

A Global Sensemaking Initiative To Reimagine Futures For The Collective Good “Catching Our Collective Breath”

Grey Swan Guild returns to the “redrawing table” to collectively reimagine shared futures.

Grey Swan Guild first formed to provide every great thinker across the globe a platform – to interconnect, to consider the past and present, and to share visions of the future. Grey Swan Guild seeks submissions to drive deeper, richer storytelling and to inform its research and Sensemaking with unique ideas to serve the collective good. You have a stake in your own future. Have your say in our collective futures.





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Wave II Theme: “Catching Our Collective Breath”

Grey Swan Guild is a global collective – a virtual organization which formed in early 2020.

The diverse group of leaders and agents for positive change first came together to help to make sense of the world during a pandemic. We refer to such big events as “Grey Swans”.

- *We refer to our overall work together as “Sensemaking”. This includes primary research.*
- *A “Wave” means content production cycle. Wave I focused on “Emergent Perspectives”.*
- *Wave II will continue to highlight emergent perspectives from Members and contributors.*

In Wave I, we sourced Point-Of-View (POV) essays from contributors. We are asking for more POV essays from more contributors in Wave II. We also seek new types of content.

The top focus for Wave II is around issues we see as problems, breakdowns, or obstacles. In support of this focus, we are asking YOU to identify an issue you think is problematic. We hope that you will research your issue, write a POV essay about it, and contribute it.

Apolitical – Aspirational – Ambitious – Activated

Grey Swan Guild is not a politicized organization. The Guild aspires to influence policy and progress. Our objective is to inform and influence better futures for people and planet.

- *Grey Swan Guild promotes inclusion and diversity. Our Members and audience are global.*
- *Writing about big issues and exploring problems toward imagining solutions will expose “political” concerns. Focus on policy issues and systems, not on political entities nor actors.*
- *WAVE II is an ambitious plan. We ask for insightful contributions from ambitious people.*
- *We aspire to profile unique, engaging storylines from key problems toward new futures.*
- *Deeper, richer storytelling is our shared growth goal for Wave II. We support this goal by accepting new content formats: 3-part POV Series; Creative Interpretation; visual media.*

YOU are ready to contribute! Think and Feel deeply. Enrich our futures with your story.

2020 has been one of the most challenging years for humanity at large in recent memory.

Rapid change, high uncertainty, continual stress. It can all be overwhelming.



We must catch our collective breath.

Understanding Grey Swan Guild's Sensemaking Lenses

As an emergent Sensemaking collective, Grey Swan Guild employs a system of both "Thinking" and "Feeling" lenses. The system enables insights classification.

Contributors of several types of unique "Point-Of-View" (POV) content to The Guild's knowledge base understand these lenses and advise which ones apply. Our Editorial Board and Research, Sensemaking, and Intelligence (RSI) Team will also use this system to gain insights from each POV and publish it accordingly. Below are the "Thinking Lenses" Grey Swan Guild uses to make sense of its content and data. Which of these "disconnects" reflect your own Point-Of-View?

The ecological disconnect:

We consume resources at 1.5 times the regeneration capacity of planet earth because of a mismatch between the unlimited growth imperative and the finite resources of the planet. As a consequence, we are hitting the "limits to growth," as the title of the Club of Rome study famously suggested, calling for a better way to preserve increasingly scarce resources.

The financial disconnect:

Foreign exchange transactions of US\$1.5 quadrillion (1,500 trillion) dwarf international trade of US\$20 trillion (less than 1.4 percent of all foreign exchange transactions). This disconnect is manifest in the decoupling of the financial economy from the "real" economy. As a consequence, we are increasingly hitting the "limits to speculation."

The leadership disconnect:

We collectively create results that nobody wants because decision-makers are increasingly disconnected from the people affected by their decisions. As a consequence, we are hitting the "limits to leadership"—that is, the limits to traditional top-down leadership that works through the mechanisms of institutional silos.



The governance disconnect:

As a global community we are unable to address the most pressing problems of our time because the coordination mechanisms are decoupled from the crisis of common goods. Because markets can't fix the problem of the commons, we are increasingly hitting the "limits to competition." We need to redraw the boundary between cooperation and competition by introducing, for example, pre-market areas of collaboration that enable innovation at the scale of the whole system.

