

Cast of Characters

The cast of characters was available as a separate page online, a resource for people who got confused about who was who, what was what, who went where and what they were doing. It is reproduced here in its entirety, for the same reason.

Abelard, Tom

The lead debater on Quilty Prep's LD team. Abelard is a senior, and the team's topic theorist, the one who divines the real meanings behind the resolutions. His teammates may sneer at his interpretations and choose to follow their own paths, but in the end it is always Tom Abelard who makes it furthest in the elimination rounds, with enough Combat of Conquerors limbs to qualify a small army. But it is not Abelard's debating skills that set him apart ; it is another quality altogether that makes this short, curly-haired teddy-bearish Quilty student remarkable. Tom Abelard has what can only be described as animal magnetism. He is not the smartest person in the world, nor the nicest, nor the best looking, but the opposite sex is attracted to him like weevils to the cotton bolls.

Andrew Johnson High School

"Home of the Unimpeachable Education" and also home of the Andrew Johnson Reconstruction Memorial and The Little Johnson, the classic debut event for Northeastern debate novices.

Coach: Renate Screeds

Ambrose, Ashley

Nighthen Day's Original Orator is never haphazard, and never less than fully dressed in a pastel lawyer suit, a white silk shirt, a Hermes scarf tied tightly around her throat—and never the same scarf twice—and three inch heels in a color matching her suit. She is always smiling, perhaps not sincerely.

Bisonette Technical

Located in Stockwood in upstate New York, Bisonette (pronounced “Bisonay”) is just beginning to assemble an LD team under the auspices of their new coach.

Coach: Amnea Nutmilk (also the Editor of Metro New York magazine)

Debaters: Chesney Nutmilk; Warner (Worm) Padrewski; Jon Marcellus (Binko); Gloria Fudless (aka Gloria What)

Principal: Val Lewton

Brillig, David

Originally the Duo partner of William Hand, and also his long-time best friend. They are both blue-eyed and blond-haired, and are students at Nighten Day. Their greatest triumph was “Parrots.” David’s solo HI piece is a cut from the film of *The Fountainhead*.

Brooklyn Behemoth

An all-speech venue.

Coach: Alida Devans

Buglaroni, Grandma

The former Maria Contaglia, she is a small woman, but thick, and her aura of solidity makes her seem larger than she is. Her hair is gray, pulled tight and knotted at the back of her head. She smells of BenGay, which she is constantly rubbing into her sore legs and arms. She wears black—widow’s weeds—the mourning outfit she has worn a la Queen Victoria since the death of her husband, Ham Senior’s father, in 1956.

Buglaroni, Hamlet P., Jr.

The novice LDer from hell. And also from Nighten Day. Thirteen years old, five feet ten inches tall and unable to push the scale over

130 pounds. His favorite cap is red, tightly fitted around his head, and it says nothing, which he considers a major statement. He always wears two pairs of socks. HPB may be the ultimate hero of Nostrum... or maybe not.

Buglaroni, Hamlet P., Sr.

Divorced (from Sharon), father of the Novice from hell, stepson of Grandma Bulgaroni, with distinct ties through his automobile-related businesses to organized crime.

Bunbury, Lav

Lav Bunbury, the Nighten Day Guidance Counselor, is perhaps the school's most flamboyant administrator. Mostly bald, what hair remains is surfer blond and closely cropped around his ears, and he is perennially deeply tanned. He believes that college visits should be bunched alphabetically.

Castorp, Hans

Hans Castorp, a German emigre, is a Hollywood wunderkind with a thick Teutonic accent and shoulder-length dirty blond hair. He is having difficulty casting his next picture.

Combat of Conquerors

Inevitably referred to as the COC, a tournament held at the end of each school year. An advisory board to the COC analyzes every tournament around the country by such criteria as the number of participants and the number of states from which these participants come, and jumbles it all together and comes up with the COC limbs: at certain points in a number of tournaments, perhaps at quarterfinals or semifinals, or at very big tournaments even at octofinals, COC limbs are granted. If you make it that far, you get a limb. If you get enough limbs to stand on—usually two but some years three and some years only one if you have a ghost limb or a wooden limb (don't ask!) — then you are allowed to participate at the Combat of Conquerors.

