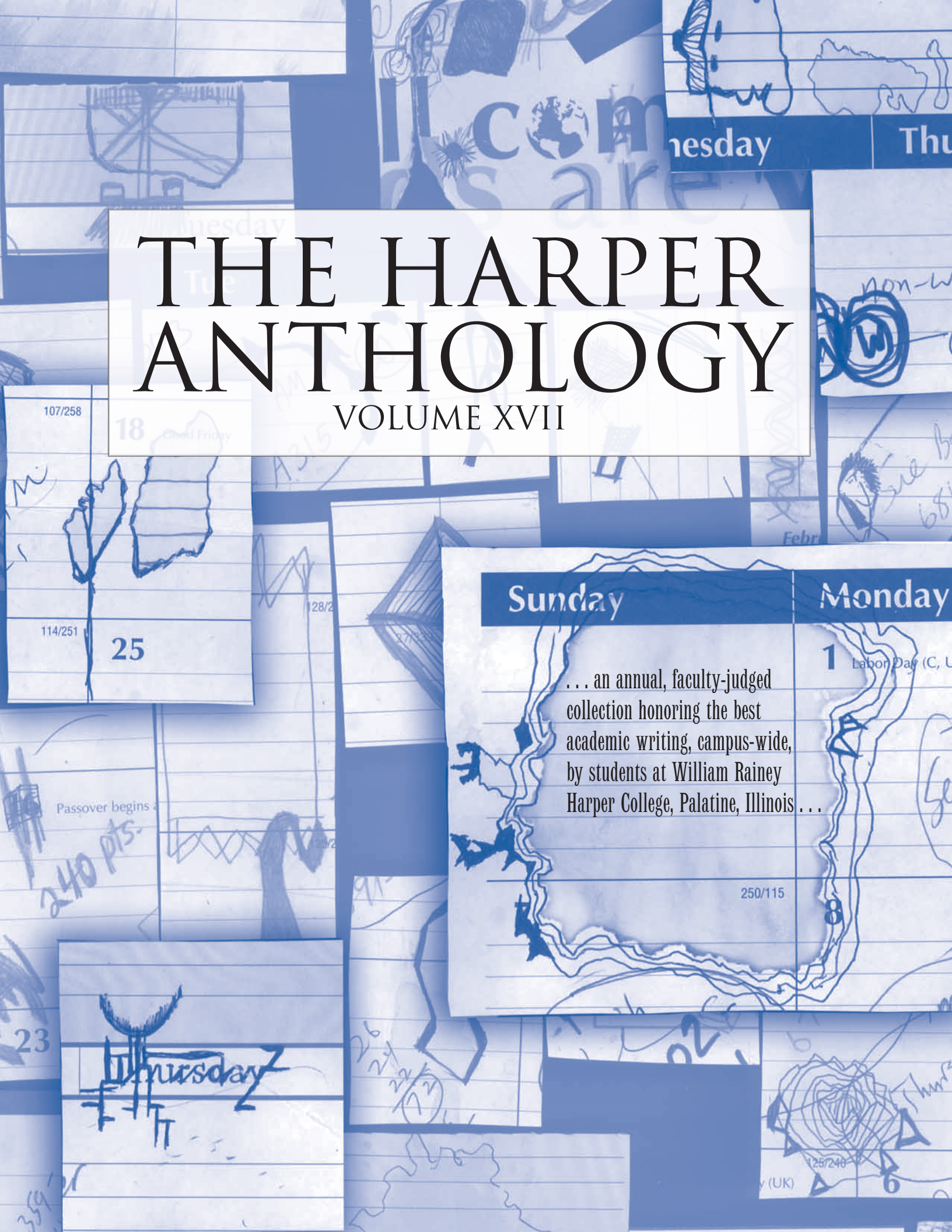

THE HARPER ANTHOLOGY

VOLUME XVII

. . . an annual, faculty-judged collection honoring the best academic writing, campus-wide, by students at William Rainey Harper College, Palatine, Illinois . . .

STUDENT WRITERS

Peter Andreou
Linda Bennett
Laura Brennan
Margaret Brigham
Jonathan Chiou
Julie Darms
Jaclyn DeRose
Matt Gebhardt
Halina Gil-Darlak
Mary Greener
Ellie Haberl
Jenn Heineman
Kate Hendrickson
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Anka Koprivec
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Kiyoko Shindo
Cara Spagnolo
Monika Staszel
Brianna Stoll
Dan Thomas
Matthew Thomas
John Tiesch
Kyle Tobin
Gloria Ufheil
Laurel Waller
Pete Whyte
Kaylyne Wiser
Shelley Zeiger

THE HARPER ANTHOLOGY

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VOLUME XVII
2005

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER COLLEGE

Submission Information

Deadlines

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Thursday, December 22, 2005

Submission deadline, 2007 issue:
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To Submit a Student's Manuscript:
Complete the submission forms included in the back of this issue, or available at the "Publications" tab of the Harper College English Department website:

www.harpercollege.edu/libarts/eng/dept.

Send manuscripts (hard copy and disk) along with submission forms by campus mail to Kris Piepenburg, English Department, Liberal Arts Division, or send materials by e-mail: kpiepenb@harpercollege.edu.

Manuscript Evaluation and Publication

Student manuscripts are read by the Harper Anthology committee once a year, during the winter break. Faculty and students are notified of manuscript acceptance and upcoming publication in February. Printing takes place in July and August, and a free contributor's copy of the publication is mailed to each student writer in September.

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Foreword: Harper Students on Writing

Linda Bennett

Writing is something that I have always enjoyed ever since I was a child. What intrigues me most about writing is the potential that it allows. A successful writer reaches his or her audience and makes its members take notice. Through the writer's words, he or she has the potential to touch the minds and hearts of the readers, to raise societal awareness, to bring light to subjects often ignored, and even to influence and shape public policy. To think that it all starts with just one person with a pen and tablet of paper or the keyboard of a computer is something that I just find fascinating.

Just as I have struggled with writing this statement, I too often struggle with my writing – trying to find just the right words – trying to take hold of the thoughts that are floating through my mind and transform them into a well-written piece of art. To me that is what writing is – a unique art. It is a sharing of one's self and a peek inside one's soul. In a society that has become so standardized in so many ways, writing, like any other art, cannot be standardized. Every writer is unique in his or her writing. No computer can do it for the writer. No standard methods can simply be replicated. Writing is a form of self-reflection – a calling to speak out and a willingness to share. As a writer, it can take you deep within the very essence of your soul—which when you write, you lay before your readers—willing to take that risk, willing to be vulnerable, and willing to allow others to see inside your soul.

When I wrote "Family Day at the Racetrack" I did just that. I reached within the recess of my mind, my memories, and my feelings, and I placed myself back in time to the day of that event. Every description and word was written through my eyes as a child, with myself as an adult guiding the words into sentences and paragraphs. Although it was difficult to do at times, I never allowed the adult in me to interfere with the words, thoughts, and feelings of the child. Placing myself back into that space was painful at times, but I never allowed that to censor my words or to interfere with my thoughts. It was a challenge to write a narrative that indirectly conveys a deeper message, but once I started it seemed to come naturally. The key was to go back in time and feel, think, and see through the eyes of the child that I was.

I have had people who are close to me read my story and find it difficult to complete because it evoked strong feelings of sadness and/or anger in them. While I feel bad to make anyone feel sad or upset, I also realize that I must have achieved the goal of the narrative, which was to elicit a response from my readers, not by telling them how to feel, but simply by telling my story. It is my hope that anyone who reads this story can also move beyond the feelings it may provoke, much in the same way that I did, so that the message of the story comes through.

Jaclyn DeRose

I'm a firm believer that writers write best when they write what they know. Whether it is a personal essay or an academic paper, writing is essentially a performance of self. I've always found that my very best writing, no matter what the assignment, includes elements of myself.

I've been writing for years. To me, it is the ultimate outlet for self-expression and one that has played a vital role in who I am and who I want to be. Just as a person is ever-evolving, I think it's important for writers to remember that the first draft is written on paper, not in stone. I've recently learned the value of the drafting and revision process and discovered that time away from a piece is as vital as time with it—you have the benefit of a clearer mind and perspective.

I am currently studying to be a high school English teacher and have spent a lot of time thinking about approaches to teaching writing. Other than knowing the mechanics, I've decided the best writing is the product of a creative process all one's own.

Miriam Hymes

In my own personal experience, writing isn't about flowery expressions and fancy vocabulary; it's about simple and honest expression of thoughts and emotions. Words have never come easier than when I'm writing a friend or making quirky observations on ordinary life. Yet, I also enjoy academic writing. Nothing is more rewarding than a well written work that conveys just the right message or feeling, a work that opens minds, shares information, or persuades. When we write we are able to express ourselves in more depth, detail, purity and permanence than simple spoken words. Writing is an art we are all capable of, if we only take the time to stop and think.

Kiyoko Shindo

Since English is not my native language, writing in English is a struggle. Writing correct grammar is the starting point to writing an essay; however, grammar is tricky. It seems like there is no firm rule in grammar. Of course, I understand that language is ambiguous and changing with time. In my native language, I love the ambiguity and have the scope to enjoy it. But in English, it just brings me confusion. Also, choosing words is a hard task. There are several English equivalents for a word, and the meanings of a word vary according to the context. I have to be very careful to choose words, or I fail to express my thoughts. However,

to write a clear, grammatically correct essay is not my only goal. Instead, I am grasping; I want my writing to have my voice. I want the readers to see my personality through my writing. To achieve this task, I have to use my imagination. I always imagine how my sentences sound to native English speakers, and how they feel about them. It is frustrating that I can never read my writing as the native speakers do. There may be a gap between my feelings and my English writing. To bridge this gap is my next task of writing.

Kris Piepenburg: Editor's Comment

It is extremely heartening to read these commentaries from these four writers, as I had begun, recently, to doubt the efficiency and effectiveness of writing as a communications medium, and to question the value of the act of writing itself. Part of this doubt stems from the fact that *so much* writing is produced by the human community, and seemingly, so little of it is read and so little of it has any impact. There are hundreds of thousands of authors, easily, being published in this country alone, yet I imagine that many of these authors have actual reading publics of fewer than 100 souls.

That, however, as these four writers point out, should not turn us away from writing, or from reading. The sincerity and seriousness with which these writers discuss their ideas about writing have convinced me again that this art is indeed a most important aspect of humanity. To reach an audience, to touch a mind or a heart—this is common to all of the arts and much of everyday interaction, and I can't think what might be more important in the human experience, with the possible exception of the serious aims of raising societal awareness or influencing public policy. This is *not* common to all of the arts and it is *not* the goal of much everyday interaction, yet these important efforts happen often through the unique art of writing—for a good example of this, see Amanda Nielsen's paper about the plans for the World Trade Center site on page 85 of this volume. (Thank you, Kurt Neumann, for describing the assignment so beautifully: "Write a 750- to 1,000-word essay that is *relevant and significant.*")

Writing, as all four of these students point out, is a performance of self, involving self-reflection and struggle with issues such as accuracy of expression and maintenance of personal voice. I would add that this performance of self, the organization of thought into language for others to think about, is a demanding but also exhilarating experience, as I have discovered again in my chaotic composing and editing of this response. The search for the clear expression of meaning in writing, or especially, the discovery of meaning as the writing progresses, can be as rewarding as climbing an unfamiliar mountain or walking a lost, unfamiliar trail, to a natural end, and then back again. The unexpected surprises add the most enjoyment to all of these endeavors, and for the reader of writing, these surprises happen, as well. As student Miriam Hymes puts it on the previous page, "Nothing is more rewarding than a well written work that conveys just the right message or feeling, a work that opens minds. . . ."

Yet, we have to have *time*, to be able to write and to read. This might be where my general malaise about the value of writing in the world began. I have not had or made time, to read or write significantly, for quite a while—I have been too busy working and living. So, I am very glad that I have had the time to actually read and think about the comments of these students, and all of the papers included in this volume, and I am extremely glad to have had the opportunity to write these comments. When I read something significant, my spirit expands. When I think and write, I feel my spirit returning to me, as a musician's spirit returns in the act of performance. I believe that the readers of this volume, however few there might be, will be moved in similar directions.

Acknowledgments

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What the Secret Sharer Shares

Peter Andreou
Course: Literature 115 (Fiction)
Instructor: Kurt Neumann

Assignment:
Write a short research essay relevant to one or two of the stories we have read. Consult a minimum of five secondary sources.

More often than not, in order for a story to be successful in connecting with an audience, it must also have a main character for that audience to identify with. In some stories, this character might be self-righteous and all-knowing, a man or woman overflowing with confidence and a strong sense of self: the traditional hero. However, other stories may employ a distinctly different character, no less identifiable, who connects with another part of the human psyche; in essence, this character portrays the more realistic part of humanity. This technique employs a more conflicted character, unsure of him- or herself and even more unsure of others. With such a character, more analysis is needed in order to bring about an understanding of the thoughts, motives, and feelings of this character. To better examine all of these, a psychological approach is necessary to fully explore the inner workings of a complex character. If we are attempting to grasp the full significance of the captain from "The Secret Sharer," we must analyze him psychologically. We must take what he says and what he does and try to assess the captain and explore possible reasons for his creating an alter ego, played by the mysterious Legatt. According to Owen Knowles in *The Oxford Companion to Conrad*, "As a story involving covert doubles, it ["The Secret Sharer"] has proved particularly amenable to psychological approaches" (337). I will investigate with this approach by "asking the basic question, 'why has this behavior occurred' and try[ing] to get at the root conflict or confusion the character might have" (*Short Fiction: Classic and Contemporary* 1333). This is the psychological approach in a nutshell, and it will be used not as an end unto itself, because it is simply too open-ended for a short essay, but instead it will be used as an aid to support a focused main idea. I will pursue this point by first observing the captain's psyche and emotions, then I will provide evidence that Legatt, the captain's other self aboard the ship, could be either a real person who has a profound effect on the captain's personality, or more likely that he is an imaginary self that the captain creates in order to deal with his new surroundings; lastly, I will focus on what Legatt represents as a part of the captain. By taking these steps, we can attempt to understand that there is a transformation in the captain by the end of the story, specifically that his ego has experienced a journey to fullness and self-sufficiency.

Before figuring out who or what Legatt is, we should first examine the captain from the psychological point of view, because the key to gaining an understanding of the story is through the journey of the humble captain. What is it exactly that causes the captain to have such a need for an alter ego? From the moment he steps aboard his new command, a ship called *The Sephora*, he is plagued by insecurities. This is understandable because he "had been appointed to the command only a fortnight before. Neither did (he) know much of the hands forward. All these people had been together for eighteen months or so and (his) position was that of the only stranger on board" (Conrad 250). This is a hard situation for anyone to have to go through, especially hard for someone as sensitive as the captain. People are by nature lovers of familiarity, and have a tendency in their loneliness to feel alone in a gigantic sea. In a sour twist, the captain is really alone at sea, which only compounds his feelings of loneliness. The captain himself goes on to say, "I mention this because it has some bearing on what is to follow" (250). This foreshadowing lays a foundation for the main conflict within the captain and displays his motivation for creating an alter ego. Aside from being alone, he is also thrown in with a completely unfamiliar group of people. Truly, this was

the greatest obstacle for the captain's psyche, for he says "but what I felt most was my being a stranger to the ship; and if truth be told, I was somewhat a stranger to myself" (250). John Graver, in *Conrad's Short Fiction* comments, "A stranger both to his ship and himself, the narrator wonders whether he will measure up to the ideal conception of one's own personality every man sets up for himself" (153). So we see that the captain is a stranger in two ways, both on the social level and the personal level. The former exacerbates the latter, which is of the most importance. He is confronted with the problem of attempting to gain others' confidence when he has no confidence in himself. He needs support somehow from somewhere. By creating an alter ego, he can share and discuss things he would otherwise be unable to, thereby strengthening him for the voyage he must make, both figuratively and literally. There is a line early on in the story in which the captain remarks, "While I lingered yet, my hand resting lightly on my ship's rail as if on the shoulder of a trusted friend" (250). In essence, the captain is in need of a companion, real or imagined, to see him through stormy weather. This is why, when a stranger is in hiding from the law after a charge of murder and he desperately needs asylum, the captain is more than willing to oblige.

Enter Legatt. What is he? Is he an apparition or a flesh and blood man? Is he a figment of the captain's strained imagination, or a kindred spirit, or is he all of the above? It is hard to be sure because we only receive information about him from one source: the captain, who narrates his own story. This complicates the story because the reader cannot altogether trust the captain's account of events as they could with an omniscient narrator. According to Owen Knowles, "The story is told by the Captain in the first person, and some critics have deemed his account unreliable, and consider Legatt a projection of his own madness" (337). Looking upon the state that the captain is in, this is a very plausible explanation. If the captain is in a fragile emotional state, then he might be imagining the existence of Legatt. Resting on this assumption, we need to ask what role Legatt plays in this story. Why is he important to the captain's psychological make-up? To answer this, we need to investigate the character of Legatt more closely. The way Legatt came to speak to the captain in the first place is important. According to R.W Stallman in *The Art of Joseph Conrad*, "what impelled Legatt to swim out to the ship was his loneliness ["I wanted to be seen, to talk with somebody before I went out"], and the same impulse motivates the captain and prompts him to greet the newcomer hospitably" (279). The captain, in his loneliness, is projecting that feeling onto another being created by his own psychosis. He is desperate to share a common thought or feeling with someone, and since no one on the ship can oblige, he will create someone to share with: a secret sharer. The eager captain receives Legatt in earnest, never once questioning the stranger's motives. Right away, the captain takes Leggatt in and treats him as a friend. The captain says, "He appealed to me as if our experiences had been as identical as our clothes" (Conrad 254). That is a strange thing for the captain to have said about someone he had just met. Stallman accounts for these actions by observing that "Each feels that he is the only stranger on board, and each feels that he, as it were, has something to swim for" (279). If Legatt is imaginary, then he is a stranger because the captain wants him to be, like the captain himself, a stranger. Now that the captain has found someone to share with, he has something to swim for also. Both the captain and Legatt are symbols of hope to each other, a bright lighthouse to swim for in an empty sea. Legatt is hopeful because the captain is hopeful. Legatt was originally lonely because the captain was lonely. These examples reinforce the aforementioned point made that they are both part of the same psyche. So once we see Legatt as an extension of the captain, the next question we must confront is the one that can create the most confusion: what effect does Legatt have on the captain, once Legatt has been created?

