There was only one way to get out of this: she now knew what to do. Gathering what strength she had left she sent out her flames clearing a path straight to her brother. Alis charged her brother still blasting out her flames to keep the necromancers away. She closed in on him. Using what leg strength was left she leapt into the air ready to lock her jaws around his throat. Her brother laughed as she stopped in mid-air mere inches from his face. Confusion filling Alis's mind.

The beast form slipped away leaving behind a bloody and shocked human Alis. She was barely able to comprehend why she was hanging in the air until she forced her gaze down to the sword skewering her torso. Something warm ran down out of her mouth. She could only know it was blood from its metallic taste. Looking back at her brother all she saw was his bright smile as he watched the color drain from her skin. "You know sister, I quite like this look on you. Skin so pale you almost look like a ghost, but I wonder..." His gaze shifted to something behind her and his smile only widened. He looked back at Alis giggling, "Now I'm gonna watch your little friend die trying to save you. What's his name again? Let me think, oh that's right, his name is Ray." He pulled his blade from her and watched as her body crippled to the ground. That cringy, excited grin never once leaves his face.

Alis could never understand why her brother was so accepting of his fate while she wanted to run from this. She only agreed to this fucked up fate because she hoped deep inside that she would be able to bring her real brother back. The one buried underneath all that greed of darkness. Maybe her brother truly wanted more than to just be the favorite child or even the most praised from our home. Perhaps he accepted this because the prize of winning this war for him

means never being looked down upon. No one was ever able to outmatch him. Even now as he watches her bleed to death Alis could see no remorse in his eyes, only absolute glee was visible.

Everything around her almost seemed unreal; her hearing was already fading. Her body lay in the direction of her army charging into the clearing. She distinctively picked Ray out among them. Pain, anger, distress all swirling in his eyes. His jaw is clenched tight, tight enough to break his teeth. The skin that is typically sunkissed, is now bleached of all color. The way he looked he may as well be dead, but he isn't. Ray is coming for her. He was sprinting in her direction saying something, but she couldn't hear what he was yelling. Maybe he was still too far to hear, or maybe she had lost too much blood. Alis couldn't tell anymore. The edges of her vision were turning dark. Hands grabbed at her shoulders shaking her almost lifeless body. Her gaze shifted to the one holding her and it was Ray. *When did he get here though? Wasn't he on the other side still?*

Alis could barely see him clearly anymore; everything was going dark, and her body was accepting the cooling comfort of death. The last thing she saw before she became lost to the world was Ray's eyes. They appeared so broken with tears streaking his cheeks.

*It was so bright outside. I opened my eyes to find the scorching sun gazing straight down on me. Sitting up I looked around, and saw my brother Kail still running around trying to get his kite to fly in the air. I don't think he realizes that the breeze isn't strong enough, but who am I to ruin his fun? He's smiling, laughing, and running around. I can't remember the last time I saw him looking like that. How could I destroy his fun by commenting that the weather isn't proper for kite flying? Kail notices that I'm no longer lying in the sun's light, and comes running over to me, kite still in tow.*

*“Alis! Alis! Finally you’re up, come help me get this kite in the air!” He was almost to me by the time I rose to my feet.*

*“Alright, alright. I’ll hold the kite up while you take off running. Hopefully this will help to get a little air under it. Okay?” I was honestly shocked by his sudden request, but I was also ecstatic that he asked for my help. He never does that, probably because he thinks I’m still incompetent since I’m younger. Oh well, I’m not going to ruin this chance at a happy memory together. So I take hold of the kite, holding it above my head. The breeze had picked up a little, so the kite might be able to fly this time.*

*“Okay Kail, whenever you’re ready.” Kail looks at me and nods his head with the biggest smile I’ve ever seen. Yet something in his eyes didn’t quite seem right... He took off at a full sprint, and I took off too, still holding the kite above my head. As we kept running the wind continued to rise, blowing around us harder and faster. The sun’s warmth was fading away as clouds gathered causing the field to grow dark.*

