



SECOND QUARTER

AS LV (2020)

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Submissions: Any gentle wishing to submit articles, artwork, poetry, etc., to the Althing is invited to do so. Please send your work to the chronicler. All material in the Althing is copyrighted to the individual contributors. The chronicler reserves the right to edit, refuse, or reprint any submissions. The Althing's submission deadline is general the 15th of the last month of the quarter (March, June, September, December) – send your contributions to chronicler@debatablelands.org for inclusion in the next issue.



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Baron and Baroness

Hello Debatable Lands! Salve Accolens! Hello neighbors!

"We live in strange times." Fair warning: this will not be our typical letter of thanks and information. "We live in strange times." We have been saying that to each other, and to many of you over these past months, first as the pandemic swept across our lives, and social media feeds, and SCA experiences. Then, as the civil unrest continues, after the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others creates a boiling point and a watershed moment in our country's history.

Why would we mention the mundane world here? Because the historic events there affect us in our hobby, too. We have long felt and said that the SCA and our Barony is a safe space. A place where we can leave our modern worries at the metaphorical door, and be exactly who we want to be - warriors and artists and leaders and so much more... And you know, while that is true for many of us, to varying degrees, it's not true for everyone. We are but human. Humans who cannot leave parts of their very selves and souls at the SCA door. We acknowledge this. Now, we ask that we all acknowledge this.

So, what do we do? The SCA does not exist in a vacuum. We are not simply warriors, not simply artisans, not simply leaders, or archers, or builders, or any of the myriad paths that we have the opportunities to follow. The SCA is, at its very heart, based in chivalry and courtesy. It's in our highest Laws, our highest expectations of ourselves. Our Core Values. It's time we take a hard look at ourselves and what the true meaning of our values are. We must actively seek the ways that our systems, our processes, our words, and above all, our actions, inhibit equity in our game. Every single one of us, even we, your Baron and Baroness, have unconscious bias. We must all examine ourselves, our words, our actions, and the systems that we build and take part in. And above all, when someone tells us that something is wrong - that something in our great hobby is harming them - we must listen.



We will say this, unequivocally: in our Barony, we will no longer turn our heads away from intolerance. We are a people of compassion, reason, and acceptance. *You are welcome here*. Whatever your race, ethnicity, orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, religion, political beliefs, age, socio-economic status, or appearance, you are welcome here. The only thing that is not welcome is intolerance.

In this self-examination, we are not perfect. Let us be patient with ourselves, let us not rush to judgment, or alienation of friends and neighbors. We say again: we are but human. And humans are flawed. We ask that we all practice kindness, and compassion, and patience, and respect - as we navigate these current rough waters.

We know our words this time have far more gravitas that you may be used to hearing from us, and we know that we ask of us all things that may be difficult. Know this: we will continue to hold every last one of you in our hearts, and to strive to keep our vibrant, amazing Barony a fun and welcoming place.. We are here because you believe.

In Levitate et Caritate and Cheers
Baron Brandubh t Baroness Hilderun





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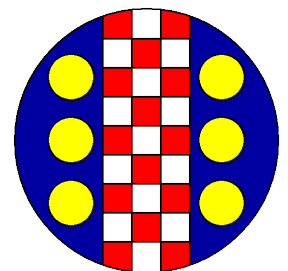
xchequer

Hello to everyone from far away. Thankfully for us, COVID is not negatively affecting our ability to operate. We have very few ongoing expenses, and we are in a position to deal with any of them for several years without income if we are not holding practices or events. Master Alaric has spent this time helping us to update the larder; getting rid of things that are no longer foodsafe or can hold allergens as well as increasing the utensils available to ensure there is less cross-contamination and there are enough serving utensils for every table at a feast. Our next step will be to engrave them to make sure they don't accidentally go home with the wrong person. If you have any questions about the way we are spending money, or would like more transparency in the barony's finances, please feel free to ask. At the moment, we are still hoping to have Aginocurt this October. Please be safe, and care for one another until we can be together again.