While Legatt may feel the same as the captain, and be connected on a psychological level, Legatt is definitely different in some ways. This does not detract from the argument that Legatt is part of the captain's subconscious psyche; it simply adds another dimension to this argument. Not only has the captain created Legatt to be similar to him, he has created Legatt to exhibit all the characteristics that he doesn't have but simultaneously desires. The captain shows fear when he is in the act of hiding Legatt, and this is a trait that

bothers the captain in a painful way. According to Graver,

> Unable to forget Legatt or the suspicions of his crew, he (the captain) admits that he requires deliberation to perform acts that for a confident commander would be instinctive. At each new threat of exposure he becomes increasingly apprehensive, while Legatt continues "perfectly self-controlled, more than calm—almost invulnerable." When the steward opens the door of the bathroom in which Legatt is hiding, the captain nearly swoons with terror, and before he learns of Legatt's safety, he automatically stresses the inexplicable, nightmarish quality of the events. But once again, when he learns the mundane truth, he marvels at "something unyielding in Legatt's character," "which was carrying him through so finely" (156).

By creating Legatt as an alter ego, the captain has in essence created a hero from whom he can learn and eventually become. He knows what he should be doing, and that behavior is projected onto Legatt, who is a kind of hero in the captain's eyes; this is essentially what he needs to be in order to successfully lead his crew. Stallman presents it in these terms: "Legatt, this other self, becomes the psychological embodiment of reality, the destiny, the ideal selfhood which the captain must measure up to" (281). Legatt is capable of such things in part because he is a man of action, and not altogether rational. He is a somewhat wild and dangerous character. This is in contrast to the captain's extreme rationality but inability to take needed action. According to John Palmer in *Conrad's Short Fiction*,

> To subdue Legatt would be a mistake, the narrator must instead fuse Legatt's subrational personality with his own rational and civilized one, to emerge as a conceptually imperfect but pragmatically effective and healthy moral agent. It is not that the captain cannot be commander of his ship until Legatt has left it, but rather that until he has made his full and active practical commitment to Legatt—he risked everything to guarantee Legatt's freedom and survival, instead of his repression—he cannot feel the self-assurance and practical force necessary to command either himself or his ship (225).

This shows that the character Legatt may not be a perfect being in himself, but is just made up of those qualities that the captain lacks, so when the two are fused together, an ideal man is created from the symbiosis of the two. It is exactly this merging of the two personalities that allows the captain to save the day at the end of the story by taking action and steering the ship away from the land it is about to hit.

The end result of "The Secret Sharer" is the captain's release of Legatt, onto whom he has held so tightly. His alter ego may have gone away, but it is not an ending characterized by loss; rather, it is an ending characterized by completeness. The captain has absorbed and inculcated the qualities of Legatt. As Stallman puts it, "He is a success in saving his ship… and Legatt is a success too, in saving the captain, by serving as a model in being simultaneously his double and his opposite" (285). The captain is now psychologically complete; he no longer needs the alter ego Legatt because he is now whole. The captain, after being trapped in a cocoon, gains from Legatt the courage and resoluteness he needs to break free, and in the end emerges as a butterfly, confident in his ability to fly.

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Palmer, John. *Joseph Conrad's Fiction*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973.

Stallman, R.W. *The Art of Joseph Conrad*. Lansing, Mich: Michigan State University Press, 1960.

Evaluation: *This is a fine piece of writing responding to a somewhat neglected piece of Joseph Conrad's work.*

Family Day at the Racetrack

Linda Bennett
Course: English 200
(Professional Writing: Grammar & Style)
Instructor: Trygve Thoreson

Assignment:
Compose a narrative essay of a kind that would merit publication in a popular mass-market magazine.

The e-mail message popped up on the computer screen: an invitation to enjoy "Family Day at the Racetrack." All that I could think was, "So now it actually has a name." I stared at the screen, reading the promises of a "fun-filled day for the entire family," complete with pony rides and coloring book contests for the children. I felt my stomach begin to knot. I wanted to hit the delete key, but instead I sat staring at the computer.

We made our way through the aisles to take our seats. It was a hot and sticky summer day. I opened my box of Cracker Jacks that my father had always bought my sisters and my brother and I when we went to the racetrack, and I wondered what little prize would be inside this time. My father stared at the racing form, circling his choices. My mother asked if we wanted to choose a horse to bet on. It was a tradition when we went to the racetrack—each of us kids would pick out a horse whose name we liked. My father would then place a one-dollar bet on those horses for us when he placed his own larger bets. When my father came back, he would proudly hand us our tickets, reminding us that they were "our very own." I stared down again at my Cracker Jacks as I ate them, still trying to get to the little prize inside the box.

I looked around me at all the people in the stands. The adults looked so happy as they looked expectantly at the track and they sipped the foamy drinks from the Budweiser plastic cups. They kind of reminded me of kids at an amusement park, eager to see their favorite characters or to go on their favorite rides. The familiar smell of beer and cigarette smoke engulfed the stands. It was as if the blazing sun had burnt the smell into the air. The man behind me accidentally banged into my chair again, this time knocking over his beer. I moved my feet just in time to save my favorite pink sandals as the beer spilled under my chair, but it still bothered me because the beer made the ground sticky. I pulled my legs up to sit, as people back then called it, "Indian-style," until the beer dried, and I stared down again at the Cracker Jacks as I ate more of them, and, finally, I found the little prize. It was a tiny little notebook pad—so small that it looked as if it was meant for a doll. I was excited because I decided that I could write a story or a poem in it. I borrowed a pen from my mother and began my writing. After a few minutes I ran out of paper, so I continued my writing on napkins that my mother had handed to me.

"And they're off!" the loud voice suddenly bellowed through the stands, and the adults jumped up from their seats: yelling, cheering, and screaming to the horses who were barreling out of the gates. With each strike of the jockeys' whips, the crowd's roars erupted louder and the horses ran faster, their hoofs rumbling down on the ground. I wondered if the whipping hurt the horses. I wondered why the adults were so excited. The yells and shouts echoed through the stands as the horses approached the finish line, and I wondered if the adults really thought that the horses could even hear them above all the noise. The jockeys' whips fiercely cracked the horses' sides in rapid succession, and the crowd yelled out even louder. My ears began to ring. And then it was over, except for the brief cheering, booing, and swearing that filled the stands and the thumping of the

rolled-up racing forms that were slammed against the rails. Many of the adults settled back into their seats, while others left to place more bets or to buy food. It was over, until the next race began.

After a few more races had passed and I had finished my Cracker Jacks and my writing, I felt restless, and so I gained my mother's permission to walk down by the fence to see the horses more closely, provided that I always stayed within her view. I walked carefully down the steps, trying to avoid all the spilled beer, cigarette butts, empty cups, food wrappers, and torn-up tickets. The smell of beer and cigarette smoke hung much thicker in the air now, like fog during a hazy night. When I reached the fence I walked along outside it, trying to walk straight like I did in gym class on the balance beam. I looked up at the people in the stands, and they began to look the same. As I surveyed my surroundings more closely, I noticed that there were not many other kids at the racetrack. I looked through the fence at the horses, and I decided that they did not look happy, like the horses I saw running free in the movies. They looked sadly burdened down with their heavy saddles and their tight harnesses.

"And they're off!" the now familiar voice belted out again. Suddenly there were adults all around me—standing, leaning, and hitting on the fence as they yelled out to the horses. The horses' hooves pounded the ground as they ran ever so fast; the jockeys' whips cracked fiercely and repeatedly along the horses' sides. The yelling, the cheering, the pounding, the rumbling, and the cracking amplified throughout the entire grounds. It was deafening and my ears were sore, and then, finally, it was over again. The people left the fences, leaving me there alone with my ears still ringing and my mind made up that the horses must feel the pain of the whips, despite my mother having told me otherwise. I looked up at the stands and saw my mother motioning for me to come back up to the seats, and so I did.

My parents said it was time to get something to eat and to use the restrooms. We all piled out of our seats, and, along with the rest of the crowd, we walked up the stairs to the building inside. My father went to stand in the long ticket line while the rest of us headed towards the restrooms. Knowing that the line for the women's restroom was always long, my mother told my brother that we would meet him at the concession stand. After we left the women's restroom we began walking back to the concession stand to meet my brother. The day was just like all of our past visits to the racetrack.

But then someone yelled loudly, "He has a gun!" and all of a sudden, the people in the huge crowd were screaming, pushing, and running. The screams of "Run! Run!" filled the air, along with the hard stamping of feet. I was about to run, too, but my mother, thank God, grabbed my sisters and me, pulled us against the wall, and held us there. She began yelling out my brother's name, her head darting back and forth as she desperately looked for him, all the while maintaining a tight grip on us girls. She told us to stay standing close against the wall, or else we could get trampled by the stampede. I began to cry. I was afraid that the man with the gun would find us and shoot us. I was also afraid of the stampede of people. I was most afraid because we did not know where my brother or my father was. We stood with our backs tightly hugging the wall until the running was finally over, all the while my mother yelling out for my brother and my father as she held onto my sisters and me. My crying had turned into hyperventilating-like gasps by this point and my oldest sister, Mary, tried her best to comfort me.

Finally, my father found us, and I was so happy to see him. I know my mother was too, but she immediately started shouting to him that my brother was missing. Although he tried to hide his emotions for our sakes, my father looked frightened, too, as he instructed my mother to stay with us girls and he headed out to look for my brother. I started to cry again, convinced that something had happened to my brother, when suddenly we saw my brother walking towards us from a distance. My mother yelled out to my father, and we all dashed quickly to my brother. The back of my brother's shirt was torn, and he looked afraid and dazed. As we ran up to hug him, he told us that when the people in the crowd yelled, "Run!" that he ran with them. He told us of getting pushed by the crowd and almost knocked to the ground, regaining his footing, and running as fast as he could to keep up with the pushing crowd. My mother began to cry at this point, and she yelled at my father

that we would never come back there again. My father said that we should all leave right away, and when I asked about the man with the gun, my parents told me that they didn't know why someone yelled that.

As we walked down the stairs, we saw police cars outside the building and we heard the sirens of ambulances and fire trucks as they approached the scene. Suddenly, my mother gasped and tried to turn my head away. But it was too late. I saw her—the pregnant lady lying on her back on the grass by the policemen, her swollen stomach high in the air revealing that she was probably about eight or nine months pregnant, her body completely still. People were gathered on the sidewalk, looking at her. My father walked over by the crowd, spoke to a few of the people, and then returned to us. He whispered something quietly to my mother, and then we all walked slowly away back to our car. I kept looking back at the lady, while my mother kept trying to guide my head in the other direction. Finally, my mother answered my question, which she had been trying hard to avoid. "Yes," she replied, "the lady and her baby are dead."

I hit the delete key on my computer with enough force to wipe the message away from everyone's computer.

Evaluation: *The framing device here (the delete key) helps Linda make a powerful point.*

Modern Life in Rome

Laura Brennan
Course: English 200
(Professional Writing: Grammar & Style)
Instructor: Trygve Thoreson

Assignment:
Compose a narrative essay of a kind that would merit publication in a popular mass-market magazine.

At nineteen, inquisitive yet naïve, I boarded a late afternoon flight bound for Rome, Italy. With a smile on my face and several large suitcases in tow, I ventured to the Eternal City to spend my sophomore year of college studying abroad. All at once, the Alitalia jet sped down the runway and the powerful engines pushed us up into the blue clouds of the afternoon sky. After having pored over maps and guidebooks during my recklessly long summer, I now sat on the plane and dreamed of the Roman history, art, and ancient ruins I was about to explore. I would soon discover that the modern city of Rome held secrets that would certainly perplex the ancient Romans.

When I arrived in Rome, I was met with a flurry of activity in the busy airport. The airport was crawling with people of all nationalities. Rowdy tour groups crowded together as polished executives dressed in black rushed to their first class seats. The loud chatter of the Italian language blended with perhaps a dozen other European dialects as I made my way through the masses of people. My anticipation to see Rome grew as our bus traveled out of the airport grounds toward the city center. All along the way, the green pastures and multicolored flowers shone in the afternoon sun. Despite the beauty of this scene, the seven-hour time difference between Chicago and Rome weighed on my heavy eyelids. Though I could barely keep my sleepy eyes open, I watched as the bus suddenly passed through the ancient brick walls on the outskirts of the city and made its way toward the center of Rome.

The Eternal City is an enigma. She holds well-preserved ancient treasures to delight the eyes of modern men, yet also offers countless conveniences never imagined by the ancient Roman people. A first glimpse of Rome revealed graffiti mixed with Bernini's masterpieces. Small motorbikes and cars fought bumper to bumper across the uneven cobblestone streets. Outdoor fountains still contained fresh water pumped into the city center via aqueducts, though everyone walked around with bottles of designer water. Noontime reminded me I was in Italy when bells from hundreds of beautiful churches and basilicas informed visitors and locals alike that Rome is the center of Catholicism. There were no skyscrapers or glass-paned buildings, but rather, row after row of earth-toned yellow and orange structures with old, brown roofs and large, imposing windows.

Despite the antiquated facade of the city, it was easy to see the influence of modern mass culture. I quickly realized the remains of the magnificent Coliseum loomed on one side of the street, while movie theaters and supermarkets attracted crowds across the swarming lanes of traffic. It was disappointing to leave a church or museum after viewing exquisite frescoes and immediately see locals chatting away on their cell phones. Preferring to travel to the Vatican on foot, I constantly fought traffic and dozens of loud, obnoxious buses. I imagined Michelangelo never dodged buses on his way to paint the ceiling of the Sistine chapel. The mix of modern life interspersed with treasures of the past made Rome an eclectic destination to explore.

One day as the fiery late afternoon sun lit up rooftops and soaring swallows, I watched a group of tourists enter a Roman piazza as they danced along its cobblestone paving. Before them stood the most perfectly preserved monument of Ancient Rome, the Pantheon.

Beyond its Grecian columns was one of the architectural wonders of the world. Built in the second century AD, the perfectly circular dome atop the Pantheon measures 143 feet in diameter and is unsupported by reinforcement or beams. An awe-inspiring sight constructed of aged, marble-faced brick, the beauty of the Pantheon commanded my attention. Each day, I wandered to this site to admire the splendor and mystery of this ancient masterpiece. I sat quietly and imagined all the people that had once strolled through the piazza.

On one particular day, I basked in the early spring sunshine and watched as the tourists hurried toward this striking monument known as the Pantheon. Suddenly, I saw the crowd swerve past the entrance. The group was bound for a different dome—the golden arches of McDonald's. I struggled to understand who approved a restaurant location directly across from an astonishing artifact of Ancient Rome. Shocked that the tourists were choosing McDonald's over viewing the architectural wonders of the Pantheon, I followed the elated crowd across the piazza to investigate this intrusive piece of Americana. Inside the *Piazza del Pantheon* McDonald's, I saw Americans ordering value meals while Italian children delighted in Happy Meal toys. Disappointed that this piece of American mass culture had invaded the striking city of Rome, I left the restaurant and slowly walked home. As the sun began its descent from the azure sky and the late afternoon rays cast a marvelous spotlight on the Pantheon, I smiled, realizing that the beauty of the ancient treasures of Rome could somehow find a way to coexist with the conveniences of the modern world.

Evaluation: *Laura's detailed impressions lead to a nuanced and thoughtful conclusion.*

An Addict's Tale:
Source and Cycle

Margaret Brigham
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment:
Write an analysis of William S. Burroughs' novel Junky *that defends a personal interpretation of the novel's value.*

William Burroughs writes, "You become a narcotics addict because you do not have strong motivations in any other direction. Junk wins by default" (xxxviii). This statement from Burroughs' novel *Junky* gives a strong insight to the motivations of an addict. Oftentimes, the motivating force is drawn directly from a lack of purpose and a boredom with life and reality that causes the addict to search for a way to make himself numb to negative feelings he may not want to experience. Many people find this to be a reaction to stress, but at times boredom itself can become such a stressor for a person, making them feel a need to escape from themselves and turn to drugs for this escape. Burroughs' book illustrated this struggle beautifully. Throughout the book, Burroughs' main character, William Lee, struggled with lack of direction and boredom, which led him to believe that "[Junk] is a way of life" (xxxix).

Burroughs' persona, William Lee, is a man who grew up in early 1920s suburbia. His parents were well off, so he had very little need for money, and he was disgusted with the people around him that seemed quite phony. Lee stated in the prologue, "My parents decided to move away to the suburbs 'to get away from the people'" (xxxvi). One can wonder from reading this and other details in the prologue about his childhood if his lack of direction may in fact have stemmed from his parents' lack of interest in him. Or, even if that wasn't the actual case, it was still the way the character perceived his parents' attitude toward him, affecting his self-confidence. By believing that he was unworthy of his parents' attention or unworthy of focusing attention on himself, his poor self-esteem led him to a life of boredom and drug abuse.

Initially, the concept of boredom may seem to be a basic excuse. However, one can see that rather than being a mere defense, Lee's free time actually becomes a driving force toward his addiction. Boredom and junk become a repetitive cycle throughout the book as Lee bounces from place to place and lives from habit to habit. This monotony is even characteristic in Lee's first experience with junk. He states, "At that time I had never used any junk and it did not occur to me to try it" (2). "A few nights after meeting Roy and Herman, I used one of the syrettes," (6) claims Lee nonchalantly.

His next habit follows the same pattern after his suspended sentence. Lee explains, "After I gave up lush-working, I decided to push junk" (34). He states most of these things with the same amount of effort as saying he had nothing to do so he went to the park.

The lack of remorse he shows not only illustrates why *Junky* is such a controversial book, but also denotes his overall attitude toward life and addiction. As heroin affects a person psychologically and numbs him from life's realities, it begins to present itself in the addict's personality. This paints a bleak, realistic picture to the reader of the effects the drug has. Once the addict's view of life has become this distorted, and they continue to run from the law in fear, the cycle of running and using continues and perpetuates itself. Lee shows this as he runs from New York to Texas to New Orleans (where he again finds nothing more to do and begins using again). Upon being caught and on the verge of being prosecuted, Lee runs again to the Rio Grande Valley and finally to Mexico City. The desperation of his situation is evident as he shows a willingness to go anywhere he needs to in order to hide from the law and be able to live a free life to use junk as he wishes to. It is within this cycle that he subtly identifies to the reader that he has no true freedom since he is still prisoner to the lifestyle junk generates. "When you give up junk, you give up a way of life," (127) is the phrase that he uses to describe this phenomenon.