*Kail released the string of the kite, and kept beelining towards the edge of the field where the shadows grew dense around the tree border. I stopped running and only watched. My heart was racing so hard inside my chest I thought it would burst out. Fear was crawling all over my skin freezing me in place. As my brother drew closer to the shadows tall figures appeared welcoming him. Once he reached the shadows, he turned and faced me, the fear increasing as I gaze at him. That smile was still on his face, but now I know what was in his eyes. It was pure evil. I saw him mouth something to me, but I could barely make out what it was. Then those dark shadows swarmed towards me. I was frozen to my spot, unable to stop them as they engulfed me. Everything turned into a thick darkness. It was suffocating... I couldn’t breathe, it felt like I was choking on the darkness itself. I could only stand there, suffocating, and hoping that someone*

*would hear my silent prayers for help. No one was there though. I was utterly alone, drowning in a pool of shadows. It became obvious as to what my brother had said before I was swarmed.*

*He had said to "Die".*

Warmth filled the air along with the scent of burning wood. Alis's body felt heavy and foreign to her. Slowly she opened her eyes to see a wooden ceiling above. Carefully she turned her head to the left, and saw the growing blaze of the fire. Turning her head the other way she saw a large table that looked to be cluttered with objects that she couldn't quite make out. Deciding to get a better sense of her surroundings, Alis tried to rise up onto her elbows. However, she paused part way through the motion as excruciating pain reverberated through her abdomen. Alis glanced down at the bandaging that was keeping her middle together. A small spot of blood started to seep through. She must've reopened her wound slightly from her sudden movement. This time slower, she raised herself into a sitting position. Placing her hands on either side of her, Alis noticed that she was laying on a cot of some sort. The material wasn't comfortable, but wasn't uncomfortable at the same time. *Weird.* Forgetting about the strange cot, she let her eyes roam her surroundings.

The room was a rather decent size. A large table filled with several bowls of different herbs and fruits sat a few feet away. There was a fire pit (where the person probably prepares their meals, or creates medicines) across the room. The walls seemed to be made of strong oak and vines from the nearby forests. There were no windows. Only an average size door, no more than 20 feet away from Alis. That was the only way to go back to the outside world.

*I'm not really sure I want to return to the outside... I feel so defeated from the recent events. Hell, I'm surprised I'm even alive. I was so sure I was dead, or at least pretty close to it. Ray must've--*

The door flew open, crashing hard onto the wall. Surrounded in a halo of light stood Ray's lean, muscular figure. The usual sun kiss tone of his skin was gone. It left only a slight paleness behind. His eyes were so wide. He looked like he's seen a ghost, maybe he was as he stood still staring at Alis. In the matter of a second, as if the spell on him has been lifted. Ray was suddenly by Alis, holding her desperately in his arms. He was holding her in such a way that he must've thought she would disappear, if he would let go. Alis could only sit there and let him hold her. She knew she had hurt him by running off on her own. All she could do was feel guilty in his arms because of the pain she must've put him through. Yet sitting there in Ray's arms also made Alis realize something.

She knew she would have to face her brother again, but next time she'll be ready for him. He will fall into her trap instead.



# **The Spot Employee Manual**

**Submitted by: Payton Boshears**



**The Spot Restaurant**

**201 South Ohio Avenue**

**Sidney, Ohio**

**45365**

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## Welcome to The Spot Restaurant

Welcome to The Spot Restaurant! We are glad that you have decided to join our team. Here we like to be able to have fun while we work, but we also do our best to give customers the greatest service possible. We hope that after you get through this manual, you'll be more than prepared to do your part here and join the rest of us in creating a joyful work environment.

## Mission Statement

Our mission here at The Spot Restaurant is to provide every customer with a great experience and provide our staff with a fun yet professional work environment.

