James Boeckmann
Advisor: Speer Morgan

“The Son of Scarlett Isabelle Holmes--formerly Scarlett Isabelle Holmström” and “Two Brothers” (fiction)

“Kafka's Experimental Dialogue and the Struggle for Agency in The Castle” (critical essay)

The heart of this project is a collection of two works of fiction both meant to interrogate the way family affects the individual and vice versa. I intend for each story to be capable of standing alone while also able to inform the reading of the other. An essay on The Castle, by Franz Kafka, who has been a major influence on my own fiction and scholarship, introduces the stories. The essay eschews traditional methods of Kafka scholarship and instead applies pragmatic theory (as in the subfield of language philosophy having nothing to do with the ethical stance of similar name) to dialogue in order to offer a different take on the central problem approached by Kafka’s work—the agency of his protagonists—which is a problem that informs the stories in the collection as well in both explicit and implicit ways.