Burroughs seems to have some very strong theories to why junk addiction overcomes a person as strongly as it does. He uses the fictitious character of Lee to present these concepts as perceived fact. The theory is most clearly described when Lee states matter-of-factly, "Junk turns the user into a plant" (138). Of course, he isn't stating that a human is going to spontaneously sprout branches, root into the ground, and become a tree. However, he is also not quite speaking metaphorically, either. Instead, he is simply stating that by injecting a drug that is originally derived from a plant into one's bloodstream, a person begins to need the substance in the same manner that a plant needs water and soil for food in order to survive. Thus, by using junk, a person is introducing to their body an additional substance that becomes necessary to their survival, making junk fuel for life.

These concepts can be quite terrifying and abstract to a person who has had no experience with drug use, and they can be even more so to a person who never used junk herself, but has experienced a relationship with a junky. In a situation of that nature, it may seem a book of this sort would answer questions and explain behaviors that were previously impossible to understand. Instead, it merely opens up deeper, more disturbing questions. The strongest of these is generated from the addict's indifferent attitude. If junk addiction can consume a person so completely—despite all efforts a person may make to recover—does that make relapse an inevitable reality?

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Evaluation: *Margaret's argument is an intelligent elucidation of why reading a subversive Beat text can be simultaneously disturbing and enlightening.*

I Rode the Rails to School and Back

Jonathan Chiou
Course: English 200
(Professional Writing: Grammar & Style)
Instructor: Trygve Thoreson

Assignment:
Compose a narrative essay concerning one or more experiences you have had at a college you've attended. Your essay should include precise, concrete details that contribute to a guiding central point you wish to make about your college or about college life.

I could *not wait* to get out of high school. It wasn't that most of my peers were not to my liking, or that the rules the administration (sometimes) enforced were insane, or anything else that students usually associate when they think back to their high school years with some dread growing deep in their stomach at the remembrance of such chaotic times. It was about freedom and leaving home.

Now, I was never the best student in high school despite what my ACT scores or history in the "gifted" and "honors" programs may lead anyone to believe. In fact, I think I graduated with a three-point-two GPA out of a five point scale; and had my honors classes not counted for more points than regular courses, I'm sure it would have been much lower. But college was about change! I was excited to go away and really dedicate myself to learning about something that I wanted to do for a living because I tend to do much better in classes where I find the material engaging and worth my time.

I had done only a few college visits, for three reasons: I had no idea what I wanted to study or even do for a living; I thought I wouldn't be able to make it into many of the colleges I wanted to go to, and once I visited the University of Illinois at Chicago campus, I knew I would be a student there in the fall of 2003. Eventually I got accepted into UIC, and I say "eventually" because the office of admissions there mixed up my paperwork, filing my test scores under "Chiov," and my high school transcript under "Chiou." I felt that there was no real foul on their part as I tend to have sloppy handwriting. Instead, I should have realized that this was a sign of things to expect from the administration at that school.

Originally, I wanted to live on campus because it is right in the heart of Chicago, and I had lived in the northwest suburbs for all of the fourteen years I've lived in Illinois. I loved going down to "the city" for concerts and shopping, and living there would make things easier, not just for entertainment and diversions (which we all know are very important to college students), but because I wanted the experience of sharing a dorm with someone and meeting people on campus. However, UIC is largely a commuter school, and since my parents had just remodeled the downstairs of our house where my new room would be, I felt it would be wrong and somewhat selfish to ask them if I could live downtown. So I commuted, and while I liked it at first, I soon came to hate it and wished that my parents had not remodeled and that I could have lived on the UIC campus.

From my house, the city is about an hour away by train and about the same by car, depending on traffic. I knew I wouldn't want to deal with the traffic, so I got a parking permit for the train station and monthly passes for the train ride. The length of the train ride proved to be somewhat beneficial to study or finish homework. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case most of the time as I was often exhausted from work, school, and, ironically enough, the long commute. So I actually spent most of my time sleeping next to strangers or by myself on the way to school and sometimes on the way home. But that was a rare luxury, as I would learn from experience that one can't always wake up in time for his stop.

Each ride on the train was fairly interesting, for the most part. There were the regular people you saw every day at the stations, who would come and go, but every now and then there would be someone new and peculiar. I remember one time I was sitting in a car almost entirely by myself. I was going home and had found myself a nice place to sit and was waiting for more people to rush in and fill the seats and for the train to crawl forward, as if awakening from a great slumber to carry us to our destinations. I was reading when I heard a voice, and the voice sounded quite out of place. It took me a minute or so until I realized it was speaking German, at which point I noticed that there was not one, but many voices clamoring in German. Apparently, a student exchange group of some sort was visiting Chicago, and here I was sitting in a train just reading a book. It made me think about what other people must feel like when tourists come to *their* towns. Because let's face it, residents generally don't care for tourists unless they are making money off of them.

Another time, I started to converse with a middle-aged man who had a guitar and an amplifier with him. We argued Gibsons over Fenders, tube amps over solid states, and who we each thought to be the greatest bands and musicians. Across from us was a middle-aged woman who would chime into our conversation, often without any idea what we were talking about, and perhaps, without any idea what was going on at all. The lady had raven hair with a streak of gray to the left of her forehead and talked slowly, her eyes fixed into a stare that gave off the impression that she felt superior to you as well as feared you. At one point, the middle-aged man had started to eat his Subway dinner when the woman said, "I'm hungry. Can I have some of that?" as she pointed to his submarine sandwich. The man and I glanced at her and then at each other, and with a slight hesitation he replied, "Uh, well…you can have my bag of chips." The man and I simultaneously came to the conclusion that this woman was definitely off her rocker. She even accused me of lying when I said I played bass, saying "Show me. Take out your bass and play," which was impossible as I clearly did not have a bass of any sort with me. She eventually believed me when I displayed to her my calloused fingers, which the man told her was a good indication that I was, indeed, a bassist.

But what do train rides have to do with college? When I started writing this paper, I had a completely different subject in mind; I was going to write about how college can be hard because it's the first time that many young adults are on their own and responsible for themselves. But when I started to write about the train, I just had so many memories that I felt it was an even better topic, so I switched over to it. I thought about going back and deleting some of the paragraphs at the beginning, but I think keeping them will prove my point about college.

And it's my entire experience on the trains that reminds me of college; it's a time and a place where, sometimes, things will suddenly make some sense (why people hate tourists) or none at all (batty old women on the train). It's a journey that may seem routine to an average person, but those who truly experience it notice all the quirks and foibles that exist during that ride. Sometimes there are cancellations, sometimes you're late, and sometimes you miss your stop and have to find a way to get back to where you are supposed to be. They are all valuable experiences because they teach you the things you can't always learn from a lecture, the things you need to learn to grow as a person.

I loved riding the train in the beginning and hated it toward the end of my first and only semester at UIC, but reflecting on those times makes me realize how much I really miss it and why I loved it so much. And thinking about college in terms of those train rides has given me a better outlook on things; now, I feel like I can get back on track with my life. I'm not entirely sure of my next destination at the moment, but I do know that it has a dorm room, and I will get there soon.

Evaluation: *Jonathan's in-class essay offers a classic instance of a writer* discovering *a topic as he writes. His subject seems to go "off track" midway through, but Jonathan then senses a crucial connection and triumphantly brings the reader back to his guiding thesis in a memorable concluding paragraph.*

Incomprehensible Love

Julie Darms
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment:
Write a literary research paper incorporating effective use of at least seven secondary sources.

"'What do any of us really know about love?' Mel said. 'It seems to me we're just beginners at love'" (Carver 980). This quote is from Raymond Carver's short story, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love." Mel is having a chat with his second wife and his two friends, a married couple. The topic of love has been brought up, and Mel can't seem to let it go. This quote appears in the middle of the story, right after Mel says he has an example of what real love is, but then he leaves the group hanging while he rants about love. At this point, the conversation has grown more serious. It has turned more philosophical. Mel expresses his feelings of ineptness and the sheer complexity of the subject matter. This quote shows the major theme in this honest short story. After reading this story, it is hard to firmly say that anyone can fully understand love.

Raymond Carver is known for his minimalist style of writing. Using as little extravagance as possible, Carver gets at the heart of common, everyday life yet reveals the outstanding within it. Critic Joe Nordgren claims that, "ordinary life is the antagonist throughout [Carver's stories and poems]…" (par. 2). Carver's personal life may have affected his writing, as Charles E. May suggests. When Carver made a pledge that, "he would stop drinking forever [it] had a significant effect on his writing style and career" (par. 3).

The story starts out with Nick narrating while he and his wife Laura have joined Mel and Mel's wife Terri in sitting around the kitchen table in the middle of the afternoon, drinking. The subject of love is brought up, and according to critic Adam Meyer, "Carver is able to turn the question of love in several different directions" (309). When Terri discusses her lover who almost killed her, yet she still believed they were in love, Mel takes off on the topic. He makes it clear how drunk he is, yet may be more honest about his fears than ever before. As Mel talks about his fantasies of being a knight, gives examples of true love, and shares his disenchantment over loving then hating his first wife, it is clear that, "Mel…has bested no one and has not successfully defended his ideas about love" (Maggi, par. 9). The current relationships between Mel and Terri, and Nick and Laura also become apparent. As "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" unfolds, the reader is

likely to become uncomfortable in their own lack of knowledge about love. Most of us think we know what love is, but as this story suggests, we haven't even begun to explore all of love's aspects. We may even be too simple to comprehend it. As Meyer suggests, "The only resolution reached [at the end of the story] is that we really have no idea 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Love'" (308).

The story also begs us to not judge other people's versions of love. Terri had a completely different view of love than the rest of the people at the table. Terri was convinced that her old lover, Ed, loved her even though he had tried to kill her, and finally killed himself because he "missed" her. Even if the love between Terri and Ed could be classified as love, it definitely wasn't healthy. Terri may have had a twisted view of reality, as Nathaniel Branden suggests in his essay entitled, "Immature Love." Branden says, "On one level, it is true enough to say that a characteristic of immature love is that the man or woman does not perceive his or her partner realistically; fantasies and projections take the place of clear vision" (967). Terri probably saw what she wanted to see because she was so desperate to believe she was loved.

While Terri and Ed's "love" might seem ridiculous, it is a reality for many men and women. Abused women often stay in bad relationships because they believe they're in love. They make excuses for their partner. Many don't see the seriousness of the situation. In fact, as Dawn Bradley Berry points out in her book, *Domestic Violence Sourcebook*, "Many women believe on some level that if only they love a man enough, they can 'save' him and he will change" (41). Terri seemed to blame herself for Ed's personal life falling apart and wanted to be there for him so she could make everything better. Terri wanted to believe that Ed loved her even if it was not accurate. In regard to these kinds of women, Berry says, "She sees what appears to be an ideal and loving partnership. Her dreams are fulfilled and she wants to believe it can work" (32).

Mel vehemently denies Terri's views on love when he says, "'My God, don't be silly. That's not love, and you know it,' … 'I don't know what you'd call it, but I sure know you wouldn't call it love'" (977). Mel is horrified by the thought that what Ed had for Terri could have been love. According to Ewing Campbell, "If [Mel] sees that Ed's passion hardly qualifies as love, he need not feel quite as emotionally threatened by the dead lover" (310). Mel is sure at this point that he knows what love isn't. He was very judgmental and alienated Terri with his comments. Terri wants her feelings validated even though they are different. When Terri told Mel not to act like he was drunk, Mel responded, "Just shut up for once in your life" (981). It's obvious that Terri and Mel have problems. It would be one thing to say "Shut up!" but to say "for once in your life" shows there are a lot of unresolved issues and resentment between them. They don't seem to be meeting each other's needs; however, they seem satisfied to stay in the marriage because it is much better than their previous relationships.

Frighteningly, Berry informs us that, "Abuse usually starts with degrading behavior, insults, put-downs" (28). While reading this book, the links to Mel's treatment of Terri, not just Ed's, was startling. In Berry's book, she lists ten risk factors for becoming an abuser but says, "The single most important factor…is one partner's need to feel he or she absolutely controls the other" (27). The way in which Mel talks to Terri and how he is insistent on finding answers shows that he has this kind of personality. It is obvious that Mel's longings are not being fulfilled by Terri, and according to David Celani, author of *The Illusion of Love*, "The first stage of the battering cycle occurs when the infantile abuser feels that his needs are not being met" (177).

Laura and Nick believe they are the perfect couple and don't think anything bad could happen to their relationship. Following some of Mel's outbursts, Laura says, "'Well, Nick and I know what love is…For us, I mean…'" (979). Laura is the peacekeeper of the group because she doesn't try to push her views on others by saying love is an absolute. Laura is confident that she and Nick are in love because they are happy. By joking that romantic love does not last long, Terri reveals that she believes Nick and Laura, "…are still in the first throes of love, whereas [Terri's] marriage to Mel seems to have become stale" (Meyer 309). After proclaiming her love is on the right track, Laura bumped Nick's knee

and said, "You're supposed to say something now" (979). She may be happy with Nick, but she still has disappointments when he doesn't respond in the way she expects. This shows that sometimes we're so wrapped up in our expectations that we can't see reality.

Mel talks the most during the story. Mel's ramblings give the reader a glimpse of what is going on in his head. Seemingly out of the blue, Mel blurts:

> If I could come back again in a different life, a different time and all, you know what? I'd like to come back as a knight. You were pretty safe wearing all that armor. It was all right being a knight until gunpowder and muskets and pistols came along (982).

Mel is afraid of love and the hurt it brings. He shows his desire to hide behind anything that will protect him. Maybe he would rather just sit on the sidelines and never love than run the risk of that love failing. However, Liz Brent points out that this protection from hurt, "can be the very cause of his suffering" (306).

Believing he had a great example of true love, Mel told the story about an old couple who got in a serious accident. Mel retold his interaction with the old man by saying:

> Well, the husband was very depressed for the longest while. Even after he found out that his wife was going to pull through, he was still very depressed. Not about the accident, though. I mean, the accident was one thing, but it wasn't everything. I'd get up to his mouth-hole, you know, and he'd say no, it wasn't the accident exactly but it was because he couldn't see her through his eye-holes. He said that was what was making him feel so bad. Can you imagine? (983-984).

By giving this example, Mel shows that he can't imagine a love like that. Though Mel seems to laugh at this kind of love, the reader can tell he really longs for a love like the old couple's. Mel probably doesn't feel this for Terri, and it scares him. He wants a love that is more than physical but doesn't know how to go about it. Meyer states that, "this old couple symbolizes for Mel…a sign of stable and long-lasting love" (308). Mel has never experienced this kind of love, since all his relationships have collapsed.

Much of Mel's fears about love stem from his failed first marriage to Marjorie. While reflecting back, Mel says, "There was a time when I thought I loved my first wife more than life itself. But now I hate her guts. I do. How do you explain that? What happened to that love? What happened to it, is what I'd like to know. I wish someone could tell me" (980). Mel articulates his fear of the unpredictability of love. He thinks love is a feeling, and feelings change quickly. I believe he also addresses this question because he's afraid it could happen again to him and Terri. Brent brings up an alarming idea when she says, "Mel's hatred for his ex-wife and his wish that she would die is used as a thinly veiled expression of similar hatred for Terri" (307).

Mel is well aware that love is fleeting. When talking about what might happen after the death of a spouse, Mel muses, "All this, all of this love we're talking about, it would just be a memory. Maybe not even a memory" (980). Mel believes that life will always go on and love isn't central to life. He suggests that love is just an experience. His beliefs are shared by Edna St. Vincent Millay. In her poem "Love Is Not All," Millay confesses:

> Pinned down by pain and moaning for release,
> Or nagged by want past resolution's power,
> I might be driven to sell your love for peace,
> Or trade the memory of this night for food.
> It well may be. I do not think I would. (818-819)

Both Millay and Mel seem to understand that love is not as important as life and does not meet every need, yet they would rather have love and suffer the consequences. Their minds are aware that they can survive without love, yet they can't deny the longing in their souls for this feeling that sometimes seems useless.

Many people fall into love to meet their own needs. In another section of "Immature Love" Branden says,

> …their whole lives may be organized around the desire to please, to be taken care of, or, alternatively, to control and dominate, to manipulate and *coerce* the satisfaction of their needs and wants, because they don't

> trust the authenticity of anyone's love or caring. They have no confidence that what they are, without their facades and manipulations, is *enough* (965).

This quote can give light to all the relationships in this story. Most of the problems between the couples resulted from individual incompetence rather than a poor match of two people. Instead of two complete individuals coming together to serve the other, two greedy individuals become even more impoverished because of their partner's use of emotional resources. Mel and Terri are clearly at this point. They are constantly having to do a quick patch job by saying "I love you" after they insult each other. Nick and Laura seem to be falling into the trap as well, since Laura is trying to get Nick to fulfill her romantic fantasies. Of course, no relationship is perfect. Yet these couples don't seem to realize that.

As the story closes, much has been said, but nothing has been decided. Nick explains that at the end of the conversation, there was silence so immense that he "could hear the human noise we sat there making…" (985). Brent interprets the scene by saying, "It is as if the excess of human emotion aroused by the discussion of true love hums about the room without the hope of articulate expression between the two couples" (307). A topic so deep is rare, and after all the talking is done, people usually need to be alone with their thoughts. Words can't express a mystery like this; "it is too extraordinary to explain and all attempts to do so are destined to fail" (Nordgren, par. 4). Seeing the impoverished human craving for love indicates that this is the most elaborate emotional expedition that any one human can make with another.

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Evaluation: *This paper uses secondary research very intelligently in presenting an analysis of this short story, and some of the sources used are out of the usual "literary criticism" realm, which makes this paper a bit more unique than the standard English 102 research paper. The writing, also, is confident and mature.*

Meanings and Connections in the Responses to *The Hours* and *Mrs. Dalloway*

Jaclyn DeRose
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Joshua Sunderbruch

Assignment:
Create a thorough analysis of a literary work, applying at least one critical approach.

> …we struggle to write books that do not change the world, despite our gifts and our unstinting efforts, our most extravagant hopes. We live our lives, do whatever we do, and then we sleep—it's as simple and ordinary as that (Cunningham 225).

In Michael Cunningham's interpretation of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, essentially a reader's response, Cunningham plays with characters, symbols, motifs, time, and plot to tell a story of his own. Through his character Clarissa Vaughn, the modern day equivalent to Woolf's Clarissa Dalloway, Cunningham assesses that essentially, the power of literature is nonexistent. All that one believes he or she could accomplish or provoke is up for interpretation. The reader is in control of writing. It is he or she who creates meaning, not the author. Despite the eloquent thoughts; beautiful, vivid imagery prevalent in her writing; a large number of friends; a successful writing career; and a loving husband—Virginia Woolf was a deeply depressed woman who eventually took her own life. *Mrs. Dalloway* is often seen as a semi-autobiographical tale.