The income and wealth disconnect:

The top 1% of the world's population own more than the bottom 90%, resulting from wealth concentration in one part of society and unmet basic needs in another. As a consequence, we are reaching dangerous levels of inequality, as we discuss in more detail below. This calls for a better realization of basic human rights through a rebalancing of the economic playing field.

The technology disconnect:

We respond to societal issues with quick technical fixes that address symptoms rather than systemic solutions. As a consequence, we are hitting the "limits to symptom-focused fixes"—that is, limits to solutions that respond to problems with more technological gadgets rather than by addressing the root causes.

The consumerism disconnect:

Greater material consumption does not lead to increased health and well-being. As a consequence, we are increasingly hitting the "limits to consumerism," a problem that calls for reconnecting the economic process with the deeper sources of happiness and well-being.

The ownership disconnect:

We face massive overuse of scarce resources, manifesting the decoupling of current ownership forms from the best societal use of scarce assets, such as our ecological commons. As a consequence, we are increasingly hitting the "limits to traditional property rights." This calls for a possible third category of commons-based property rights that would better protect the interest of future generations and the planet.



Below are the “Feeling Lenses” Grey Swan Guild uses to make sense of its content.

Which reflect your own Point-Of-View?

LIVE

Our lives are forever affected. How and in what ways? Are these changes to how we live our lives permanent or not? These questions require ongoing, deep exploration forward.

LOVE

The 2020 pandemic has re-shifted our focuses to what are truly important to us – our families, local society, global society, the Earth, humanity – to LOVE.

LEARN

The only way to fully use the power of creativity is to enter with a beginner’s mind - to unlearn and relearn into our shared emergent and unknown futures.

LEAD

Leadership will be essential to how we integrate the learnings from this pandemic. If we do not find new ways to lead, will the unlimited outcomes in the future be optimal?

LIMINAL

Liminal refers to the space between two worlds. As we transition through the pandemic, we transform previously held understandings about ourselves and the world. Like a caterpillar in its chrysalis, we emerge with a new vision, with new resilience, and with new superpowers.

- *How do we experience the ambiguity and disorientation as we move between the old and the new?*
- *How do we mediate the tension of the opposites, between how things were and how they’re becoming?*
- *What symbols, imagery, fantasies, and shadows arise from our unconscious, to inform us and to guide us through this liminal space?*



What is a Point-Of-View (POV) Essay?

We provide great thinkers and leaders in the world a platform to connect together, to consider the past and present, to share visions of the future. The strength of our work is the diversity of insights from our contributors. A Point-Of-View (POV) essay is the primary source of content from which we garner diverse insights, perspectives, and ideas from around the world.

A POV is an essay of prescribed lengths to share unique perspectives on issues and experiences, with a particular focus on influencing our futures. Your POV should reflect your own experience, expertise, interests, and ideas. It should reflect your own unique voice and focus on what matters to you.

Point-Of-View (POV) Essay Writing Tips

Some key advice to help you best express your insights and ideas to the world at large

Write from your heart

- Write about what matters to You.
- Topic can be global or local in focus.
- Focus on the current issue worth solving or dissolving.

Use your mind best

- Apply your most critical thinking.
- Validate your POV with evidence.
- Find and share secondary sources.

Make it compelling

- Demonstrate why this issue matters.
- Tell your story in your unique voice.
- Imagine 1,000s will read your story.



Keep in mind:

1. Please cite your research and include all your research sources/links at the end of your essay.
2. Include with POV submission a supporting image - personal or for open usage e.g. from unsplash.com.
3. Include with POV submission two photographs of yourself: 1. square headshot 400px 2. 225px x 175px

When you submit a POV essay, you will suggest which Thinking and Feeling Lens best applies. If more than one of each applies, indicate so.

Your POV will be reviewed by our Editorial Board. It may be edited for clarity or accuracy. If your submission meets the Grey Swan Guild's values and editorial standards, it will be published to our website within 14 days of receipt — you will be notified when your essay is published.

Many POV submissions, in whole or in part, will also be included in our themed publications / products during our varied sensemaking, events and production cycles. Grey Swan Guild reserves the right not to publish.

SUBMIT all POV essay contributions for WAVE II by December 8, 2020.