## Restaurant Hours

Monday 11:00am-8:00pm

Tuesday 11:00am-8:00pm

Wed. 11:00am-8:00pm

Thurs. 11:00am-8:00pm

Friday 11:00am-8:00pm

Saturday. 11:00am-8:00pm

Sunday 11:00am-8:00pm

## Holiday Hours

Thanksgiving Eve 8:00am-8:00pm

Thanksgiving. Closed

Christmas Eve. 8:00am-2:00pm

Christmas Day. Closed

New Year's Eve. 11:00am-2:00pm

New Year's Day. Closed

## **Introduction to the Manual**

Welcome to The Spot Restaurant Employee Manual! Here we will help to break down the specifics of some of our important positions. All positions are valued, but there are a few that take more time and training than the others. It is our hope that after you read this manual you will have a better understanding of what expectations there will be and the kind of work ethic you will need to have.

## **Hiring Process**

For the hiring process either call or go to The Spot and ask an employee how to apply. The employee will give you the #415-851-3160 to text, and you'll text the code 518866. After you send the code the number will send an automatic message with a link to a page that displays all of the available job opportunities. Each job is listed with the number of openings available, as well as if it's for morning or evening shift. Click the job you wish to apply for and fill out the application provided. Then send it in and await a phone call from the owner to set up an in-person interview

## **Initial Training**

This typically begins a week after being hired, so that we are able to work you into the schedule based on your time availability. To begin your initial training, you'll be introduced to a couple of people from each position. These are the people you can ask questions/get advice from. From there you meet the main person you will be training with at the wrapper position for the first week or two, depending on how quickly you catch on.

## Wrapper Position

Here is where you'll get the experience of seeing how the food is prepared/cooked, as well as how the food is dressed and served for the customers (At this restaurant we have a little over a handful of sandwiches/burgers that come with specific condiments already assigned to them, while at the same time the rest of the sandwiches/burgers come plain this way the customers have free rein over how they wish their food to be dressed). For takeout orders the wrapper will wrap the sandwiches/burgers in foil wraps while dine in orders are placed in a big boat. This way both the sandwich and the side can sit side-by-side. With take out the sides are placed in little paper bags that are able to hold about 2-3 oz of fries/onion rings/deep fried mushrooms.

Depending on whether the food is for dine in or take out varies where the food is placed after being wrapped. Dine in food will be placed on the silver counter and called out to the customer by their order number. Whereas take-out food will be placed in slots on a heated counter until a carhop gets it bagged.

## Expectations of this Position

For this position there are a few expectations that are expected of you as you continue forward.

1. Always be 15-20 minutes early to your shift. By being early you have time to do some of your responsibilities such as filling bottles, filling containers, or getting some stock items.
2. Clean as you go! There will be moments throughout the shift where there may be no orders to complete. During this time, you should do some cleaning, maybe get more stock, and just try to stay ahead as the shift progresses. Keep in mind the more you accomplish throughout the shift the less you'll have to do at closing time.

3. Have a little fun. Even though this is a job, and it should be taken seriously to a certain degree, there is nothing wrong with having a little bit of fun throughout the time you're here. However, if you begin having too much fun, and just avoiding doing your work then there will be some repercussions put into place.

As long as you can follow these few expectations then your time here at the restaurant should be an easy and fun time.

### **Things that need to be Learned and Things that need to be Remembered**

When training in this position there are some things that you will need to focus on learning that will be helpful to you later on. If you remember these things, it'll be sure to help you become quicker and more understanding about the position.

1. When you first begin training you will get to use what we call a "cheat sheet". The cheat sheet will have all of our special burgers/sandwiches listed on them along with what types of cheese, toppings, and buns they receive. You really want to try and memorize all the items on this sheet as quickly as possible, because after a couple of days you do not get to use it anymore. Once the sheet is taken away then it's up to you to remember what each sandwich is supposed to have. Now it's okay to ask questions if there is a certain topping you're unsure about for a particular sandwich. Just remember that the quicker you learn them all the better off you'll be later on.
2. Cleaning and stocking. The less someone has to tell you what to do and what to get, the better off you'll be. This will also help you to stay on good terms with your co-workers, because it gets frustrating repeating the same things constantly.