Though the various assets of the novel would elicit some type of response from a reader, it is impractical to state that any given reader is reading, understanding, and interpreting the novel as Woolf either wrote or intended its interpretation. It is natural for a reader to form connections with certain characters or events based upon his or her own personality and/or life experiences. Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* explores the alter egos of housewife Clarissa Dalloway and shell-shocked soldier Septimus Smith. Michael Cunningham explores the quiet, desperate lives of three women in three different eras, all inextricably influenced by *Mrs. Dalloway*. Using *Mrs. Dalloway*, we will explore the reader-response criticism that is essentially Cunningham's novel and analyze the symbolism and imagery prevalent in the works and how one would examine and use them in accordance to their own interpretation of the work.

Reader-response criticism can be seen as the most open form of literary criticism. It seems to be guided by the least amount and most open of rules, because to guide the reader towards a response is forcing a "meaning" upon the reader.

> Reader-response critics contend that a text does not (cannot) convey meaning. They confront the intentionalist view that a text inscribes its author's purpose, as well as the formalist view that meaning lies in a text's structural signification. Reader-response critics put forth two principal arguments in behalf of this notion of semantic indeterminacy: (1) an intentionalist understanding of "meaning" is inadequate for a description of the reading process, and (2) the ultimate impossibility of an objective viewpoint privileges the reader. (Porier par. 1)

Symbols cannot be symbolic with out some sort of meaning attached. Using the word "meaning" in the context of the reader-response theory is contending that meaning is not conveyed by an author or text, but by the reader who responds to it. A reader who responds to the many interlaying symbols of *Mrs. Dalloway* and to the idea of an exploration of the novel in *The Hours* will undoubtedly attach meaning and expand the stories with these motifs. These are what are considered informed or competent readers, and they make up the group with which reader-response theorists are primarily concerned.

"Informed or competent readers are familiar with the conventions of literature…. There will still, of course, be plenty of room for differences of interpretation…. In short, we can say that a writer works against a backdrop that is shared by readers…. As readers, we are familiar with various kinds of literature. Knowing (to a large degree) how we ought to respond, our responses thus are not merely private" (Barnet et al 1608). Barnet sees the world of reader response from the perspective of the educated/knowledgeable reader as one that cannot be purely genuine. Besides relating personal life experiences, the reader would undoubtedly feed off of his or her educational background and influences of other works, teachers, theories that will guide them to a predisposed interpretation—what a reader thinks he or she should get out of a given work.

"In reading a novel, one can sometimes extrapolate from it an implied reader, a figure whom the text seems to be addressing and who occasionally functions as a character in the work" (Leitch et al 18). Reading *Mrs. Dalloway*, a reader often feels a sense of Woolf's presence in the work as though she is there as an observer of the observer, someone to watch over the reader and guide them toward reacting to the work. This is not to imply that authors wish for their readers to have a similar reaction to their work. On the contrary, most authors merely wish to supply material to press the reader toward his or her own enlightenment. But it is not to say that all authors write with an idea of the general public in mind. This would be an impossible task. *Mrs. Dalloway* may most likely make the grandest effects upon other women, but not all women. Women who, like Clarissa, wonder about the what-ifs in life, the people that surround her, the inevitable jealousies—these seem to be Woolf's target audience. Not that other readers wouldn't appreciate Woolf's work, but a reader who is not only an informed reader, but a responsive reader, is likely to get the most from the novel.

Among the various types of readers are those who are educated to appreciate the academic, historical, social, and political aspects of a piece of writing. Leitch sees these readers as fixated upon their educational beliefs and often oppose and interrogate these texts on no real basis other than their engrained beliefs. The truly intriguing readers are those whose minds may be considered slightly less sculpted, but nevertheless, are open and more receptive to various perspectives and ideas. "Real readers are people whose actual responses to plays, poems, and other texts have been recorded by theorists and, in some cases, analyzed for their individual styles and for the personal psychological quirks they reveal" (Leitch et al 18).

For the more average reader, however, there exist elements of psychology that affect the reacting experience. Since the average reader is not predisposed to identify with any particular elements of a given text, psychologists are often interested in the various elements a reader picks up and how they interpret them. In effect, the psychologist is given a glimpse into the life and background of the reader through their interpretation of what on the surface seems to be an unrelated topic.

Woolf makes it clear from the start that the lives of Septimus Smith and Clarissa Dalloway would run as parallel opposites throughout the course of the novel.

Both respond to the world around them in different ways, and the world responds to them differently as well. Though neither of these characters ever comes into direct contact with one another, the reader places a strong sense of connection between the two characters. Clarissa is life, Septimus is death. Clarissa is sane, Septimus is not. On the surface, there appears to be almost no reason to parallel Clarissa's tale with the seemingly pointless one of Septimus Smith if the characters' lives are never to intertwine. Woolf is essentially modeling Septimus as a means to better explore the character of Clarissa.

Since the book's title is *Mrs. Dalloway* there is never any question that the story's goal is to remain centered upon Clarissa. "But, possibly the deepest root of difference between them is the fact that Clarissa is able to lose herself, and Septimus holds tightly to the control of his own ego. Neither one begins with an interior balance, if you will, between their souls and their egos, but Clarissa, because she lets go of the boundaries around her own ego, comes to a moment of fulfillment, a moment of balance that Septimus has little hope of ever achieving" (Kuhlmann 30). It is through this contrast that the reader can grasp a greater understanding of the character development and what she believes is being conveyed about this woman. Woolf does not come out and say, this is who Clarissa Dalloway is. She uses symbols and contrasts to create a wall off which the reader bounces her own opinions, ideas, and interpretations.

This is why *Mrs. Dalloway* is considered to be a novel of such great stature. It does not fit the standard plot formula of introduction, rising action, climax, dénouement, and conclusion, nor does it ever try to. The standard plot formula is too decisive for further exploration. The novel takes place in less than a day time-wise, essentially an afternoon. The involved reader is never curious what is to happen next or how the day would end. It is about development; development of characters and their thoughts, perspectives, ideas, interactions, and pasts. The meaning a reader extracts from the novel is dependant upon preexisting social codes and learned protocols of interpretation. Each "community" that interprets a text enlists the interpretive strategies of his or her own field (Leitch 19). These strategies then form the shape of the way in which a reader would interpret a text. For the reader of Mrs. Dalloway, it is about learning and understanding, not how the party she is preparing for will turn out.

Woolf succeeds in writing a great novel in that there are no answers in this novel, only opportunities for great questions. Why is Clarissa unhappy? Do she and Richard really love one another? Should she and Peter be together? What caused the rift between her and her daughter? Is there an inappropriate relationship between her daughter and her tutor, Mrs. Kilman? Why is Clarissa so jealous of Mrs. Kilman? What is the story of Sally and Clarissa's relationship?

To probe these questions and responses, there are motifs and symbolism throughout the story: flowers, Big Ben, automobiles, airplanes, and the various members and classes of people. The bells in Mrs. Dalloway signal the inevitability of change: "Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air" (Woolf 4). "The central image of Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway appears in the bells that ring emphatically at crucial junctures and resonate metaphorically throughout the novel" (Harrington par. 1). It is almost as if Woolf uses the bells to state, "Take notice! Think." The bells and Big Ben seem to symbolize parts where some sort of change or idea is taking place. Woolf never wishes to state what is exactly happening at these points in the story but attempts to evoke a response in the reader by drawing attention to a given scene. The church bells ring forward changes in the story, often calling into question the voice of masculine authority. According to the preface of an early edition of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf had originally intended to have Clarissa commit suicide before creating the character of Septimus to do it for her (Rosenfeld 153).

The inclusion of the character of Septimus Warren Smith has long been a source of interest among readers and critics alike who wonder what purpose Woolf intended this alter ego of Clarissa to serve. Readers cannot help but to associate the distinction between Clarissa and Septimus as one influenced by the realm of gender criticism. It seems as though Septimus' quality of life was betrayed by his own masculinity. The

premise of the shell-shocked soldier is not created as an outlet to blame for Septimus' problems. Woolf instead links Septimus' problems to his own male ego. The source of his own madness exists in the depths of this ego. His lack of feeling consequently destroys his insight, empathy with others, and imagination, and his artistic capabilities are destroyed as well. His suicide stems from his refusal to face whatever it is that frightens him in his consciousness, most likely stemming from the war (Kuhlmann 31). It is as though Woolf views art as life and the act of living it and the refusal of Septimus to come to terms and open up his feelings destroys the artistic vision that is life, ultimately causing Septimus to destroy himself.

The reader as well perceives the inclination for Clarissa to retreat into a world similar to that of Septimus Smith. However, it is in the expansions of her thoughts and perspective that she withdraws from this (Septimus, though full of thought, wallows in ideas of loneliness). She reflects on successes and failures, disappointment and envy, and "the complexities these emotions bring to her awareness" (Kuhlmann 31). Clarissa is a character defined by balance, whereas Septimus is all extreme. She wishes to expand her world, but never sacrifices her soul or her ego.

But why Clarissa? Kuhlmann cites Woolf's female character as "an artist of life, a character whose feminine qualities are the root of her creativity" (31). Essentially, *Mrs. Dalloway* is Woolf's promotion of the feminine qualities she seems to think better mankind. Perhaps this may be the reason Cunningham's interpretation focuses on three women, three people most likely to enlighten and be enlightened by the novel.

In Cunningham's novel, three women tell three separate stories of three separate lives all interconnected by the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. There is a depressed Virginia Woolf, the author, beginning to write the novel in 1923; an unhappy fifties housewife named Laura Brown, whose perspective of her world is being changed through her reading of Woolf's novel; and modern day book editor Clarissa Vaughn, nicknamed Mrs. Dalloway, a woman who is essentially a twist on Woolf's character, buying the flowers and preparing for a party as was Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway.

> The characters of *Mrs. Dalloway* are not perfect illustrations either of virtue or of vice (Woolf is too rich a writer to create characters that are caricatures). But understanding what Woolf says of them, and assessing both how they are deficient and how they succeed, brings us closer to Woolf's own views on character. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa Dalloway is both the central figure and the moral center of the novel; viewing her through the eyes of others, and being privy to her thoughts about both herself and others we see Woolf's character evaluation at work. (Curd par. 6)

Woolf's novel is an analysis of human nature, of the little idiosyncrasies that make us are who we are. Woolf never intends to define human nature, but to merely open it up for reader commentary. The readers then can analyze the various facets of the lives of Septimus Smith and Clarissa Dalloway with respect to the symbols, information, and interactions that are supplied by Woolf's writing. "Clarissa Dalloway is in the process of developing a genuinely good character. Her actions and emotions have become a true part of herself, and are not the result of calculation; she has the capacity to judge character and to manage her emotions in a praiseworthy way" (Curd par. 39). This is why she succeeds as a character where Septimus fails. She allows the reader to enter her world, faults and all, to understand what makes her tick and how she responds to the world around her. The closed doors that make up the life of Septimus Smith prevent any readers from fully understanding or sympathizing with him. The ability to communicate is the missing link of Septimus Warren Smith. It is where the parallel between Septimus and Clarissa is terminated. It is the reason why the story roots for Mrs. Dalloway and ends Septimus' life in end.

Along with the paralleled lives of Septimus and Clarissa, another noticeable facet to the readers is the inclusion of ideas of class division and distinction in the England of this era. It also serves to comment on the materialism and self-involvement that was becoming predominant for many Britons. In the opening scenes of the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa's journey through the city to get the flowers is full of imagery, some of which are Woolf's particular favorites: the airplane and the

automobile. She subtly mocks the importance the townspeople place upon analyzing the plane's skywriting and of the identity of a person in a fancy, dark automobile (could it be royalty?). But amongst all this imagery of horizontal motion, Woolf adds vehicles that have stalled, blocked crosswalks, and Septimus "unable to pass" (Woolf 14). It is in these mocking assessments of horizontal motion that Woolf is portraying her true emotions on the desire for people to obtain vertical motion (personal and financial mobility) in an increasingly materialistic society (Rosenfeld 140-141). The members of the increasingly expanding middle class, look longingly into the windows of the motor car and the windows of expensive shops, with the difference between the middle and upper classes shown as shock and awe versus appreciation and acceptance of good things.

Windows play a role in the view of various classes. It is through a window that Clarissa views the ambulance that is going to take Septimus's body. She sees that something is going on, but she is not connected with it. The window provides her with a protection of her life of privilege (Rosenfeld 141). Septimus's plunge through a window shows his resistance toward a life he felt trapped in and the doctor who couldn't help him. So what did Woolf hope to convey with the death of Septimus Warren Smith? "Death was defiance… There was an embrace in death" (Guth par. 5). Septimus's death was his last and final attempt to communicate all he could not and all they (his wife and doctors) would not listen to.

Ironically, Septimus's final thoughts before he plunges to his death are among the most controversial and hypocritical in the novel. "He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings—what did they want? 'I'll give it to you!' he cried" (Woolf 149). Readers gain a sense of betrayal by those who were enlisted to help Septimus, though it was, according to Dr. Holmes, "a sudden impulse, no one was in the least to blame" (Woolf 150). It is as though Septimus had felt the world long ago give up on him and eventually decided to give up on himself. Again, though, it portrays Septimus's strong connection to his male ego, and his use of the words "I'll give it to *you*" and what "*they* want" demonstrate selfishness, the readiness to place blame upon others, and the fact that Septimus's inner self was doomed from the start—that his death was, in fact, meant to be.

Above all, readers relate to the style of *Mrs. Dalloway* and are not fixated upon any general ideas of plot development. The stream-of-consciousness style connects the minds of various people within one day in England—people who, for the most part, aren't necessarily important in the lives of the main characters, but nevertheless provide valuable insight on the inner workings of these characters and their own personal ideals, judgments, values, and opinions, et cetera.

Cunningham's *The Hours* operates in roughly the same way. Instead of a variety of people all interconnected in the same place, it joins three different eras inextricably connected through the story and ideals presented in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. Following the reasoning of Woolf's portrayal of Septimus Warren Smith, Cunningham includes another ill-fated male character, a gay author named Richard. It is in the modern era that Cunningham most vastly plays with the characters found in *Mrs. Dalloway* and some of the ubiquitous themes and ideas many readers and critics have picked up on. Stories and recollections of youthful banter between a young Clarissa, Richard, and Sally are often seen for their subtle, but nevertheless present, homosexual insinuations. Cunningham turned Clarissa and Sally into lovers and partners. Richard is now a celebrated author who is dying of AIDS, but the hint of a past love and a strong connection still exist between Clarissa and Richard. Richard Brown decides to follow Septimus's example by taking his own life, again by leaping out of a window. Then there are the men and women who cared about Richard and try to interpret his suicide by viewing it as an attempt to retain a semblance of personal dignity before all was lost (Lane par. 14).

This is not to say that Cunningham is fixated on homosexual relationships—he explores human relationships. What sex each character is that is involved with another is not an apparent concern or direct focus. Instead, Cunningham focuses on the bonds that exist because of who the characters are, and any and all connections between them are based upon a love for the person, not a gender. Thus, the resounding theme in

The Hours is human connection, and occasionally the lack thereof.

There are essentially three facets to the character of Mrs. Dalloway that Cunningham creates and molds in his novel: The woman behind Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf, who like most authors, whether intentionally or not, places a bit of herself into the character; Laura Brown, the part of Clarissa that wishes to give up; and Clarissa Vaughn, the modern day Mrs. Dalloway whose life has become a twist of the one Dalloway often reflected on. "Its female characters give us three distinct reactions to feeling 'lost' when society seems meaningless, two of which are withdrawing temporarily into fiction and going about one's affairs with all the happiness one can muster" (Lane par. 14). Ironically, it seems fated that Laura Brown, a sad, desperate housewife, is likely to take her own life. Cunningham instead chooses to follow Woolf's lead and with a twist in the end, brings an elder Laura Brown into the present day scene, following the suicide of her son Richard, whom she ran out on shortly following the events in her section of the novel. She is the woman behind Richard's celebrated poetry, "the woman who tried to die and failed at it, the woman who fled her family" (Cunningham 222). Never far from her mind is the ultimate end of the woman who wrote the book she is holding; "How, Laura wonders, could someone who was able to write a sentence like that—who was able to feel everything contained in a sentence like that—come to kill herself? What in the world is wrong with people?" (Cunningham 41). Perhaps there is no clear cut definition of those who are sane and insane. How, then, could Woolf pass judgment on the male ego in the suicide of Septimus but terminate her own life? Cunningham addresses it in the statement made by Laura Brown. There are facets to every personality—no one is decidedly successful or doomed. Life is a measure of our interactions with others and how they affect us; everyone views matters of their lives differently from how an outsider would view them. Essentially, both literature and life itself are up for interpretation.

E.M. Forster wrote, "people in a novel can be understood completely by the reader, if the novelist wishes; their inner as well as their outer life can be exposed. And this is why they often seem more definite than characters in history, or even our own friends; we have been told all about them that can be told; even if they are imperfect or unreal they do not contain any secrets, whereas our friends do and must, mutual secrecy being one of the conditions of life upon this globe" (Dee par. 9). The legacy of *Mrs. Dalloway* is not one merely imparted on Woolf, but on all the readers who feel so strongly about something they read—strong enough to write an entire novel in response to it. As readers, the opportunity to be immersed into a life that unfolds before them can be the ultimate exploration of both self and a work of literature, especially in the context of the reader-response theory.

Works Cited

As this issue of *The Harper Anthology* went to press, the works cited list for this paper was unavailable. Proper use and citation of sources, however, was verified by the student's instructor at the time the paper was submitted.

Evaluation: *Jaclyn has written an exceptional paper more on par with the work of an advanced student of literature. Her writing is clear, and her analysis is insightful.*

Sane Until Proven Otherwise

Matt Gebhardt
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Nancy L. Davis

Assignment:
Write a literary research paper.

Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" is a story of revenge and murder, but it is also a story of underlying themes and ideas. Many people believe that the protagonist, Montresor, is mentally unstable, in view of the extreme nature of the crime he commits. However, if the best way to avenge being hit by a pitch in baseball is to hit a home run off that pitcher, then leading Fortunato down into the catacombs under a false premise is the ultimate grand slam. The murder is committed because Fortunato insults Montresor one too many times. "The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult I vowed revenge… I must not only punish but punish with impunity…. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong" (Poe 173). To the unaided eye, this would seem to be an open and shut insanity case; however, by plunging deeper into the symbolism, it seems as if Montresor is thinking clearly. Perchance the use of the catacombs is only the tip of the iceberg, and there is a lot more to this story than meets the eye. "All this underground vault business in Poe only symbolizes that which takes place beneath the conscious. On top, all is fair-spoken. Beneath, there is the awful murderous extremity of burying alive" (Lawrence 8). Even though insanity is perhaps the simplest explanation for Montresor's crime, it becomes apparent through symbolism that Montresor acts in a chillingly calculated and rational fashion.

Understanding Montresor's sanity requires insight into the realm of Edgar Allan Poe. Many people believed that Poe himself was insane, and rightfully so; however, Poe's work is a direct product of the cleverness and logic that he possessed. "Most of [Poe's] heroes, even at their most 'mad,' have all the cold logic and lucidity of the sane: no one is more horrifyingly calm than Montresor" (Graham 332). Poe definitely wrote stories influenced from his own experiences. The stories that he wrote were a reflection of his own thoughts, and were not representative of his insane nature. They echoed the cold, calm, and clear nature of Poe. Montresor is a result of Edgar Allan Poe's sanity and wit, not his demise.

The character of Montresor in "The Cask of Amontillado" has a mental process that is often debated. Some suggest that near the end of the story when

Montresor shows a kind of pity on Fortunato, it displays Montresor's feelings and thus his sanity. "There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick; it was the dampness of the catacombs that made it so" (Poe 177). It is true that Montresor shows a weak, softer side, but not because he feels sorry for Fortunato. Montresor wants Fortunato to fully understand his reasons for burying him alive, and when Fortunato screams in anguish, it reveals insanity in the mind of Fortunato, not Montresor. Montresor was thinking clearly enough to know exactly how his crime is supposed to be carried out; it is only when Fortunato demonstrates signs of insanity, rage, and fear that there are signs of a mentally unstable person in this story (Henninger 323). The ending of the story is not astonishing; it is the finale to the instruction of the greatest crime ever committed. "There is no surprise in store here. This is to be a study of the calculated creation of that masterwork of criminal art, the perfect crime" (Henninger 322).

The beginnings of Montresor's masterful plan are in the family motto he describes to Fortunato. " 'Nemo me impune lacessit.' Montresor's family motto has been translated, 'No one attacks me with impunity.' But it can be translated, 'No one bothers me in the slightest with impunity'" (White 551-2). No matter how insignificant the insult is that Fortunato projects onto Montresor, Montresor has to avenge it. The family motto is also accompanied by an emblem or family coat of arms. The Montresor family emblem depicts a snake being stepped on by a golden foot, but the snake is biting the foot in the Achilles heel (White 553). In ancient Greek tradition, the Achilles heel was viewed as the weak point on a person's body and if any misfortune came to that part of the body, it could result in death, as it did in the case of the war-hero Achilles. The coat of arms is an insight into the mind of Montresor, as is the family motto. Montresor is like the snake; he is going to have the last laugh. The family motto itself gives justification for Montresor to commit the crime he did. Through the symbolism of the coat of arms, it is clear that Montresor is simply acting in a way that is common in his family. The motto of the Montresor family spells out exactly what happens to anyone who crosses the family, and it serves as a fair warning to anyone who wishes to challenge the family tradition.

The family tradition of Montresor fully explains why Montresor committs the crime that he does. However, the family emblem and motto do not call for a despicable plan to bury someone alive. This does not suggest that Montresor is insane; it merely provides an exclamation point to the entire situation. "He has an obligation to his family; he carries it out, with relish, and savors deeply the satisfaction that success in carrying out this obligation brings him...now, fifty years after the event, he can recount it with pride" (White 554). Montresor acts for his family and its honor. The motto and family emblem are the keys to understanding the root of Montresor's aggressive behavior towards Fortunato. In the time Montresor is alive, allegiance and pride in one's family is comparable to our modern day nationalism. As a member of the family, he feels obligated to defend his family from an attack, in this case, the attack coming directly from Fortunato. Montresor is only defending his family's honor. This makes Montresor a sort of patriot of his time (White 551). During Montresor's life, there is no national pride in existence. People are only connected to the close ones around them. It is a time of mistrust, and people had to keep their friends close, but their enemies closer. "For Montresor, with his feudal orientation, [family coat of arms and motto] would be capable of imposing the most serious and fearful obligations" (White 551). Poe deliberately informs the audience of Montresor's family heritage for forshadowing purposes. The family emblem and motto are signs of Montresor's feelings and loyalties, and they should not be taken lightly.

Montresor's allegiance to his family and their beliefs provides a glance into his complex mind. Montresor committed his act for his family, and justifiably so. As for the method used in killing Fortunato, there is nothing wrong with making a little extra effort to get the job done. Montresor enjoys his duty of murdering Fortunato, so it is no surprise he prepares accordingly. Also, burying someone alive in the manner used by Montresor is an intelligent choice of method. Montresor has to make sure the job gets done and done right; he can not let anything interfere with

his plans. To understand why Montresor can enjoy killing Fortunato, he must be viewed as a soldier, because after all, he is defending his family. The family unit in Montresor's eyes is as important as the country is to a modern day marine. Soldiers of war take pleasure in victories, even when excessive enemy blood is spilled. The reason soldiers can take pride in such a massacre is because they are acting for the best interest of their homeland. Nothing hits as close to home for Montresor as an attack on his family (White 553). Montresor acts in a patriotic way, performing a civil duty in modern day standards. War is hell, and desperate times call for desperate measures. Montresor has the mindset of a soldier and believes he is fighting for peace, peace at any price. "Even if Fortunato's presumed offense had been directed against Montresor personally, not only Montresor but the entire Montresor family would be shamed by it. To strike one is to strike all" (White 552). Montresor acts for the honor of his family, not for unjustifiable reasons of insanity. "If we grant Montresor the mentality of a soldier in combat—and it would seem he is possibly entitled to such consideration—we should be able to understand that he would not have to be either demented or Satanic to carry out the killing of Fortunato" (White 553). Countries do not look down upon soldiers of war who commit horrible acts of murder; people should not frown upon Montresor for defending his family values and legacy.

The Montresor family motto is shared by the country of Scotland and The Order of the Thistle. It originates from when the Danes attacked Scotland, and someone blew their cover by stepping on a thistle. The Danes were severely punished with impunity (Cervo 1). The snake in the Montresor family emblem represents the thistle in Scotland, and Fortunato symbolizes the Danes. Montresor gets his family motto from the Scottish national motto, and it means as much to Montresor as it does to an entire country, proving that this motto can provoke extreme nationalism, or in Montresor's case, extreme loyalty to his family lines. The national medallion of Scotland, which features the same motto that is adopted by the Montresor family, provides additional support to the fact that Montresor is not insane.

The Scottish national symbol does not feature a snake being stepped on by a golden foot like the Montresor family emblem. It does, however, offer a preview of events to unfold. Montresor is not insane; he is the greatest choreographer of the most elaborate production ever known. "The underlying structural paradigm of Poe's story is in the medallion of The Order of the Thistle: an eight-pointed star, charged with a figure of Saint Andrew, which is set behind the X-shaped cross he is holding" (Cervo 1). This symbolizes the obliteration of a human being by crossing them out, out of life. Montresor's goal in "Cask of Amontillado" is to erase the existence of Fortunato, which he succeeds in doing.

Another connection can be drawn between Saint Andrew and Fortunato, using the same idea behind the medallion. The medallion of The Order of Thistle depicts Saint Andrew carrying a cross. Not only does this represent someone being eliminated, but it also reveals how Saint Andrew died. Saint Andrew carried his cross because that is what was required of someone on their way to be crucified. He was put to death because of his views and his beliefs in Christianity. Saint Andrew held the belief in one God, and he stuck by that God until death. Fortunato can be viewed as Saint Andrew in the way he dies, making Montresor a genius in the way he murders him. With his arms outstretched and bound by chains, Fortunato assumes the position of crucifixion, even though no nails are used in the death of Fortunato. Along the same lines, Fortunato dies in such a way that resembles the death of Saint Andrew, for the love of God. " 'Yes,' I said, 'let us be gone.' *'For the love of God, Montresor!'* 'Yes,' I said, 'for the love of God'" (Poe 177).

Joseph Kishel comments that Fortunato yells, "For the love of God, Montresor," and Montresor simply answers his cry with an ironic mimic of Fortunato by repeating his words. This can either symbolize Montresor's own religious motives or a play on Biblical times when beggars would yell out in the streets, "For the love of God," as a sign of begging for their own lives. Montresor mocks Fortunato and does not listen to Fortunato's plea for his life (Kishel 1). One of the final pieces of Montresor's masterpiece is the connection to the Bible. Montresor displays his knowledge and his

level mindset by carrying out the murder of Fortunato in a mock religious ceremony of a human sacrifice. "Fortunato's incredulity suggests that Montresor is a Catholic…the coat of arms…is more than a simple revenge motif. The circuitous device—'A huge human foot d'or, in field azure; the foot crushes a serpent…'—is taken from the curse upon the serpent in Genesis 3:14" (Harris 320).

Religious symbolism plays a further role in the story. The crucifixion and the motto suggest that Montresor is of Catholic descent. Montresor presents one of the last pieces to his puzzle by conducting a spoof of a traditional Catholic mass. "Montresor is performing his murder in the fashion of a grotesque mockery of Holy Mass. A supreme connoisseur, Montresor must not only kill with impunity, but also with style" (Clendenning 337). Clues also suggests that the costume that Montresor wears to the festival, the roquelaire, has significant meaning to the Catholic Church. The roquelaire is a ceremonial garment for Catholic priests that is worn during mass; the mass of the deceased (337). Montresor's thoughts reveal more insight into his holy duties. "I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation" (Poe 173). Clendenning continues by commenting on the meaning of Montresor's choice of words. Immolation is not only a killing, as Montresor is well aware; it is a sacrificial homicide (337).

Furthermore, Felheim, Moon, and Pearce elaborate by exposing additional symbolism in Montresor's crime and setting. The carnival setting in which Montresor's masterful plan is executed is representative of the ancient festival of the night of Passover. Fortunato's costume for the festival also reveals some reference to the Bible. The jester's hat that Fortunato wears is symbolic of the crown of thorns worn in ancient times. The bait itself, the Amontillado, is used by Montresor for specific reasons. Amontillado means, "From the mountain," which can be traced back to a sacred wine for Christians, otherwise known as communion. The use of bait to lure someone to their own death is the last symbolic feature to Montresor's masterpiece. In the Bible, Judas was escorted down into catacombs, exactly like Fortunato is, and left to be mocked and eventually killed (301). The striking similarities to religious ceremonies cannot be overlooked. Montresor has extensive knowledge of the Holy Mass as well as Christian history and traditions. A person of an unstable mental state could not coordinate such a precise ritual. Montresor's ceremonial execution of Fortunato is no accident in the way it plays out. Each event is carefully calculated. "The tale has a strong flavour of a profane rite, a sort of Black Mass, or parody of archetypal events and themes in holy scripture" (301). Montresor not only acts with impunity, he acts as a crusader on behalf of God Himself.

It is easy to point a finger blaming insanity, but who are we pointing it at? Montresor is clearly not insane. Poe makes a point to show Montresor's sanity at the end of the story by his "heart growing sick" (177). Also, the Montresor family motto and coat of arms reveal that Montresor is merely acting on behalf of his family's honor; this gives justification to his actions. The relationship between the Montresor family emblem and the Scottish national seal proves that the symbol of a family can ignite enough passion to kill for a cause. The Scottish national symbol itself is symbolic of the method used to kill Fortunato. Finally, the parallels between Montresor's act and the Holy Mass are astounding. Montresor not only acts for his "country"; he fights for God Himself. This gives Montresor the status of a soldier fighting for his motherland, as well as a holy warrior, fighting in a more modern day crusade. It is difficult to tell a soldier of war he is insane for putting his life on the line for his country; thus, Montresor cannot be labeled insane for carrying out his own civil duty.

If Montresor is not insane, then who is? "Poe makes us explore the sadism that lurks in all of us" (Graham 332). Montresor begins his masterpiece by informing everyone that they share the same feelings as him by stating, "You, who so well know the nature of my soul" (Poe 173). Montresor acts for his homeland, and people today still feel a strong allegiance to their motherland. Patrick White explains:

> We as members of the human community, share it with the royal house of Scotland, with the revolutionary-era American patriots, with all members of universal humanity whoever

> they may be, who anticipating or experiencing a grievance against their tribal unit, whether it be one of formal political autonomy or not, feel justified in holding the right to take direct action against an adversary and in taking action if the provocation occurs. And, sharing that soul which we know so well, we know that the provocation can be slight and the retaliation brutal. (554)

Montresor knows that everyone understands his crime, and most importantly, the reasons for committing it. He knows that every human being is capable of the same thoughts and the same actions (553). On September 11, 2001, the United States of America was brutally attacked by foreign threats. At that time in our country, every American citizen wanted to see the culprits of this disaster punished harshly. Does this make the entire country insane? No, it makes us human, like Montresor, capable of thinking and performing inhumane assignments.

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Evaluation: *Matt's research is thorough, incisive, and original. He takes us through catacombs as fearlessly as Montresor does Fortunato.*

Unforgettable Trip

Halina Gil-Darlak
Course: English 101 (Composition)
Instructor: Andrew Wilson

Assignment:
Write a personal experience essay.

It was a beautiful September, 1994, and that Sunday's afternoon was especially beautiful; the sun shone and beat down so strongly that I had the feeling it was the middle of the summer, not the autumn. My three-year-old son Pawel, my husband Krzysztof, and I sat on a swing in my father's garden; I still could not believe that only the day before we had been in our house in Poland, getting ready for our first trip to the United States. Because I hadn't seen my father, my brother, and my friends for very long time, because I missed all of them very much, I was very happy there, in my father's house, which was located in a small, picturesque town called Barrington. Moreover, my happiness and my joy caused the world around me to look more wonderful; it seemed that everything was much easier, and everything was possible. Therefore, I hoped that there, far away from problems, troubles, arguments, and fights with my husband, (parts of my life in Poland), I would be able to revive my broken marriage.

While my father and my brother were preparing the welcoming dinner, some delicious meals on the barbecue, my friends swam in the swimming pool. They were also very glad about our meeting, so they asked me and my husband to go with them to Minnesota for fishing. Because it was my first time in the U.S., because I wanted to see as much as I could, because I thought that this trip could a be miraculous cure for my disintegrating marriage, I decided to go with them. I borrowed my father's car, took our son, and full of happiness, joy, and hope, I began my first unforgettable trip in the U.S.

The trip lasted about eight hours until we reached our destination, but when we got there, I was very surprised. Moreover, I was deeply shocked! The place that my friends chose was completely wild. The camping area, if I can call it that, was located in the middle of a forest, nearby some big lake whose name I don't remember now, a few miles from any civilization. I knew that my friends were fervent fishermen and fisherwomen and that for them the most important thing was this lake, but I didn't expect that they would bring me to such a secluded spot. The vacation houses, which my friends had been talking about and praising, looked like sheds. There was neither a bathroom nor a restroom inside those sheds. I stopped dead trying to imagine myself going to the forest with my basic needs. There was only the small sink, but it was too small to bathe my son in it. "O my God! What am I doing here? What am I doing here?" I kept asking myself. Unfortunately, I could see nothing positive in this circumstance; the only things I saw were dirty windows, sticky floor, and filthy, destroyed furniture. And that terrible stink! The place in which I was going to spend a whole week was full of a terrible stink. Moreover, it was very cold there, and there was no heating in our "vacation shed." I was disappointed, angry, terrified, and sad. I was sad because my husband didn't care about my feelings; in contrast, he was happy!

He was happy because, as he used to say, he went there to fish, and only this was important for him, nothing else. My husband and friends woke up in the early morning, took the boat, and went fishing. They spent the whole day on the lake, and came back very late in

the evening. During this time, I stayed alone with my small boy and was waiting for their return. However, the situation did not change when they came back. My husband explained to me that they were so "busy" fishing all day, and that they were so tired; therefore, they were going to recover from stress. Of course, the best way to do that was by drinking. Because I was the only mother with a small child there, because I had to take care of him, I did not participate in the drunken parties. I felt awful because my husband did not pay any attention to me, because he didn't pay attention to his son, and because I realized that my marriage was a big mistake. I talked with him, I wanted him to understand my situation: I had nothing to do there, and I had no one to talk with of course besides my son, who was three and therefore wasn't necessarily a good companion to talk to. Unfortunately, my husband was deaf and blind.

One day, I noticed that my son had a high fever, and some strange rash was on his whole body. My son, who always was a bright, lively, and cheerful child, became sluggish, downcast, and grumpy. He complained that he was all itchy. But even then my husband was blind. It turned out that Pawel had chicken pox. Initially, my son had only a few bumps that looked like insect bites. Then, they developed into thin-walled blisters filled with clear fluid, which then became cloudy. The blisters first appeared on my son's face, and then they spread to almost everywhere else on his body, including the scalp, mouth, nose, ears, and even eyes. There were several hundred blisters on Pawel's body! When the blisters' walls started to break, they left open sores. Whereas some blisters broke, a lot of new ones appeared. As I found out later, the most characteristic feature of the chicken pox rash is that all stages of the lesions can be present at the same time.

I was sure that we had to go back home. Of course, my son's daddy was having so much fun there, so he didn't want to go back. Crying, I ased him to go home with us; I begged him for help because I needed a driver. Because I wasn't used to driving in the U.S., and I completely didn't know how to get home, I really needed his help. Moreover, I knew that I would have to take care of my sick child during the trip, but my husband refused. I knew that I couldn't stay there longer, so I made a desperate decision to take my sick son and go home by myself.

I had never been as scared as I was while I was driving home. I wasn't sure if I was driving in a good direction, but some inner voice, my intuition, was telling me to drive that way. It was getting later and later, and my car was the only one on the highway. Because it was so dark, and only the full moon was lighting up the world around me, I imagined the worst things that could happen to my son and me. For instance, I wondered what could happen if my car broke down. I tried not to think in this way, but the thoughts did not leave my mind. Shivering and crying from the fear, I kept driving. I wanted so much to see any car on the highway because it might have helped me to feel safer. However, when this car drove up, and kept driving very, very close behind me for a long time, I felt worse than before. I thought that the driver from his car might be a killer, that he might kill me and my son. At that time, I didn't know much about the U.S.; moreover, some of my knowledge came from American horror movies. Therefore, that night, everything was horrifying for me. While driving, I also thought about my husband. I couldn't understand how he could let me drive. At that moment, my sadness transformed into anger; my powerlessness transformed into hatred, but that anger and that hatred gave me some strange power that didn't allow me to give up.