On Service

Lady Arthes of the Debatable Lands

Exchecquer





Good day Debatable Lands,

Unfortunately I don't have much to say this quarter. With us all stuck in exile there is not a lot happening in the SCA right now. What I do need to say is this:

Be kind to one another.

With recent happenings hopefully we can all remember that every statement and every action taken online effects the same people that you would be at events with. Everyone out there is still a person and not just a profile picture.

As always send all reports and content to chronicler@debatablelands.org

Drottin Skjoldbjorn

Chronicler Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands



SCA Statement of Core Values

In pursuing its mission, the SCA is committed to excellence in its programs, communications and activities and to

- act in accordance with the chivalric virtues of honor and service;
- value and respect the worth and dignity of all individuals;
- practice inclusiveness and respect pluralism and diversity;
- promote a safe and respectful environment for all SCA events;
- act with transparency, fairness, integrity and honesty;
- be a responsible steward of SCA resources; and,
- be committed to maintaining the trust of its members and participants.

It is the expectation of the SCA that its members and participants, in all events and activities of the SCA, will conduct themselves in accordance with these tenets.



I am Mistress Gytha Oggisdottir, the Kingdom Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer. A big part of my job description is education. Today, let's talk about implicit bias.

We are raised with certain messages being taught to us by our family, neighbors, and cultures. These messages and beliefs run so deep, to the level where they are just "how things are", where you might not even know they are there. And they happen to all of us as we grow up. Do these implicit biases make you actively racist, transphobic, homophobic, or ableist? Nope. That's the thing with implicit biases you can have them and be unconscious of them. You might truly believe that you are not prejudiced, and you can believe in equality for everyone and still show small behaviors that are coming from these hidden, implicit biases. People can consider themselves anti-discrimination and still have old learned hidden biases.

Having these implicit biases does not mean that one is a bad person. However, if one wants to work on them and not cause harm to others, it means that they have to constantly look at and work on behaviors that come from this place, whether those behaviors are conscious or unconscious. Right now, in our Kingdom, country, and world, there are deep emotions and many people are really looking at biases (hidden and open) and discrimination. It is a thing which is desperately needed.

We all have implicit bias, but this is a thing that we can work on, and a place we can better ourselves. I want to stress that education is how we work on these, within ourselves and for others. We all need to explore inside ourselves for stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination, and help educate others as well.

If you see others showing some of these manifestations of implicit bias, look at them as a whole person, and what you know about them. Then help to educate them, or point them to a place to educate themselves. This is how we will strengthen our society and become what we strive to become, by bettering ourselves and helping others on their own path to the extent we are able. The SCA DEI website is a great jumping off place to learn about implicit bias – <https://www.sca.org/dei-office/dei-resources/>.

Or contact me by email – ae.dei@aethelmearc.org



From the Society Seneschal

I want to reiterate a statement my predecessor made a few years ago on the issue of doxxing any SCA participant. I want you to alert all of your officers (Kingdom and local group officers) that doxxing (i.e. posting personal information/contact information/political information/employment information about individuals) is a violation of the SCA Code of Conduct and the Anti-Bullying and Harassment policy.

Doxxing is also against the law in a number of jurisdictions. Furthermore, doxxing may likewise be actionable as an Invasion of Privacy which may result in a civil suit and monetary damages. Please convey to all of your officers—not only seneschals—at both the Kingdom and local group level that any officer of the SCA found to be doxxing is subject to termination from their office. I am instructing all Kingdom Seneschals and their deputies to obtain screenshots of instances of doxxing by any participant as this cannot be tolerated and offenders are subject to being sanctioned for this behavior.

Everyone needs to contemplate the consequences of their actions. I know that there is a lot of anger and frustration over recent events. However, as officers and members of the SCA, we must act in accordance with the very foundations of this organization: courtesy, honor, chivalry and respect.

We are all held to the standards of the Society. If there are allegations that any member took part in doxxing, that behavior will be reviewed for possible sanction against the participants. Officers have a responsibility to be leaders—to be part of a solution and not part of the problem, even when the fog of division, discord and blame makes it hard to see what is truly important to us all.

It is times like these when we need to pull together, rally around what is good about our Society and lead by example. Even when the world appears bereft of courtesy, honor, chivalry and respect, we need to be an example of these virtues.