Cratch, Bob

The secretary of the Quilty Prep forensics team. Bob Cratch is a perfect choice for the position: he is serious without being joyless, and he is capable of maintaining accurate records, which is more than can be said for many adult coaches. Even Bob Cratch's appearance is serious but not joyless: tall and beefy with his blond hair in a Marine buzz cut, bright red flannel shirt over faded carpenter pants, giving off the sense of an apprentice lumberjack. This is his second year as secretary, and in that time he has never missed a registration deadline and never failed to obtain the maximum number of slots for his team.

Davidson, Disney

A vegan freshman at Northeastern Agricultural Institute, and former Nighten Day LDer.

Devans, Alida

At six feet tall, the most formidable coach on the circuit aside from Seth B. Obomash. Alida Devans, 53 years old, coaches speech at Brooklyn Behemoth. For Alida, it's not about competition, it's about winning. As it is hard to foster a mindless, prejudicial hatred unless you yourself are somehow tainted by the thing you hate, it behooves us to point out that Alida was raised a Catholic.

Diamond, Cartier

Nighten Day's contribution to Dramatic Interp. A senior with shoulder-length blond hair, blazing violet eyes and a honey-soft feline voice. She usually dresses in black and is tall enough and pretty enough to be a model; Tarnish Jutmoll often gets the impression that she is only pretending to be a high school student to bring back notes from the field.

DiBella, Ellie

Once known as De Belle of Debate before she settled down with Trat Warner. A Nighten Day LDer, Ellie often manages to break into elimination rounds. Both Ellie and Trat are seniors, and have already decided to seek early admission at the same college. No

one doubts that they will be buried together about eighty years from now.

Dwindle, Chip

Representing Farnsworth Catholic's LD contingent, Chip is his real—baptismal—name. Presumably there must be a St. Chip, therefore, celebrated somewhere in Catholic liturgy. Chip's father, who often judges, is notorious for always dropping Jasmine Maru.

Farnsworth Catholic

From Manhattan, Farnsworthians always dress similarly in blazers and chinos, a recognizable uniform of exception in the otherwise uniform debate sea of inclusion of dark gray and blue suits. To a degree Farnsworthians are interchangeable cogs in their school's attack on forensics, always running the same cases at blazing speed, leaving nothing behind but a whiff of incense and a hint of irony—they are Catholic to the core.

Coach: Haj L. Sworn

Debaters: Chip Dwindle

Fleece, Had

Six foot two with a linebacker's solidly muscular build, he is golden and blond and chiseled thickly from the WASPiest of blood stocks. Had is neither conceited nor pompous about his debating success, any more than he is conceited or pompous about his classical good looks or his consistent high honor roll average or his perfect 1600 SATs achieved in his junior year. His lack of conceit and pomposity have made him the most popular boy in his Toulouse-Lautrec class, another fact about which he is neither conceited nor pompous.

Fudless, Gloria

Originally known as Gloria What, the word that would best describe her first appearance in *Nostrum* is undead. Her hair is dyed black, and she wears black eye makeup and black lipstick. But her voice is deep and rich. She appears—representing Bisonette Tech—at her first NDL in a short black skirt, black tights, a black shirt and a black jacket; you can take the girl out of the night, but you can't take the night out of the girl.

Goldbaum, Griot

Nighten Day's smartest student, a senior who's already racked up perfect 800s on his SATs. He is short and chubby, with curly black hair sticking up from the top of his head like a tangle of holly bushes. A long mandarin mustache gives him an air of oriental mystery, in keeping with his being the only full-blooded Inuit not only in Nighten Day High School, but in the town, the county, and perhaps even the state (with the exception, of course, of his

immediate family). Griot is something of a mystic, and the number-one schematic interpreter on the circuit.

Hannah and Hughes

Hebrides High School's leading Duo team.

Hand, William

Originally half of the blond, blue-eyed Duo team of Hand and Brillig, William has recently come out as gay. (Welcome to the Bahamas!) As an aside, William can listen to the soundtrack of "Rent" twenty-four hours a day.

Hyphen-Emdash, Tilde

Star debater from the Algren-on-the-Beach, Massachusetts, team. She is a tall, dark-haired girl, in appearance somewhat resembling Morticia Addams, only slightly more funereal.

Jutmoll, Tarnish

The Nighten Day coach. A small man, barely five feet tall, with a white goatee below a wild range of similarly white hair on his little skull. One long white eyebrow stretches the entire ridge above his dark, probing eyes. He inevitably seems to have just come indoors

from a windstorm, and one might mistake him for a tiny wizard or a large elf if one is partial to fantasy universes. His main anchor to reality is his bow-leggedness, his knees seemingly far enough apart to allow the passage between them of a pair of Siamese twin toddlers clutching black market Sleep-and-Snore Ernie dolls. There is mystery in Jutmoll's past: the accident, Myra Moon ... Jutmoll teaches Social Studies, plus a half credit debate class. He has no family.