The worst part of my trip was when I made a decision to find a hotel. Because I was very tired, I could not drive anymore. In other words, I had to find a hotel to get stronger. It was not easy because I was in that part of Minnesota where there were only forests and open spaces. It was about two in the morning when I saw a lone motel standing not so far from the highway. It was a small motel that looked like the one from Hitchcock's movie, but I had no choice because my son and I felt worse and worse. I couldn't sleep all night, and I was shivering. I realized that I had a very high fever and the same rash as my son had; I had chicken pox, too. The next morning, I felt really bad, but I couldn't think about myself; my son's health was the most important for me. And although I had difficulty to get to my car, I knew that I had to drive home.

The morning was beautiful; the sun shone more brightly than usual, and I was lost somewhere in the U.S. I didn't know where I was, but I knew that I had to get home as fast as possible, because my son was in very bad condition. the fever was still very high, and with each minute, there were more and more blisters on his skin. He cried, but this cry was so strong that for a while he was losing his breath. Even though I felt so very, very bad, I had to think first about my little boy. I tried to calm him down; I told him some fables and sang him some songs, but it didn't work. He still cried. He kept crying for a long time. This crying was driving me crazy; I felt as if my head was splitting. Silence! At length the silence! Because he was so exhausted, my son stopped crying. He was fast asleep. Now, I was alone with my thoughts, but I didn't think about sadness, disappointment, sorrow. I neither thought about anger and hatred. My only thought was my home. Even though the blaxing sun dazzled me, and even though I was almost unconscious, I kept driving. I don't remember how many hours I drove, but I remember how happy I was when I saw my home. My father and brother were surprised because they didn't know what happened in Minnesota, but they didn't ask. My father called a doctor, who was his friend, and asked him to come to our home. The doctor came and took care of us. I was so weak, and I almost don't remember what happened later. Because my son was only three, he got better very fast, but I spent many days lying half-conscious in my bed.

When I finally got home, I couldn't believe what I did. I covered that long distance between Minnesota and Chicago, but also I overcame my fear. Until I overcame my fear, I had thought about myself as a weak woman who hadn't been able to do anything without my husband's help. That trip was a very important experience in my life because I proved to myself that I was a strong woman capable of taking care of my child and me, and I didn't have to be dependent on a husband. And even though my trip wasn't a miraculous cure for my broken marriage, it helped me to solve my problems in a different way. After those few days when I could count only on myself, I had no illusions about my marriage. Therefore, I began divorce proceedings a few weeks after that unforgettable trip. Even though that trip wasn't pleasant, it taught me how to be self-sufficient and independent. There is a well-known saying: "If something doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger." I think that this one episode of my life made me stronger, but it didn't make my body stronger. Instead, it strengthened my spirit, loosened my unhealthy link to my husband, and perfected the bond between myself and my son.

Evaluation: *This essay appeals to me because it has some of the features of a solid narrative: a semi-villain, a sense of realistic growth, and a little bit of the "stranger in a strange land" spirit.*

Global E-Commerce: Are You Ready?

Mary Greener
Course: CIS 218 (E-Commerce Development)
Instructor: Terry Morris

Assignment:
Information technology professionals often need to research new business applications of technology and report to a manager or project team. This assignment provides students practice with this job function. In this business research report, each student chooses an aspect of e-commerce that interests him or her. The student explores, researches, and prepares a report on the chosen topic. The scope of this business report is five to nine pages. Students work on this project for much of the semester and are required to meet milestones, including topic approval, research and source evaluation, outline, rough draft, and final report. This provides students with guidance and feedback throughout the semester on their work. Students are mentored during the process with the goal of an informative, practical business research report in mind.

There are 680 million users on the Internet today, and only 40% of those users speak English as their native language. Studies have shown that given the opportunity to make a transaction, a user will do so on a site presented in their native language. That equates to about 412 million people untouched by "English only" web sites, and the percentage of people who do not speak English will grow as less developed countries have the Internet made available to the general population. Translating web pages to another language does not make or guarantee a global sale. The investment is much larger than translation. Things to consider include culture, tradition, law, language, measurement, currency and customer service. Ensuring that a web site is truly global will be the key to success in international e-trade.

Anyone with a business engaging in e-commerce needs to apply brick and mortar international trade guidelines to e-commerce international trade. Most of the rules apply except, of course, physical contact with the customer. Edward T. Hall, a well-known anthropologist considered the founder of intercultural study, once said, "the single greatest barrier to business success is the one erected by culture." E-commerce firms should approach the process of learning about the intended audience from a student's perspective, to learn as much as they can about the culture, traditions, and professional etiquette and protocol of the people, and regions within that country. Those interested in global e-commerce should not limit their resources and should be sure to consult current, dated materials such as books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers and, of course, the Internet.

Anyone interested in developing an e-commerce business should be sure to determine the intended audience for the site before doing so. If you already have a site, you should determine who visits your site, or otherwise, determine who your potential customer will be or who you want them to be. This is a critical step when considering the localization of a web-site, because there are a vast number of nationalities in the world, and physical boundaries between countries do not often correlate with differences in culture, tradition, or etiquette. Dialects in language also differ within the same country or language. For instance, one who is of Spanish descent,

speaks Spanish, and lives in Mexico will not interpret a translation in the same context as a person of Spanish decent who speaks Spanish and lives in Spain or Cuba.

Several resources are available for existing sites to determine who current visitors to sites are, which may help in deciding on localization. Web-site log files are one resource that can indicate what languages may be worth translating pages into. Other information that can be gleamed from logs includes web browsers used and the platforms they run on. These resources will also become invaluable in analyzing the success of your investment. Knowing what technology is commonly available to your target audience is also important. Several foreign governments regulate communication channels and access. Although computers have nearly become a staple in the American household, they are not a staple in all countries. You would also benefit to know if and what hardware and software is available to your target audience.

Just as you would not overload a school schedule with too many classes, you should not overload your experience in learning about different audiences. There are far too many languages and cultures to address them all at once, so someone interested in tailoring an e-commerce web page to a specific audience should start small, plan, and work into it. Trust often comes with respect for another's culture and traditions, and trust equates to new and returning customers.

For many reasons, this educational footwork should be completed before designing a site's localized pages. One should consider learning about the pace of the customer, religions, and recognized holidays, religious as well as governmental. In many foreign countries, the business protocol is slower than in the United States. Relationships often take years to establish, unlike with Americans, who expect to establish a bond within weeks and sometimes hours. The Japanese, for example, are known for a slower pace. In running an e-commerce web site focused on a specific international audience, one should expect a potential international customer to make several visits to the site over an extended period of time before a sale is made, and the audience should be given a reason to return to the site.

In traditional trade, trust is most often built through socialization, such as dinners and gift giving. Although the Internet makes both of these activities difficult, socialization can still be accomplished in international e-commerce. Open forums, bulletin boards, or marketing strategies such as free items are tools that can be used; however, without research, use of these steps could very well backfire. For instance, many consumers in foreign countries consider the style and thoughtfulness or personalization of a gift over substance. A free travel alarm clock might be welcome here, but in China such a gift would be considered morbid, representing death or the time left in one's life. In Japan and South Korea, to give four of an item is considered unlucky. These are just a few examples where a marketing strategy could actually drive potential customers away.

Education on the laws of exporting from within the United States and importing into your target area is a necessity for anyone involved in internationally focused e-commerce. Customs and export laws need to be applied to prevent legal complications and additional expenses that may be incurred by not following them. The United States Customs and Border Protection Service is responsible for ensuring that all goods entering and exiting the United States do so in accordance with U.S. laws and regulations (see list of works consulted for web address); however, they only enforce the laws set by other departments of the government. Civil and criminal fines for breaking these laws range anywhere from $500 to over $1 million, with some including jail time, depending on the severity of the breach. The actual agencies that determine these laws include the U.S. Department of Commerce; Bureau of Industry and Security; Department of State; Office of Defense Trade Controls; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Drug Enforcement Administration; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Office of Foreign Assets Control; or the Bureau of the Census. So, trying to determine who would regulate your exports may become an overwhelming task. A very helpful web site that covers not only the US laws but also some links on foreign law is Export.gov (http://www.export.gov). This site provides links covering exporting basics to shipping, licensing, and documentation requirements.

Sensitivity to the nuances of communication with

the target audience should take into account such factors as body language, colors, and individual words, not just verbal communication. Believe it or not, these things presented innocently on your site could drive away potential customers. There are many resources available to help one understand foreign nonverbal communication, most notably world travel guides for tourists. Whether or not you plan on traveling to the country of your potential customer, these guides will give you good insight into the ways of that culture.

Body language can be portrayed through simple graphics used on your site, such as buttons, logos, or graphics of product packaging. Although we have many hand gestures and body language we use every day without a second thought, one should be sure to think them over again before using them with the intended audience. You may be tempted to use some of these symbols to direct customers' attention to items or actions that need to be taken by them. Let's say you want to place a graphic depicting a hand gesturing an O.K. symbol instead of the word "okay" or "OK." In the United States, this gesture would be perfectly acceptable; however, it is a very rude gesture in Russia, Germany, Brazil, and Latin America. In the 1950s, Vice President Richard Nixon made a goodwill trip to Latin America. At that time, there was much hostility toward the U.S. Nixon innocently stepped off the plane on his arrival and flashed the "OK" sign. The people booed him, and this small event made headlines. This same gesture in France would translate to "worthless," or in Japan to "money." Nixon was notorious for flashing the peace sign, also known as the victory sign. Do you think he knew that having the palm toward the face while gesturing is offensive in England?

Colors used in the design of your site or in product packaging can also cause unintended harm to your success. Purple represents death in Mexico and Brazil, but white represents death in Japan. Southeast Asians like bright colors, whereas Germans prefer somber colors. In Japan, gold is considered gaudy, but in Hong Kong it is a symbol of royalty. Green is the nationalist color of Egypt but represents jungle disease in Malaysia and youth in the Orient. However, if a man wears a green hat in China it means that his wife or his sister is a prostitute! People's tastes in color schemes vary depending on the culture, traditions, age, and market you are targeting.

Words that we take for granted everyday could have many different meanings across the world. Many of our words are slang and not recognized by foreigners. Once, I walked into a gas station to pay for the gas I had pumped into my car. The clerk, who was from India, was on the telephone reciting numbers to the person on the other end of the line. Jokingly, I said, "calling in numbers to your bookie, hey?" He looked at me with a questioning face. Then I realized that he had no idea what I was talking about or what a bookie was. Of course I went on to explain this to him and we laughed, but the opportunity to explain does not exist in the cyber-world. Determine what's in a word before using it---avoid sarcasm and slang. And just when you thought you'd be safe using English, here's a twist. Words in the American English language often do not equate to words in the British English language. For example, the word billion translates to trillion, can to tin, hood to bonnet, and diaper to napkin. One should determine which English your potential customers are exposed to before applying it.

Customer service can be the vital link determining the return of a new customer. This applies at home as well as abroad. Customers want web contacts to be available when they want and expect openness and honesty as they establish trust with you. Be sure to include phone numbers and the address of your business on your site, along with an e-mail address where the customer can contact you. Include pictures of the owner and staff to portray a personal effect. Be punctual in responding to questions or e-mails and be sensitive to the element of time. Although the contiguous 48 United States only has three time zones, a large portion of the world is just going to bed as we are going to work. Be clear on delivery dates and the mode of transportation available. Product availability or time constraints may be the only reason a customer has visited your site to complete a transaction. If you can achieve delivery effectively, it is more than likely they will return again because of your service.

Information on the site should be clearly expressed. Warranties should be expressed clearly in the appropri-

ate language and include return or repair instructions, and prices and quantities should be listed on the site in the appropriate currency and translation. Confusing the customer with American measurements and weights can drive them away quickly if they have to convert them. An excellent resource for conversions of almost any type is at http://www.onlineconversion.com, which is part of the BlueSparks network.

The servicing of a customer thousands of miles away may face several barriers that must be overcome to truly make the customer comfortable and satisfied. After all, a good after sales service can turn a negative experience into a positive one. Again, phone numbers, addresses, bulletin boards and on-line chat offer the feeling that a company is attentive to their customers' needs, but how will you interpret these modes of communication from your customer? Customers may be drawn to a site by a translated page and then be lost just as easily when they discover support doesn't come in their language.

There are a number of different options available for customer service that supports different languages. A translator could be hired, but this is probably not the most efficient use of resources. A recent advertisement for a translator speaking English, German, and French offered a salary of 17,500 to 20,000 British pounds, equivalent in America to $31,283 to $35,752. To employ an individual may not be costly, but to employ an individual around the clock for every language may run up quite a payroll. Luckily, there are other alternatives. You could contract with an independent on a case by case basis either locally or overseas. Drawbacks here would include availability, unless of course the individual doesn't mind waking with a cheery face when a customer calls at some odd hour or responding to calls when they are ill.

To help conquer the language barrier, you could create a virtual call center with software that uses a remote agent and telecommuting workforce. Software like this is offered by companies such as Database Systems Corporation (http://www.databasesystemscorp.com). These systems use the Internet, allowing customer service staff to work from home. Or, you could use a service such as Universal Engine (http://universalengine.com), which supplies multilingual customer support solutions. These services offer incoming and outgoing e-mail translation by human professionals and live sales and support conversations through an interpreter, both available 24 hours a day.

Another strategy focused on conquering the language barrier involves implementation of a multilingual web-based support portal. This technology takes advantage of knowledge bases and allows users access to self-help resources, technical information, and support services that allow users to find answers to their own questions. Regardless of the solution, plenty of research should be done to address this critical portion of the customer relationship.

When looking to expand beyond the borders of the United States, you may want to consider the ISO 9000. The International Organization for Standardization's ISO 9000 is a set of standards for quality management systems that is accepted around the world. The increase in international trade brought on the development of internationally recognized quality standards. It was feared that different national standards would be a barrier to international trade, and so the ISO was born (http://www.iso.ch). Currently, more than 158 countries have adopted ISO 9000 as national standards. Although the manufacturing industry initially got the head start, ISO 9000 applies to all types of companies. It doesn't matter what size a company is or what it does.

It can help both product- and service-oriented companies achieve standards of quality that are recognized and respected. Registration is rapidly becoming a must for any company that does business in Europe, as the European Union has made it a key element in its drive to remove barriers to trade with Europe. Benefits from implementing this standardization claim to be management optimization, operating efficiency, reduced costs, increased marketability, and customer satisfaction.

Anyone building a truly global business should invest time in education before investing in converting to a multilingual web-site. There are far too many things to consider besides simply translating a page to be successful. So often in companies, investments and projects fail or are shelved because of lack of knowledge, structure, and understanding of the customers' needs and

desires. This also applies to foreign customers.

A three-year study completed in 2000 by the Language and Culture for Business Program at the University of Luton, England, focuses on a training program targeted at small and medium-sized companies desiring to or participating in overseas commerce. The program teaches cultural norms, etiquette, and language skills through workshops in a train-the-trainer fashion. Results of a survey in the final year of the study in relation to multicultural and multilingual web-sites revealed the following:

- Participants were treated with more respect by customers or suppliers due to making an effort to learn their language.
- Companies were able to take in more orders and close more deals with improved verbal communication skills.
- Participants saw an immediate benefit in the areas of strategic planning, marketing and business opportunity as well as effective customer service and customer satisfaction.

Education is a key to success. A trip to the country of your prospective customer would be a good idea, as would attendance at a trade fair to learn about your customers' culture of business and your current knowledge of it.

Finally, the design and mechanism you will use to translate your pages should be considered carefully. Although this should be the last and what most would think the easiest step, it cannot be accomplished effectively or successfully without the educational experience you must take first.

When designing multilingual pages, remember to apply what you have learned about your audience. Color and graphics should be used wisely, and the whole site should demonstrate a sensitivity to your customers' culture, traditions, and preferences. Slang and sarcasm should be avoided. Your customer will not understand things they have not been exposed to without an explanation. Use short, simple sentences to be clear and precise, and repeat important statements as many times as necessary to ensure understanding. All necessary information you would present in your English site should be presented in the customer's native language. This includes warranties, privacy statements, order forms, customer service and more.

Larger companies, although they have several advantages over others, apparently haven't done all their research and have invested what must be millions into the development of their global web-sites. For instance, Nike.com offers what seems to be a wide variety of translated pages. North America has menus that indicate the USA and Canada. The native language of the USA is English. What is the native language of Canada? The laws of Canada recognize two official languages, English and French. The region of the country you are in determines the language that is used most often; however, the Canadian site is only offered in English.

The luck of the draw will tell you if any of the Nike Women sites have actually been translated. English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Italian, Polish, Turkish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Tia are the languages available. If you select the link to Malaysia, Singapore, or the Philippines, where the native language is Filipino, also known as Tagalog, it is written in English. Although Manila, the capital of the Philippines, and the surrounding suburbs are somewhat affluent, certainly not everyone can read English.

Another issue with the Nike.com site is Flash, Flash, and more Flash. They open with Flash and link to Flash. Several of the links to "translated" pages merely display advertising in Flash. Obviously, the availability of high-speed access and higher-end processing hardware were not what Nike was thinking about when developing their site. In May 2003, a study by Neilsen (http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=302129) of the broadband and dial-up usage in the United States alone revealed that about 39 million Americans have a broadband access while 69.5 million have a dial-up access; and these are just the statistics for the US, a technically advanced country. Nike is missing out on a huge audience who will exit this site because of load time, regardless of translation.

Deciding on automated translation or human translation will also be an educational experience. The greatest advantage of automated translations is speed, while accuracy is the greatest advantage of human

translation. Other dynamics come into play in both, such as cost, maintenance, and culture.

Below is a paragraph that was translated from English to Spanish then back to English at http://babelfish.altavista.com/. This site allows the user to translate phrases for free. This is a fine example of how the value of accuracy can outweigh the value of cost.

> For years I've taken pictures, had them developed and put them in a box or a photo album where they sat. I finally decided to do something with them. Now that I have a digital camera the standard process of take, develop and file has changed. Three walls of my basement, or my "Eclectic Gallery," are covered with picture frames I've collected from all over the country. Most of them are now filled with those useless photos, although many are waiting for new memories of tomorrow. I've created digital scrapbooks for friends and family and I am currently working on one for each of my boys. This is all just for fun, but maybe someday it will become something great.