Respectfully,

Mike Watkins

Society Seneschal



From the Laurel Queen of Arms with Regard to Offensive Names and Armorial Devices

From Juliana de Luna, Laurel Queen of Arms, greetings to all those to whom these presents come.

Offensive Names and the Current Situation

As you doubtless know, a great deal of concern has been expressed about the fact that Wolfgang von Sachsenhausen, a name registered in 2007, included reference both to a Nazi concentration camp and a scientist who did experiments there. We wish to share with you, so that you can share with your populace, an explanation of how this name was registered and a general road map of what the Laurel Office has been working on since we became aware of the issue in the morning of Saturday, June 6, 2020.

How this name was registered:

The Standards for Evaluation of Names and Armory (“SENA”) ban the registration of names that are offensive. Specifically:

No name that is offensive to a large segment of members of the SCA or the general public will be registered. Offense is a modern concept; just because a name was used in period does not mean that it is not offensive to the modern observer. Offense returns are rare because the bar for determining offensiveness is quite high; it has not been unusual for years to pass between returns for offense.

Offense is not dependent on intent. The fact that a submitter did not intend to be offensive is not relevant. The standard is whether a large segment of the SCA or the general public would be offended.

In 2007, we were not as attuned to the problems of white supremacy in the SCA as we are today. At that time, we used a different set of rules, but the rules about offensiveness were substantially the same.

The people making decisions on names and armory are not experts in every topic that arises. For that reason, we rely heavily on commentary from our array of volunteer heralds from every Kingdom. In this particular case, no one at the Society level identified the link between this name and the concentration camp in commentary, so the issue was not considered at the time. I was a commenter at that time and can say that we rarely looked actively for such issues, assuming that submissions of hate were a thing of the past.

Now, in 2020, we are more alert to the problems of white supremacy and racism in the Society, as are our commenters. In addition, there is vastly more information available to allow us to identify potentially problematic names. We make a regular practice of checking Google and other available resources, such as the databases of white supremacist images and lists of offensive racial terminology, when making decisions. Offensive racial epithets such as the Gypsy have been banned, as have certain depictions of the Celtic or Norse crosses that are commonly used by hate groups.



What has the Laurel Office been doing?

Since becoming aware of the issue, the Laurel Office has been working on several projects:

- (1) We have prepared a report to the Board of Directors discussing the issue, our plans for moving forward, and the calls for revocation of this person's registration (something that is regulated by Corpora rather than the Laurel office).
- (2) We have prepared and will shortly be issuing a Palimpsest Letter for commentary adding a provision to SENA banning names that are morally offensive and proposing a multi-factor test for moral offensiveness.
- (3) We have researched and prepared a proposal for how to handle names that incorporate place names of concentration camps, which will appear in an upcoming Cover Letter.
- (4) On the April 2020 Cover Letter, we will be announcing a new policy allowing free changes of names and armory for people whose registered elements are offensive. For example, some period armorial motifs have been co-opted by hate groups in the years since they were originally registered. Likewise, the phrase the Gypsy once had a very different popular meaning, but is now considered hate speech by the Roma people and the United Nations. People who now find themselves with inadvertently offensive names may wish to change them and we are removing one barrier to doing so.
- (5) Pelican Queen of Arms is forming a working group to identify other potential red flags in names so that we can maintain a list of problematic name elements going forward. Although Pelican and her staff have been doing this same work behind the scenes for several years, we now are actively reaching out to people who are not presently commenting to request their assistance.

What can people do?

- (1) Be patient. Many of the things we are trying to do require substantial research time or input from the Board of Directors.
- (2) Become involved in researching and commenting on names and armory in OSCAR. The Sovereigns are not experts in every single area of language, history or armory. We need and rely on commentary from experts in a wide variety of fields. We remain particularly in need of people with expertise in languages and cultures outside of Europe.
- (3) Become involved in researching and writing articles to help educate people on period names or armorial motifs that have problematic modern connotations.

Julia Smith/Juliana de Luna

Laurel Queen of Arms

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