Juvaswami, Kumar

Nighten Day's Humorous Interper, who always seems to be in a world of his own. A senior.

King Ivy

The big Ivy League tournament in February.

Levi al-Chaim, Sister

Sister Levi is the forensics doyenne of Hebrides High School. She has been in the nun business for fifty years now.

Lewton, Val

The principal of Bisonette with a leering aspect that Amnea Nutmilk finds suspect.

Lloyd, Harold

Monsignor Lloyd is the principal of Veil of Ignorance.

Manhattan Lodestone

A magnet school. Home of the Original Vaganza Tournament (all other Tournaments are Extra), which includes a notorious LD Round Robin.

Coach: Mr. Lo Pat; Erstwhile asst, Lisa Torte

Debaters: Kalima Milak

Marcellus, Jon

Aka Binko, a motorcyclist with a severe five o'clock shadow, although five o'clock of which day is probably up for grabs. He could be seventeen, twenty-two or twenty-seven. A cigarette smoker, he someday wants to get a major-paying job for some heartless corporation, but first he has to graduate high school and go to college, and his bet is that "having debate on my resume will not be a bad idea."

Maru, Camelia

Shy younger sister of Jasmine Maru, and a potential Master of the Debate Universe from Nighten Day.

Maru, Jasmine

At five foot one and ninety-one pounds, she is tiny and dark and as Japanese as the Emperor. A Nighten Day LDer, serious like her younger sister Camelia, perhaps a bit too romantic for her own good.

Melvish

A novice LDer from Quilty Prep, rather unpopular with the team seniors.

Messerschmitt

The Messerschmitt Mess O' Forensics is the first major high school tournament of the school year, encompassing every forensic event. Messerschmitt College is in Miami, Florida.

Milak, Kalima

From Manhattan Lodestone, the toughest girl on the circuit, both in debating ability and life experience. She commutes over two hours on a variety of buses, subways and Conestoga wagons to get to her school every day from a foster home at the furthest reaches of Staten Island. Rumor has it that she is armed at all times, and she apparently wears a human ear as a necklace.

Moon, Myra

It will be a while before we're ready to tell this story....

Nighthen Day

The central team in *Nostrum*, but the budget is tight, and they may be dropping forensics at whatever point this year that the money runs out. The Snow Ball is Nighthen Day's own annual tournament, run every January, usually in the middle of a snowstorm.

Coach: Tarnish Jutmoll

The Team:

LD Varsity: Griot Goldbaum, Jasmine Maru, Trat Warner, Ellie DiBella

LD Novices: Camelia Maru, the Tarleton Twins, Hamlet P. Buglaroni

Speechies: Mark & Noah (extemp); David (Twas) Brillig and William Hand (Duo); Kumar Juvaswami (HI); Ashley Ambrose (OO); Cartier Diamond (DI); Mordred Prentice (forensic activity unknown)

Staff:

Raoul Walsh, principal; Margery Mooney, freshman English teacher; Harry Klein, teacher of Cinema Appreciation; Lav Bunbury, guidance counselor

Family and Such:

The Buglaronis ; Braun Saxon (Cartier's married ex-boyfriend); Myra Moon (the mystery of Tarnish Jutmoll's past)

Nutmilk, Amnea

The Editor of *Metro New York* magazine, this solid, frizzy-haired, recently divorced woman is now coaching a new team for her son's new suburban high school, Bisonette Technical.

Nutmilk, Chesney

A Master of the Debate Universe, formerly of Manhattan Lodestone, now with Bisonette Technical. In his freshman year at Lodestone he won his first two Combat of Conquerors limbs, and from that point on there was no looking back. As a sophomore he took King Ivy. As a junior he made it all the way to the finals of

the COC Tournament, and made it to semis in both the Catholic Forensic League Nationals and the Non-Catholic Forensic League Nationals.

Obomash, Seth B.

A man of many appetites. Six and a half feet tall, this African-American first appears in *Nostrum* as the coach of Veil of Ignorance, a history teacher, district NFL chairman, and a dyed-in-the-wool Policy-first maven.

O'Connor, Bill ("Invoice")

He begins as Bill, a slightly overweight policy debater, successful partner of Tara Petskin at Veil of Ignorance. Thanks to francogrammatification, and some other changes, he becomes Invoice O'Connor, among other things.