Translation:

> By the I've years taken pictures, it had them developed and put them in a box or an album of photo where they seated. Finally it decided to do something with them. Now which I have a digital camera the standard process of the taking, it conviértase and the file has changed. Three walls of my cellar, or my Gallery" "Eclectic;, they are covered with the I've marks gathered of everything on the country. Now they fill most of them of those useless photos, although many are waiting for new memories morning. The books of digital memories created I've for the friends and family and I are working at the moment in one for each one of my boys. This one is all hardly for the diversion, perhaps but it will become someday something great.

This process took less than one minute, the cost was absolutely nothing, and maintenance would be as simple as clicking buttons, cutting, and pasting; however, the process certainly did not translate the paragraph into anything meaningful. One cannot tell if any culture was taken into consideration in this translation; however, we could assume not, since no questions were asked prior to submission and Spanish in Spain is different from Spanish in Mexico.

Another software application that claims to transform sites into "interactive multilingual hubs" is SYSTRANLinks. They also offer translation plug-ins for Microsoft products and claim that human translation is neither cost-effective nor capable of managing dynamic multilingual translations. Dynamic pages would bring this paper to a whole new level of education, but one should consider the static pages and the cost in time and software that would be wasted with output similar to that above. Although machine translation can filter large quantities of documents quickly, it doesn't produce perfect results. It can, however, provide an avenue to identify what documents will need human translation and speed that process.

Human translation, although very accurate if using a translator who is educated in the culture, can also be very cost prohibitive. Translation services are most often charged per word; however, this charge fluctuates based on the language and the level of the translator. To translate the example paragraph above at 40 cents per word would cost $48.00. Although this may seem like a minimal amount, this is only a paragraph of 120 words. In evaluating translation, one should consider the cost to convert the pages necessary for localization of just one target audience and the cost every time your page is updated.

There are several resources on the Internet for translation and localization. World Lingo is a superb source for all types of translation services (http://www.worldlingo.com/). At World Lingo, you can obtain an instant estimate on the cost of document translation. To translate this document by a human from English to Tagalog would cost approximately $980 or 25 cents per word. Translation by machine is limited to the most popular twelve languages by this resource, Tagalog not being one of them. They also offer services that allow you to browse the web in the twelve languages, and they offer an on-line e-mail translator, text translator, and a real-time web-site translator that you can add onto your site with one line of HTML code. They offer a live chat translator that would be beneficial for customer service

support and many other products. These are all machine translations, so remember your audience. World Lingo also has a comprehensive FAQ section on web-site localization (http://www.worldlingo.com/products_services/localization_faq.html).

What do the Social Security Administration, Rand McNally, MSNBC, John Deere and Geico Insurance Co. have in common? These are just a few of the clients that have used the translation, transcription, or interpreting services of ALS International (http://www.alsintl.com), another localization resource. They handle everything from language translation to web design and graphics for localized advertising. Although their site is not as informative as World Lingo, they do boast an impressive list of clients.

Several studies and projects over the past few years have given us hope in new technology. An interesting project which tries to address e-commerce communication was conducted by NESPOLE (NEgotiating through SPOken Language in E-commerce—http://nespole.itc.it/). The project involves personal translation of audio/video communication, or simply speech-to-speech translation. This system translates based on speech recognition, analysis, generation, and synthesis. Although not perfected, it is a success story nonetheless that presents a starting point for live automated translation.

The truth is, there is no software that will address all of your localization needs, and neither is there a translator who will. Effective solutions are a combination of technology that streamlines multilingual publishing, human translation, and interpretive expertise. Localization is more than translation.

Although widely professed to be global, the Internet is only one of the tools to your global success. Many larger companies have the resources in cash, legal expertise, and the advantage of going global brick and mortar first before applying what they have learned to international e-commerce. No doubt, there are tremendous opportunities to reach and secure foreign customers through e-commerce. But before you start translating web pages, plenty of research and analysis should go into your decision of converting to a multilingual site and truly going global, expanding your business across borders.

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Evaluation: *Mary provides a thorough overview of e-commerce localization and translation issues along with specific examples. She successfully draws from both well-regarded publications related to global trade as well as recent web sites. Mary does an excellent job of using a variety of resources to provide useful information and examples of e-commerce globalization issues important for a business to consider.*

Madness as Divine Sense in William Luce's *The Belle of Amerst*

Ellie Haberl
Course: Literature 224 (Women in Literature)
Instructor: Elizabeth Turner

Assignment:
Attend a women's literary event and compose an interpretive description of what you've experienced.

The director of City Lit Theater Company's *The Belle of Amherst*, Martha Adrienne, says in her director's notes that she often found herself wondering during rehearsals, "Why doesn't Emily seem more crazy and weird, as I hear others speak of her?" Indeed, in the collective consciousness, Emily Dickinson is regarded as eccentric: she rarely left her father's Massachusetts home, she never married, and she only wore white. With this image of Emily as a bizarre recluse being accepted by many as truth, Adrienne's question certainly hangs in the air during a production of *The Belle of Amherst*. Emily, herself, gives an answer when she writes, "much madness is divinest Sense—to a discerning Eye" (xiv). Playwright William Luce exhibits this discerning eye. By justifying Emily's strange behavior, Luce changes his audience's image of Emily Dickinson from one of a crazy recluse to a quirky genius. In his hands, madness begins to look like divine sense.

Luce delivers this change by targeting the areas of Emily's life that appear strange. He recognizes the need to explain her seclusion. This is done almost immediately after the play begins. Emily admits the behavior, saying, "I don't cross my father's ground to any house or town. I haven't left the house for years"(3). Emily then gives the explanation, "why should I socialize with gossips?" Luce has Emily portray the people of the town as nosy, walking by, and craning their necks to see into the house. Their conversation is portrayed as petty. Karen Pratt, City Lit Theater Company's Emily, takes on an obnoxious voice when she imitates the town people gossiping about Emily's sister Livinia. These conversations, when compared with the deep, beautiful, spiritual thoughts Emily shares throughout the play, persuade the audience that a lack of equal intellect is one of the reasons for Emily's seclusion.

Luce also must explain Emily's choice to dress exclusively in white. This is often a subject of psychoanalysis. Some say she wore bridal white because she never married and was disappointed in love as a girl. Luce has Emily address these concerns: "I enjoy the game. I do it on purpose. It's all—deliberate" (7). Pratt chooses to laugh playfully here to further this notion that having a little fun with the townspeople amused Emily. Luce communicates that Dickinson wanted to be regarded as a character in the town.

Luce also sees the need to address Emily's never marrying, in his effort to change Emily's image. The picture of Emily as a woman fearful of intimacy and comfortable in isolation is certainly supported by the fact that Emily remained in her father's house for her entire life, save one year of schooling, and by the fact that she lived with her sister, Livinia, until her death. Luce does not want Dickinson to look abnormal, so he explains she was the typical Amherst girl, going to dances and having crushes on boys. Pratt's Emily becomes giddy as she flashes back to her youth and reenacts flirting with James Billings at a dance. Pratt flits about the stage, smiling out at Billings as if he is in the audience. Luce also thinks it is important to Dickinson's image that he explain she had several men propose marriage. Emily says Judge Otis Lord was one such suitor. Again, there is justification for Emily's

refusal. One reason given is Judge Lord's eighteen-year seniority to Emily. Another reason Luce points to is Judge Lord's niece's objection to the marriage. Luce also wants to dispel the idea that Emily is incapable of intimacy. He includes text that describes a passionate love Emily shares with a minister from Philadelphia, Charles Wadsworth. Luce reveals that Emily can love and does. Of Wadsworth, Emily says, "like fleshless lovers, forever one. Such love was the limit of my dream, the focus of my prayer" (57). Again, so Emily will not seem abnormal, Luce makes it clear that the pair do not marry because of outside forces, not because Emily doesn't want to marry. Pratt kneels and weeps while saying, "Master—open your life wide and take me forever" (59). It is implied that it is impossible for them to marry. Emily asks, "Will you come to Amherst again? You can't? I understand" (60). It was so unusual for a female not to marry during Emily's time that Luce feels he must explain that Dickinson was able to love and willing to marry. His aim is always to prove Emily sane.

There is another, less easily defined way in which Luce paints a new picture of Emily. Throughout *The Belle of Amherst*, Luce's Emily is highly intelligent, intuitive, creative, witty, and mystical. He paints her as different, separate, gifted, and in the words of Emily's housekeeper, "genius"(9). This technique, even more than the others mentioned previously, explains Emily's unusual behavior. Luce says that Emily's behavior is different because Emily is different. Emily is physically isolated because she is intellectually isolated. Specific examples of Emily's unique sensibility abound. Luce alludes that Dickinson doesn't go to church because she feels God is present everywhere, preaching "In the name of the Bee—And of the Butterfly—And of the Breeze—Amen" (32). She has a mystical awareness that is far more developed than the spirituality of her peers, who feel they must attend church to feel God's spirit. Luce also portrays Dickinson as unusually witty. Again Luce separates her, so her differences appear genius rather than bizarre. Dickinson uses her characteristic humor when she describes her sister Lavinia's new cats. She says, "It catches a mouse an hour. We call it the minute hand" (35). Luce also creates an Emily who has a special relationship with books and words, which also separates her from the outside world. His Emily says it is an "afternoon for heaven" (8) when she reads Keats, Shelley, Shakespeare, and Bronte. She describes feeling physically as if the top of her head has been taken off. Emily explains that there are some words so magnificent she "lifts her hat to them" (9). When Pratt, as Emily, says the word, "phosphorescence" she writes it down, stares at it in awe, and makes a joyful noise. Emily has, in the words of Luce, "a love affair with language," one so powerful it almost is like a relationship similar to that of friends or lovers. Again, Luce wants to justify Emily's isolation from the outside world, this time by saying it is a choice to marry words, and to spend her time with books. Luce wants to make Dickinson's uniqueness appear positive.

City Lit and Luce's words make madness look like phosphorescence. The play is a celebration of the passion and the beauty of being unique, yet there is a sad little pull after watching Luce's defense of Emily. Emily Dickinson needs a defense. She is seen as crazy simply because she is a woman who challenges her time by choosing to live with words rather than with a man. She wears white, and she doesn't go out into a world that doesn't accept women who think about deep topics like life, and death, and love. We call her mad for this. If only Luce could make our madness look like divine sense.

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Evaluation: *Ellie's paper is both a focused interpretation and a thoughtful assessment.*

Submission or Transformation in Unbalanced Families: Kafka's Gregor Samsa and Faulkner's Sarty Snopes

Jenn Heineman
Courses: English 102 (Composition)
and Philosophy 115 (Ethics)
Instructors: Andrew Wilson and Barbara Solheim

Assignment:
Write a research paper in which you weave the content of the two courses together.

Family loyalty seems like a simple enough idea on its own. It is usually considered a positive character trait; this quality is admired, and many would say that it is easy to maintain. However, in our complex and diverse society, family loyalty cannot be counted on to maintain moral integrity or to support individuals' aspirations. Indeed, Aristotle might say that it is a virtue that could easily become a vice.

Upon examining Kafka's Gregor Samsa from "The Metamorphosis" and Faulkner's Sarty Snopes of "Barn Burning," one would likely say that these characters and their situations are very much alike. Both of these characters have controlling fathers; these characters are exploited and taken for granted. However, delving deeper into the stories, one will find that they have many differences as well; at the end of each story, these characters handle their situations very differently. One submits in every way, never really trying to overcome his burden, while the other undergoes a very dramatic transformation.

Gregor is used for money; his family shows little appreciation for his hard work and generosity, and his father is misleading about the fact that he could have easily gotten a job himself. One quote, in particular, describes Gregor, his willininghness to help his family financially, and the relationship that ensues:

> His success at work translated directly into cash that he could lay on the table at home before his astonished and pleased family. Those had been fine times, but they had never recurred, at least not with the same warm feelings, although Gregor later earned so much money that he was in a position to support the entire family, and he did so. They simply got used to it—the family as well as Gregor. They gratefully accepted his money, and he gladly offered it, but that special warmth did not reappear. (Kafka 406)

Gregor decided to support his family financially when they were supposedly in need. It seems that at first, he got positive feedback and felt good about what he was doing. However, as the family "simply got used to it," he may have felt that he was not trying hard enough to please them. Gregor may have been blinded by this, simply letting his family take advantage of his willingness to help while hoping that he would one day do well enough to be appreciated. Sadly, his persistence is hopeless; "that special warmth did not reappear."

In a way, "The Metamorphosis" is meant to depict the selfish, destructive nature of humans and material gain. However, Sheldon Goldfarb argues that this is not entirely true:

> But there are two problems with this interpretation: first, not everyone in the story becomes a piece of revolting vermin, only Gregor Samsa does; and second, there is more to Gregor Samsa's life as a bug than being disgusting and helpless. (198)

It is certainly true that Gregor is not helpless. His story is simply one of symbolism and the consequences he must face after the decisions he has made. However, to argue that Gregor is the only character in the story that becomes "a revolting piece of vermin" would be to look only at outward appearances.

At one time, Gregor's father had a business. When Mr. Samsa closes that business, he sets aside a good deal of money, but his son is under the impression that they have nothing left. Gregor's father lets him believe this and takes advantage of his helpful nature by letting Gregor get a job to support the family on his own without attempting to do so himself. Mr. Samsa is clearly a lazy and manipulative character.

Similarly, in Faulkner's "Barn Burning," Abner Snopes uses his son Sarty. He expects his son to lie for him, but he hardly shows Sarty any courtesy. In this way, Abner constantly takes advantage of Sarty's supposed impressionable youth and assumed resulting dependence; however, he underestimates his son. Sarty has a conscience and knows that what his father is doing is not right. When his father is telling him to be loyal to his family, and "stick to [his] own blood" (Faulkner 400), he may be feeling some resentment because blood is the only thing that he was given. It was something that he could not choose, and it is something that he knows he can never get rid of. Sarty was never given a real home, but even if he makes his own, he will always have his father's blood running through his veins. Although he is so different from his father, he knows that he would not exist without him; that is a guilt that will be with Sarty anywhere he goes. Still, Sarty knows that his father has made this family's blood too tainted for him to stick to.

Sarty's father has always made trouble for his family. He does nothing to avoid conflict; in fact, he is quite headstrong and always an instigator. A prime example is Mr. Snopes' attitude toward his boss, Mr. DeSpain, and his property. He deliberately walks through manure and does not care to wipe his feet before entering the house. When he is asked to clean the rug, he makes sure to ruin it in the process of removing the stain. Sarty's father walks his family through life being destructive and asking for trouble; when it crosses him, he is too stubborn to admit that he is wrong. Whenever he feels that he has been wronged, or does not get his way, Mr. Snopes makes sure that someone pays; he burns the barn of every man who crosses him.

Gregor and Sarty both have undesirable fathers, but the most obvious example of their differences is the way in which these characters handle their quandaries. Gregor's problem is that he does nothing at all. He had always simply decided that he should do what he could for the family, without realizing that he was really letting them take advantage of him. Even when Gregor finds that the family had some money saved up, he makes excuses for them, saying that his father was very clever to set aside some money when he did. Because Gregor always did what was asked of him, it seems that he was already an insect before his metamorphosis. Even with this radical change, Gregor is determined to go out and do another day's work.

> "Now," said Gregor—and he was well aware that he was the only one remaining calm—"I will just get dressed, pack my samples up, and be off. Will you allow me to go? Deputy Director, you see that I am not obstinate and that I want to go to work…." (Kafka 400)

It does not occur to him right away that this would not be practical even if it were possible. Physically becoming an insect hardly startles Gregor; perhaps he actually recognizes himself as one because he has always seemed and still seems to play that sort of role in life. His family even recognizes him in this new physical state. This is illustrated by the fact that Grete, Gregor's sister, brings the mutated Gregor milk, which was his favorite drink as a human. In a way, their recognition of him as an insect implies that the family is not blind to the fact that they treat Gregor with such greed. When the family is talking about getting rid of Gregor, he dies. In this way, even in Gregor's final, dying metamorphosis, he does exactly what his family wants him to do.

Quite differently, Sarty knows all along that his father does not do the right things. He is well aware of his father's problems and does not even attempt to make excuses for Abner's actions. Throughout this story, Sarty's conflicted feelings are underscored. He feels a sense of duty and eventually stands up for what he believes in (cf Ford n.pag.). Even at such a young age, Sarty must take action and move on. As his father sets

fire to the barn, Sarty breaks free and runs to tell DeSpain, knowing that his father will likely get shot. He runs towards the woods and hears shots fired; he thinks his father has been killed, but he keeps running. Abner would call this betrayal, but he fails to realize that blood is not what makes a home. Because he did not provide his son with a real home, because he was a coward who would rather run than face his problems in a civilized manner, because he did not provide his son with a decent example of a man, and because he expected Sarty to abandon his morals, Abner is the real traitor to his family.

Critics may ask why Sarty did not move on sooner, and why this particular time was so important. However, the important questions are not "why?" or "when?" Sarty is certainly torn; even after he leaves his family, he is found admiring his father. "To define himself, Sarty must define his father, so he eulogizes Abner." (Ford n.pag.)

> Father. My father, he thought. "He was brave!" he cried suddenly…"He was! He was in the war! He was in Colonel Sartoris' cav'ryl!" not knowing that his father had gone to that war …wearing no uniform, admitting the authority of and giving fidelity to no man, or army or flag, going to war…for booty—it meant nothing and less than nothing to him if it were enemy booty or his own. (Faulkner 409)

By admiring his father, it seems that Sarty wishes to embody his few positive traits. After the decision has been made, he is still uneasy about it. Despite the fact that he has already taken adult-like iinitiative, the fact that he is still a child and also still very vulnerable breaks through as he displays his agony over such a taxing decision. He doesn't know that his father isn't worthy of his second guessing, but the important bit of information is that Sarty does, indeed, move on.

Both characters are noble—Gregor, for his willingness to help his family, and Sarty, for his undying allegience to his morals, even in such a difficult situation—but neither of them change their families for the better. Sarty, however, chooses to assert himself, showing his family that he does have an opinion on the matter of how he is treated and that his opinion matters. Gregor never defends himself, sending the message that he does not respect himself. Perhaps more importantly, Sarty lives on with the chance to spread his message and give others the ideas and motivation for being self assertive and for demanding respect.