3. Learn how to read the tickets. At the beginning it can be a little confusing when it comes to reading the tickets, but over time it does get easier. Many of the items are sectioned off together. To demonstrate, all the burgers are listed in the top section followed by any chicken product we have, then our miscellaneous sandwiches. Next are the sides, drinks, desserts, and lastly any salads. Once you understand what everything means on the ticket, doing the orders will be much easier. If you have any questions over something written on the ticket, don't be afraid to ask questions.

### **Wrapper Duties**

- Filling sauce bottles/pans
- Filling veggie pans
- Making sure there are filled extra veggies/sauce pans/containers under your station in a mini cooler

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Grabbing enough stock for the shift (different sized drink cups, soup bowls/lids, different sized boats, etc...)

- Filling ice container on the pop machine
- Cleaning the counter/pop machine
- Sweeping the floors
- Taking out the trash
- Getting soups and drinks for take-out orders

**Wrapper Stock Card****Cups (Sleeves)**

-5 kid green ones

-10 medium green ones

- 8 small red ones

-10 large blue ones

**Soup cups**

-4 sleeves

1 box of fry bags

2 sleeves of mini boats

2 sleeves of big boats

1 sleeve 2 oz cups with lids

## Switchboard Machine

The switchboard machine is actually an old nursing board system that has a timer set in it, which begins to count down every time you answer a customer to take their order. The board is connected to sets of speakers outside in the back lot where cars pull in. Customers then push a button on the speaker, which causes the board inside to make a beeping noise indicating to the carhops/switchboard person to take the order. When the board goes off it also shows a light next to the lot number that is calling in, this way we can write down the lot number the order will go to on the ticket. In order to speak to the customers, you have to press the button of the number lighting up, then push the talk button to green. However, in order for the customer to hear you, you have to hold the talk button the whole time you are speaking, but then release it when you're not speaking so you can hear the customer.

## Switchboard Position

This is when you are introduced to how the orders are taken and the next part of your training after learning how to wrap. Now you know all about the food, but now it's time to learn how to use the switchboard system as well as the register/computer system. This is the part of the training that people can find really easy or extremely difficult. It all depends on how easily they

learn how to alternate ringing orders between the two carhops, take the orders over the board, take off coupons/discounts, and to properly bag orders so they are ready for the carhop to take out.

## **Carhop Position**

The carhop position is the hardest position in the whole restaurant because they deal with money, so they're held accountable if they are extremely short at the end of their shift. They answer the switchboard often, they bag their own orders, sometimes they have to help get their own drinks or soups, and they also are the ones that deal with the customers the most. Meaning if something is wrong with a customer's order, they are the ones that get yelled at (or worse) for a mistake they didn't make. They also need to be able to stay calm and not get upset in order to try and handle bad situations as best as possible.

## **Carhop Duties**

- Getting stock for the next shift (bags, boxes, lids, paper tickets, drink carriers, pie, money bags, etc...)
- Taking orders
- Dealing with customers
- Answering the phone and switchboard
- Sweeping the rug
- Sweeping the floor
- Cleaning the pie cooler
- Checking the heater
- Running orders

- Handling money

Carhop Stock

- 1 box of ketchup packets
- 1 box of crackers
- 1 pack of sm. and lg. pie boxes
- 1/2 a shelf of 2 drink carriers
- 1/2 a shelf of 4 drink carriers
- 8 packs of napkins
- sm/med/lg bags
- 4-6 boxes of straws
- 1 box of forks/spoons/malt spoon/cutlery packets
- 8 packs of plates

## Menu Understanding

There is a decent number of items on the menu. It's important to know that there are certain items that can't be combined even if a customer orders it that way. There are only 6 actual combos listed on the menu, and the only item that can't be a side in the combo are the deep-fried mushrooms since they are the more expensive side. However, a customer can get a boat combo for any sandwich and it includes fries/onion rings with a mini salad/potato salad/cottage cheese/coleslaw, but a drink is not included. Drink sizes are also something that you have to pay attention to because a small tea or lemonade is actually the same size as a medium soft drink.