Overview of WAVE II Point-Of-View (POV) Serial Essay

First, we #reVIEW. Next, we #reNEW. Finally, we #reDO.

Our ambitious plan for WAVE II content and our productions focuses on our storytelling.

- *The foundation of the plan is the addition of Serial Point-Of-View (POV) Essays format.*
- *The consistent format starts with problem identification toward proposing solutions.*
- *The structure for a POV Series is prescribed. Contributors decide which story to write.*

Contributors will first write their #reVIEW POV; identifies the issue for their full series.



Serial Point-Of-View (POV) Essay Structure

Each POV Essay in your series should be written as 450-500 words. Submit each when finished.

POV Essay 1: #reVIEW

- Identify a current issue worth solving (a problem, breakdown, or obstacle).
- Write about what matters most to You.
- Your issue can be global or local in focus.
- Issue can predate pandemic or be new.

POV Essay 2: #reNEW

- Imagine what an ideal future looks like (in the context of your issue in POV #1).
- You do not need to have all the answers.
- Make your case, even if not yet feasible.

POV Essay 3: #reDO

- Focus on viable solutions in the near term (address your issue with 1+ real solutions).
- Make the case for the change you propose.
- Ideas include policies, processes, programs, products, new ways to work and live, etc.

Keep in mind:

1. Please cite your research and include all your research sources/links at the end of your essay.
2. Include with POV submission a supporting image - personal or for open usage e.g. from unsplash.com.



3. Include with POV submission two photographs of yourself: 1. square headshot 400px 2. 225px x 175px

When you submit a POV essay, you will suggest which Thinking and Feeling Lens best applies. If more than one of each applies, indicate so.

Your POV will be reviewed by our Editorial Board. It may be edited for clarity or accuracy. If your submission meets the Grey Swan Guild's values and editorial standards, it will be published to our website — you will be notified when your essay is published.

Many POV submissions, in whole or in part, will also be included in our themed publications / products during our varied sensemaking, events and production cycles. Grey Swan Guild reserves the right not to publish.

SUBMIT all POV essay contributions for WAVE II by December 8, 2020.

Overview of WAVE II “Creative Interpretation” Submissions

For WAVE II, we are seeking additional content types and formats.

We offer all contributors this platform to submit new creative and alternative content – beyond written Point-of-View (POV) essays.

Submit one or more creative interpretations of your perspective, insights or observations. This might take the form of a poem, creative nonfiction, future fiction, or other prose, artwork, photo, video or images (as examples). It can also be a shorter-form or flash commentary statement.

Tips for Submitting “Creative Interpretations” Content:

- Video, audio and other media files will need to be 1 TB or less in size.
- Each contributor may submit these types of content as often as desired.
- Be sure to only submit your personal content or that licensed for reuse.



Post-submission Process, Content Uses, Intake Schedule

When you submit a POV essay, you will suggest which Thinking and Feeling Lens best applies. If more than one of each applies, indicate so.

Your POV will be reviewed by our Editorial Board. It may be edited for clarity or accuracy. If your submission meets the Grey Swan Guild's values and editorial standards, it will be published to our website within 14 days of receipt — you will be notified when your essay is published.

Many POV submissions, in whole or in part, will also be included in our themed publications / products during our varied sensemaking, events and production cycles. Grey Swan Guild reserves the right not to publish.

“Creative Interpretation” submissions will be reviewed and usages decided.

Content Submissions Schedule and Deadlines:

SUBMIT every POV essay contribution for WAVE II by December 8, 2020.

SUBMIT each “Creative Interpretation” for WAVE II by December 8, 2020.

Raise Your Hand. Raise Your Voice. Share Your Point-Of-View.

Why should YOU contribute to Grey Swan Guild?

2020 has presented us all with reasons to evaluate what matters most to each of us. As we catch our collective breath and live our lives in the space between the known past and the unknowable future, we seek purpose. We know we will need to change ourselves as we embrace a world of change. We think about what our own future will be, how we must change, how we can actively influence a new era and create impact.

Grey Swan Guild is your platform and community to share your insights about our collective futures. It is your portal to a diverse world of brilliant people and brilliant ideas. This is your opportunity to be recognized as a thought leader around the world. We look forward to your contribution!