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Note to the Reader

Delta Editorial Board

*Illinois Wesleyan University*

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the third edition of *The Delta*, the English Department Journal. As our journal adds another year to its publication history, we have aptly lived up to our name; a delta is a symbol for change, and this year, along with the usual high quality analytical work, we opted to include pieces written by students while studying abroad as well as a more creatively critical piece. It is our hope to open *The Delta* to as diverse and creative a body of work as possible.

We again received a large number of submissions and as a result were greatly challenged in the selection process. We followed a blind selection procedure in which the editorial board judged the papers based solely on criteria outlined in the journal’s original call for submissions:

We seek original and analytical papers unified around a specific thesis. The paper must be cohesive, well-supported, and, where applicable, properly cited using MLA format. While we will only publish excellent papers, we seek a diverse representation of work so that the publication covers many time periods, genres, subjects, and methodologies.

The editorial board would like to thank everyone who submitted a paper for consideration. We are also grateful to Susan Sombeck and Carrie Hymer at Printing Services for their help in the publication process and formatting *The Delta*, as well as to Student Senate for providing funding for our publication. Additional thanks to Cathi Martin for making our blind selection process possible.

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Thanks to the Alpha Eti Pi chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, who continue to draw and support incredible students and their works. Last but not least, thank you to Dr. Theune for his endless wisdom, guidance, and support throughout this process.

We hope you enjoy the third edition of The Delta,

*The Delta* Editorial Board

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**The Contradiction of Masculinity in the Middle Ages**

Leann Stuber

In the Middle Ages, masculinity was defined in contradictory ways, depending on the man’s role in society. Contradictions are evident in the literature of the time, within Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*. This contradiction comes from the fact that Chaucer’s male pilgrims present themselves with more than one definition of masculinity than the definition expected based on the pilgrim’s occupation. Among the pilgrims that deviate from the “male” gender role, the Friar and Pardoner both exemplify the contradictory definitions of masculinity. There are pilgrims, such as the Man of Law, that maintain a gender definition based on occupation, there are also those that deviate from the expected gender definition. In addition, the characteristics presented in the Man of Law’s tale illustrate the contradictions present in society.

**Historical Context**

_A woman should learn in quietness and full submission, permit a woman to teach or to have authority over others, be silent._ - *Timothy 2:11-12*

In the Middle Ages, ideas surrounding masculinity were inherited from classical literature and the Bible. The social system developed and changed, several and societal groups needed definitions, especially...