## Ticket Understanding

When it comes to understanding the order tickets there's a couple of important things to note now. There are certain abbreviations to represent each item on the menu except for tater tots, sweet potato fries, shrimp baskets, and our special dinners. Other than these few things everything else has its own abbreviation, even the condiments. On the ticket there are two small boxes next to each item because this is where you'll write the number of the item indicating how many the cook has to make. You also write down the lot number of where this order goes at the bottom of the ticket next to the attached receipt with their total.

The image shows a standard restaurant order ticket. At the top left is the logo for 'FAMOUS FOR HAMBURGERS ON THE SQUARE' in 'BERRY CREEK'. To the right, it says 'Thank You' and 'Founded 1967'. The main body of the ticket is a grid of small boxes, each representing a menu item. Each item has a small box next to it for the quantity and a larger box for the lot number. The items listed include various burgers, sandwiches, salads, and other menu items. At the bottom of the ticket, there is a section for 'QUANTITY' with columns for different categories and a total column.

## Computer System/Register

The computer is actually pretty easy to understand, it's located where each item is that sometimes throws people off. There is a button on the screen for each section of the menu and each button takes you to a screen full of items that are placed in that section based on the title of the food item. For instance, our pies would be listed under the "Dessert" button, burgers, or hot dogs under the "Burger/Dog button", or "fish filet" would be under the "Sandwiches" button. For

takeout, when we are ringing up orders, we will hit the “All To-Go” button at the top right of the screen once all the orders have been put into the computer. After hitting the “All To-Go” button, you’ll then hit the “Print Receipt” button to get a copy of the receipt with the total amount owed by the customer.

### **Learning Difficulty**

When it comes to learning how to use the computer system it can be easy for some and a little more difficult for others. The two things that seem to make people who find it more difficult to understand are locating where certain menu items are and making sure to hit the “Dine-in” button for in-house orders and hitting “All To-Go” for any take-out orders. Once you get the hang of these two things then it becomes fairly simple to work the computer system.

### **Screen Determination/Location of Food Item**

Every item on the menu is located under certain designated screens on the computer. All miscellaneous drinks are listed under the “Bev”. tab. Soda products are listed under the “Soda” tab. Anything that is a burger or hot dog is under the “Burger/Hot dog” tab. The rest of the sandwiches and special dinners are all under the “Sandwiches” tab. All the sides are listed under the “Fryer/Salad” tab. The “Dessert” tab is where all the pie can be found. Anything else that we have can typically be found under the “Misc.” tab.

### **Identifying Whose Ticket is Whose**

There is a simple way of knowing whose order is which when they are being rang up. Every shift the two carhops scheduled will each pick a colored ticket that they want to use for the duration of their shift. They can usually pick between pink, yellow, green, or blue tickets. Whichever color ticket is in your hand that is the person you will ring it up on.

## Coupons/Discounts

Here we do offer a 10% discount for anyone with a school band card, veteran's, seniors, (or any other sort of service.) We also have different coupons that can be used on orders such as \$5.00 off, BOGO Free on burgers, BOGO ½Off burgers, and then a free slice of pie coupon. Now when using the discounts and coupons customers can either use their discount or the coupon, but not both at the same time. It's the same thing when a customer tries to use two coupons on one order, they have to pick only one of the coupons to use.