Padrewski, Warner (Worm)

Worm is a Bisonette sophomore recruited by Chesney Nutmilk. Dark, unshaven, disshevelled, he has a voice like a depressed turtle.

Pat, Mr. Lo

The wheelchair-bound coach of Manhattan Lodestone. A debate god from the get-go, he has been around since the invention of around. His disability is the result of an accident.

Petskin, Tara

A pair of glasses, which seem to cover every part of her face that isn't hidden by her long auburn hair. Tara, a senior, is a serious Polician from Veil of Ignorance, the partner of Bill O'Connor. In her earlier debate career she partnered with Haircut Puente.

Prentice, Mordred

Mordred, a Nighten Day sophomore, is the familiar of Cartier Diamond. He is not known to participate actively in forensics, but he always seems to be at forensics events. Chubby, short, unattractive, usually red-faced.

Puente, Shavena (Haircut)

Haircut, at five-foot-eleven, with a closely shaved head and a shadow of whiskers and an intense look in his eye, is the classic image of the anarchist. You could imagine him organizing Wobblies in the middle west of America or riding the train to Finland with Lenin or sipping Pernod with the students in 1968 Paris or generally causing serious mischief against The System from whatever platform he chose to preach from. One time partner

of Tara Petskin at Veil of Ignorance. Creator of the enormously successful www.haircutpuente.com web site.

Quilty Prep

Quilty Prep is a public high school allied with no university. Its founders considered the name Quilty High to be too banal for such a tony hamlet as Quilty, New York. Quilty Prep, on the other hand, wreaked of wealth and ivy and untold numbers of strings of polo ponies, if not exactly of common sense. So Quilty Prep it was. Quilty Prep has one of the largest forensics teams in the state, spread over LD and Speech but excluding Policy.

Ryan, Dan

The coach of Toulouse is a fiery Irishman of the Policy persuasion. Usually found in the tab room.

Santorelli, Bark

Bark is the original boyfriend of Gloria Fudless. He has long, stringy dark hair tied around at the back of his neck, where the head of a dragon tattoo can be seen riding up above his collar. Three gold earrings dangle from his right ear, and one from his left. He is a senior at Nighten Day, all of eighteen years old with a regular driver's license and his own ancient Buick.

Saxon, Braun and Brett

A young married couple. Brett is working toward her master's degree in archaeology, and is forced to travel often. *Nostrum* begins with Braun, offstage, having recently broken up with Cartier Diamond.

Sazo, Nip

Bowling fanatic and coach of the Algren-On-The-Beach, Massachusetts, team.

Screeds, Renate

Rail thin and older than justice, Ms. Screeds is the coach of Andrew Johnson.

Starbuck, Tom

Consiglieri of the Vitelli family. The lawyer, Starbuck, is a large, tall man, nearly completely bald, wearing oversized aviator-frame eyeglasses. His size and fitness and bronze skin exude health and vitality, while his small eyes behind the glasses add a definition of intelligence to his profile.

Sworn, Haj L.

The coach of Farnsworth Catholic.

Tarleton, Frick and Frank

The Tarleton Twins, Nighten Day LD Novices, often engage in conversations that only they consider any sort of communication.

Torte, Lisa

The not-unattractive, 22-year-old, five-foot tall Ms. Torte begins her *Nostrum* forensics career as an assistant to Mr. Lo Pat at Manhattan Lodestone. A former LD champ, she is a true believer in postmodernism, whatever that is, and possesses a coffee mug emblazoned with the slogan, “Narrative Isn’t.”

Toulouse Lautrec High School

A major forensics school with a stuffed monkey as a mascot. They’re the closest neighbors to Nighten Day

Coach: Dan Ryan

Debaters:

Policy: Fab Beeter and Kush Behar

LD: Had Fleece

Veil of Ignorance Catholic High School

Policy Rules at this school.

Coach: Seth B. Obomash (original)

Debaters: Tara Petskin & Bill O'Connor

Principal: The Reverend Monsignor Harold Lloyd

The Vitellis

Don Angelo is the father of Don Domenick. Don Proscenio is the son of Angelo and half-brother to Domenick. The newspapers refer to him as Proscenio (the “Whale”) Vitelli. The Whale lives a rather piscatory existence, while remaining a mammal, at least in name.

Walsh, Raoul

A dry old man with an eye patch, the principal of Nighten Day.

Warner, Trat

A Nighten Day senior, boyfriend of Ellie DiBella.