## Order Ringing Process/Next Steps

1. Identify who the order gets rung up on
2. Ring up each item individually and make sure it's the correct amount if there are multiple of one item
3. Once you rang up every item on the ticket hit "All To-Go" button and hit "Exact Cash" button
4. A receipt paper should have printed, take that receipt and staple it to the bottom of the ticket (make sure the bolded three-digit number is visible as well as the total)
5. Place the ticket on the wrapper's station for them to have to dress the sandwiches and put the order together

## Dealing with Money

When it comes to dealing with money, it's the easiest thing to get right or wrong in the whole job description. Carhops begin their shift with \$47.50 given to them in fives, ones, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. The whole point of this is so at the end of the shift, when they count down

all the money they have obtained in their belts, they subtract that \$47.50 to get the actual total amount they have received from their orders.



### **Purpose for Beginning the Shift with \$47.50**

The reason a carhop starts the shift with \$47.50 is because it gives you your starting change. Each carhop should start the shift with \$20 in 5's, \$10 in 1's, \$10 in quarters, \$5 in dimes, \$2 in nickels, and 50 cents in pennies. Since this is the amount, you begin your shift which, this is then the amount you will subtract from the total amount of money you have in your belt to get the actual amount of money that is owed to the restaurant.

### **Counting the Money in the End**

When it comes time to count down your money at the end of the night there are typically two ways to count down. One way is by counting it out all individually, then adding it all up and subtracting the initial amount. The other way to count your money is to count all your coins together into one total and then your bills into one total. Add those two totals together and then subtract the initial amount of \$47.50. It's best to count your money in a way you feel comfortable counting it.



## Checkout Receipt

The checkout receipt is your money report that shows all your credit card payouts and how much cash you should have in total from your belt and changer.

## Being Short/Even/Over the Money Owed

After you do all your calculations there are three things that could happen. You could either wind up being short, even, or over the amount of money owed. If you're short or over that simply means that some order between you, the other carhop, and even the front register got mixed up or closed out incorrectly. This means that one way or another all the money is there, but it's just misplaced in one of the other people's money counts. As long as all the money is there between those people then there's nothing really to worry about. Being even in your belt (which doesn't happen often) simply just means that all of your money was there and you have the exact total of money that you owe to the restaurant on your checkout receipt.

## Closing (image inserted for each position at end of shift)

At the end of the night for closing all you have to do is make sure everything is turned off, stocked up, and cleaned up before clocking out to leave for the day/night.

## Closing Routine for each Position

<p>Wrapper Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Bring up Stock</li> <li>-Fill condiments</li> <li>-Clean Area</li> <li>-Fill freezer items</li> <li>-Wipe down area</li> <li>-Wipe down freezer doors</li> <li>-Clean malt machine</li> <li>-Put soups/ steam table items away</li> </ul>	<p>Switchboard Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Make sure pans filled</li> <li>-Put pie in cooler</li> <li>-Clean counter</li> <li>-Fill pie boxes</li> <li>-Clean sink next to heater</li> <li>-Wipe down heater/ pie cooler</li> <li>-Sweep and take out trash</li> </ul>	<p>Carhop Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Make sure pans filled</li> <li>-Put pie in cooler</li> <li>-Clean counter</li> <li>-Fill pie boxes</li> <li>-Clean sink next to heater</li> <li>-Wipe down heater/ pie cooler</li> <li>-Keep trash off lot</li> <li>-Run report/ count money</li> <li>-Sweep and take out trash</li> <li>-Turn off heater/warmer on counter/ switchboard</li> </ul>
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## **Time Spent Training for each Position**

The amount of time that is spent on training does depend on the person in question. Each person processes and understands things at different rates, meaning some people can whip through training in a matter of days while others could take a few weeks to fully grasp it all. Here is a view of how long each position ultimately takes to learn starting at the hiring process.

Hiring Process: 2-5 days

Initial Training: 2-3 days

Wrapper: 7-14 days

Switchboard: 7-14 days

Carhop: 3-5 days