Using Aristotle's discussion of what it means to have a good life, this argument is only strengthened. Aristotle explains that happiness is not attained by material gain or by receiving any other worldly pleasure. It is attained by seeking virtue (Aristotle 55). Aristotle describes the social order as divided into three parts: the life of enjoyment, the life of politics, and the life of contemplation. The life of enjoyment is rejected as vulgar. It harbors short-term goals, including power, lust, survival, and other such lowly earthly pleasures, all of which are short-lived. The other paths are viewed as positive. A life of politics may be any aspect of contribution to the general polis. We are essentially social beings, and must recognize that we can work together to sustain and possibly advance our way of life. A life of contemplation is the path that a philosopher would choose. This path promotes freedom of thought and the possibility of advancement among societies (Aristotle 56).

According to Aristotle, all humans seek happiness; however, according to his teleological, or goal-based, theory, happiness may only be found once a person has begun to live a life in accordance with virtue. Virtues are excellences of character, determined by functions relevant to that being; something or someone is good when that thing or person performs a unique function well. Aristotle also implies that one would be happier when exercising one's unique function. Rational thinking and acting are traits unique to human beings. Therefore, to be a good human being, one's goal should be to develop these functions. In doing so, one will feel more complete (Aristotle 57).

Aristotle's virtue theory can be applied as an excellent way of thinking about how we shape our lives. No matter what a person's desired function is, there is a virtue that is suited for that function. Virtue exists in two forms: moral and intellectual. Moral virtues are positive character traits that are basically habitual and often taught to children at a very young age. However, the given virtue becomes a vice if it is in excess or if it is in deficiency. Intellectual virtue is found by exercising the

human function of reasoning (Aristotle 59). Aristotle believes that this produces the most perfect form of happiness (Aristotle 60).

If he had lived to read Faulkner's "Barn Burning" and Kafka's "The Metamorphosis," Aristotle would be likely to interpret and compare the characters Sarty Snopes and Gregor Samsa in much the same way that I have. Family loyalty is clearly a common virtue among the two stories. Gregor tries his best to maintain it alone, and Sarty tries to balance it with other virtues. However, in each case, it has become more of an issue; it is a burden, or even a vice.

Gregor, in his dire attempt to win back his family's affection, works almost nonstop as the sole provider. Blinded by his love for his family, he does not care to realize that they are taking advantage of him. He believes that if he works hard enough, they will show their love in return and make him happy.

Unfortunately, without a healthy balance of virtues, Gregor focuses all of his energy on his family. In the end, none of the family members are better off for it. By taking advantage of Gregor, his family has chosen to live a life of enjoyment. By being so submissive, Gregor only serves to support his family's chosen path in life. He only means to be helpful, but Gregor cannot give the Samsas anything lasting by carrying on in this manner. Gregor's family loyalty has become a vice for the entire household. That vice appears in several forms; Gregor's insect-like work ethic causes him to deny his own needs, his family learns that they can easily take advantage of him, and all of their gratefulness is replaced with laziness and simple complacence.

Gregor goes too far when striving to maintain his family loyalty; it is in excess and becomes a vice. Sarty handles his family loyalty differently. It clearly is important to him because he is constantly struggling with it. However, this is a healthy struggle because it is a byproduct of Sarty's efforts to balance family loyalty with his other virtues; Sarty "represents those ideals of truth and integrity" (Loges n. pag.).

In the end, although he is still quite unsure about the moral validity of his actions, it seems that Sarty ultimately chooses to leave his family because his family situation makes it impossible for him to maintain a beneficial balance of virtues. His family is constantly involved in seriously immoral activities. Sarty is consequently faced with the challenge of balancing his virtues with Abner's unfair expectations and twisted definition of family loyalty (Ford n. pag.). In Sarty's case, adhering to family loyalty would have become a vice, and it would cost him numerous other virtues.

Clearly, using Aristotle's virtue theory to compare the lives of Gregor and Sarty, these characters handle their burdens in two completely different manners. One significant difference is that Gregor's story is one of consequences, while Sarty's is one of a struggle and a final decision. Gregor has done nothing to overcome the vices around him, but Sarty has moved on. He may not be entirely sure of his choices, but the complexity in his thoughts shows that he has depth and virtue. On his path, this character may someday choose the life of the philosopher.

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Evaluation: *From Kafka to Faulkner to Aristotle… this is a long journey, but Jenn makes it a fun and interesting one.*

Caroline's Comeuppance

Kate Hendrickson
Course: Honors Literature 115 (Fiction)
Instructor: Andrew Wilson

Assignment:
Write a letter to any character from the literature we've studied thus far. Your letter does not have to come to any single conclusion about the character. Maybe there are good things and *bad things about the character; you are free, in your letter, to demonstrate such ambiguity. Maybe you'd like to scold your chosen character about something, but maybe, too, there are things about your chosen character that strike you as semi-heroic. Again, let your letter reflect these complications (if you wish to reflect these complications, that is). Please make reference to the text in your letter. In other words, try not to be too vague about things your chosen character says/does in the text. Rather, be specific.*

My dear cousin Caroline,

It has been ever so long since I have seen you or heard from you that I felt I must write to let you know the latest news. We have had the pleasure of your brother Maury's company for the last several weeks. Much to my distress, he left the day before yesterday on a business trip which will take him up north before he returns to you. It seems that he has a wonderful investment opportunity with some influential people in New York (an opportunity which Victor was unable to take advantage of at this time due to some business crisis or another—you know how these men are!), so Maury and one of his new partners went on without him. I shall miss him so. He is so lively and tells the most interesting stories.

Every evening after dinner, Maury, Victor, and I would sit together, the men with their brandy and I with my embroidery, often reminiscing about the old days, and wondering where the time has gone. Since Victor must retire early because he rises at such an uncivilized hour, Maury and I would chat about many subjects (he is ever so witty—and worldly, if you know what I mean). As he came to appreciate the sincerity of my deep affection for and interest in you and your family, he began to confide to me some of the trials and tribulations you have been subjected to (which Maury himself felt powerless to control, your husband being who he was). Now Caroline, far be it from me to speak ill of the dead, but I want you to know that I completely agree with Maury that Jason Compson was never the right man for a woman of your delicate sensibilities. Oh, he swept you off your feet with his promises and airs, but, truth be told, his overbearing manner and unreasonable Compson pride would have been impossible for the Queen of England to bear!

Why, Maury tells me that your husband was almost no help at all after Benjamin was born—he left you with nearly total responsibility for the care and rearing of that poor demented boy. Maury also says that after Damuddy died, you were so grief-stricken that you had to take to your bed and that in thirty years you have yet to fully regain your strength. No wonder! Your dear mother must have been such a help and comfort to you, and with her gone, how were you ever to go on?

Husbands never seem able to understand what we women must cope with, do they? We do our marital duty, bear their children, and off they go to conduct their business and leave us with everything else to manage. Of course in my case, since young Victor is our only child, I can hardly complain compared to what you've been through. By the way, did I tell you that young Victor has moved with his wife and my adorable granddaughter to Jackson where he has joined a law firm as a junior partner? This is surely a good step on his way to a political career. Presidents have to start somewhere, don't they? But never mind. We can talk more about that later. Still, I do miss them so.

Obviously you know what it is to suffer the loss of a son. I hesitate to say this, dear cousin, but I was shocked to learn from Maury that Quentin's accident may not have been an accident at all! Can it possibly be true that he committed suicide? Perhaps you've noticed that after his third or fourth brandy, Maury becomes a little vague when it comes to details of events, but I'm almost sure that's what he was suggesting. Caroline, why, oh why, didn't you tell me? I know you and I had our silly disagreements when we were girls, but surely you knew you could turn to me, another mother, and a Bascomb, for comfort. Even though Victor and I weren't able to be there for the funeral, you should have written and I would have flown to your side when we returned from Europe.

Maury says that you seem to have been cursed when you married into the Compson family, for trouble and bad luck have plagued you at every turn, no matter how much you give or how hard you try to please. Again, he can be a little vague, but he tells me that somehow Quentin's death was connected to Caddy's marriage, but that does sound a bit odd, so I'm not sure he has his facts straight. Nonetheless, her divorce and abandonment of her daughter to be raised by you, with all your other burdens, are disgraceful, no matter what the facts are. My dear Caroline, no one knows better than you and I do that children can be so thoughtless and insensitive to a mother's love and devotion, but Caddy's betrayal of you and all you stand for goes beyond anything I've ever heard! Maury was shocked when he learned of her scandalous behavior, but he was so proud of you and the stand you took—wearing black, mourning her rejection of all you hold dear, was a symbolic gesture he will never forget, and on this score, he's positive that he's got the facts straight!

And where was your husband, the illustrious Jason Compson III, while all this was going on? According to Maury, he was literally drinking himself to death! Demon rum!!! Dear girl, how have you borne the pain, the betrayal, the loss (not to mention the possibility of scandal) over the years. Thank God for young Jason. I know he is the one ray of sunshine in your life—a Bascomb through and through. Maury and I can't help but wonder how Caddy's daughter—Miss Quentin, I believe—could possibly have stolen Jason's money, after all that you and Jason have sacrificed for her. I understand that Jason's temper is a little short lately, but is it any wonder, considering that he is trying to work, look after you and Benjamin and, until recently, Miss Quentin, and feed and keep a roof over the heads of the Negroes under your care?

And speaking of that, Maury has called to my attention the situation you have with Dilsey. Apparently she is quite argumentative, is slow to do her chores and give you proper attention when your fragile health requires it, and has been known to interfere when young Jason, as man of the house, properly attempted to discipline your granddaughter. Caroline, I will admit to you, as I did to Victor, that I am highly perplexed by the uppity attitude I've noticed lately among the Negroes here. Victor dismisses my concerns. He says that, like us, they're just getting old, but he's here so seldom, what with his business and all, that he really doesn't know.

But now, I saved the best for last. The only reason that I mentioned all the things that Maury told me is because I have a wonderful surprise for you. Victor has business in Yoknapatawpha County next week, and I have overcome all of his objections to my determination to visit you for a few weeks. In fact, by the time you receive this letter, we will be on our way to Jefferson. We will arrive on Wednesday (Victor will drop me off and leave immediately), and then, Caroline, we'll have such fun! We'll talk and shop and sit on the verandah and reminisce all about the good times we had when we

were girls. And you can tell me everything, and I mean everything, about your life with that man and the children he surely ruined despite the sacrifices you made to try and raise them as only a Bascomb could. Remember, dear cousin, that confession is good for the soul, and discretion is my middle name.

Also, Maury says that your house could use a coat of paint, maybe some new curtains and furniture, and the grounds could use some sprucing up. I'm sure that Jason would be willing to pay any amount to see how much good it will do his beloved mother to be up and around and busy and happy once more. You'll see, dearest cousin and friend, that together we Bascombs can change all that's gone wrong—we can change everything back to the way it used to be! Be of brave spirit, dear Caroline. Help is on the way!

Your loving cousin,

Adeline

Evaluation: *Kate was, to say the least, angry at Faulkner's self-centered Mrs. Compson. Class period after class period, Kate seethed. There's some of that here, though it's highly controlled.*

Home Schooling

Mindy Hurley
Course: English 101 (Composition)
Instructor: Andrew Wilson

Assignment:
Write a persuasive essay.

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt: what do all these presidents have in common? They were home schooled. Martha Washington, Abigail Adams, Florence Nightingale, Agatha Christie, Pearl S. Buck: what do they have in common? They were home schooled. Likewise, Mark Twain, Charles Dickens, Rembrandt Peale, Claude Monet, Felix Mendelssohn, and Amadeus Mozart were home schooled. But home schooling is by no means ancient or old fashioned. Venus and Serena Williams, the tennis stars, were home schooled. Spenser Breslin, the young Hollywood actor starring in *The Kid* and *Santa Clause 2*, is home schooled. Home schooling is no longer a fringe movement of ultraconservatives, but is becoming more mainstream, growing by about 20% annually nationwide (Paulson 18). Increasingly, Christians, agnostics, and Muslims alike all pursue home schooling because of the excellent education home schooling gives. If we want the best for our nation today and for our future, then home schooling needs to be considered as a viable option in education for three reasons: first, home schooling delivers a superior education; second, home schooling creates more involved citizens; third, home schooling prepares students for the reality of life.

The definition of home schooling varies state by state. In some states, anything outside of the public school system, whether it is private school or home school, is considered home schooling. That is the exception rather than the rule, though. Although private school students do score higher than their public school counterparts, their scores are still lower than home schoolers' scores (Rudner 18). The state of Illinois, however, considers a home school to be a private school, given the same rights and privileges of all private schools in the state. Some home schoolers team with private schools and receive all of their curriculum from the school. Other home schoolers order their curriculum from various companies that either print curriculum for schools or specifically for home schoolers. Basically, home schooling is when children stay home with one of their parents and receive instruction one-on-one from a parent and by studying on their own. Additionally, supplemental home schooling groups offer support for home schooling families by utilizing parents with different strengths, such as a foreign language, a sport, a science, physical education, art, or music.

When people discover I am a home school graduate, one of the first questions out of their mouths is usually, "Did your mom give you an A in every class?" This question shows a serious lack of understanding about home schooling. People assume that parents will automatically give their children good grades, as if it is as simple as giving an allowance at the end of the week. But by no means did my mom give me an A in every class; I took three years of math in high school and earned a B every year. This question could be based on the fact that home schoolers consistently receive high grades, which in theory could be attributed to the parents giving good grades, instead of basing them on achievement. If that were the case, however, test scores like the Prairie State Achievement Test, the ACT, and

the SAT would reflect the home schoolers' lack of learning. But that is not the case at all: "Home schoolers consistently score 20 to 30 percentile points more than their public school peers on standardized tests" (Smith). Overall, home schooling simply delivers a superior education. It just makes sense. When a student, public or private, is struggling in a school subject, the very best help for him or her is tutoring. When someone can give that student one-on-one training and attention, he is bound to improve his understanding. And home schooling delivers that very understanding. The average class size in a public school is about 25 to 30 students, while at home there are about 4 students. Because these parents are directly involved in their children's education, they consistently do everything they can to help their children learn and improve. Home schoolers also have much higher college attendance rates than the rest of the U.S. population. "Over 74% of home-educated adults ages 18-24 have taken college level courses, compared to 46% of the general United States population" (Home School Legal Defense Association 2). As we all know, standardized tests, while very helpful in measuring achievement, cannot be perfect. But these test scores are seen as accurate by Jonathan Reider, the associate director of admissions at Stanford University. He stated, "We admire home schoolers; we think they are often very bright and independent thinkers. They are eligible to be admitted just like everybody else" (Remmerde 12). Clearly, home schoolers' consistently high grades are not a result of their parents awarding good grades, but rather, of the students' hard work and achievement.

Not only is a home school education superior in terms of test scores and the number of students, but home schooling provides superior flexibility to pursue a wide range of activities and interests. Many young actors are home schooled or privately tutored so they can keep up with their studies while pursuing a career. Venus and Serena Williams were home schooled, which gave them the flexibility to practice tennis for hours every day while still keeping up with their educations. I have two friends who are home schooled, one in Ohio and one here in Illinois, which gives them the flexibility to own a horse and spend time at the barn working and riding, while still keeping up with high school. Home schooling also gives the flexibility for accelerated learning and early vocational training, as opposed to the rigid schedule inherent in the public school system. With home schooling,

> There are opportunities and time to pursue interests that are employment related such as internships. Some topics are not even available in a typical government or private school. Advanced curriculum and vocational training are available. They can easily start college-level studies. They can take proficiency-level exams for college such as CLEP. They are not held back from higher education while waiting for a high school graduation. (Hedding 13)

Home schooling has given me flexibility in a number of different ways. My sophomore year of high school, I spent a week in Jamaica on a mission trip in the middle of February. It was very difficult for my friends to take a week off school, but home schooling allowed me to work ahead beforehand and count my time in Jamaica as cultural studies. I also was able to attend Harper part-time my senior year and take two classes both semesters. These classes counted for both high school and college, which enabled me to begin pursuing my nursing career sooner, taking classes like chemistry and microbiology. All of these activities would be much harder, if not impossible, to pursue outside the flexibility that home schooling provides. Home schoolers have flexibility not only in scheduling when they do their homework, but also in how quickly they do it and what they study. The flexibility that home schooling provides makes it easier for students to study, furthering both their educations and vocations more quickly and effectively.

The superior education of home schooling is not the only reason for home schooling, however. Home schooling also creates more involved citizens. In 2003, a study was conducted by Dr. Brian Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute, surveying over 7,300 adults who were home schooled. Over 5,000 of these adults were home schooled for more than seven years. According to Dr. Ray's study, 71% of home school graduates participate in an ongoing community service activity, compared to 37% of U.S. adults of

comparable ages (Ray 5). An ongoing community service activity includes, but is not limited to, coaching a sports team, volunteering at a school, or working with a church or neighborhood ministry such as a homeless shelter. Dr. Ray's study also discovered that a mere 4.2% of home school graduates consider politics and government too complicated to understand, compared to 35% of U.S. adults. Even more astonishing in this fact: in the 18- to 24-year-old bracket, 76% of home school graduates have voted, while only 29% of the comparable U.S. population has voted. In the older age brackets of home school graduates, the voting level never falls below 95%, while comparable age brackets of the general U.S. population never clear 53% (Ray 5). The average college-age student typically lacks community involvement and is disinterested in voting. In fact, in the most recent (2004) election, it was a national phenomenon that young people were so interested in the race. There are millions of young voters in the 18- to 24-year age bracket, of which a mere 10% voted in this year's presidential election (S. Smith). Home schoolers, on the other hand, are involved citizens who will continue to work hard for the good of their communities and their country.

Home schooling delivers a superior education and creates more involved citizens, but it also prepares students for the reality of life. The all-time, number one question adolescents and adults alike asked me during my home schooling years was, "Do you have any friends?" It was as if they thought all home schoolers live in a bubble which they are never allowed to come out of. My response to their question was always, "Yes, I have lots of friends. I have friends at church, friends in our home school group, and friends in my neighborhood." Just recently I heard a home school mom give the best reaction to that very question. She said, "Yes, socialization is a huge problem. My kids have so many friends they have a hard time finding time to do their schoolwork!" Because the environment of home schooling is much more similar to life in the real world, students are better prepared for the reality of life. For example, public schools segregate by age, with children rarely interacting with anyone who varies in age more than a year or two. But once a student graduates from college, he will very rarely, if ever, have a job where he works entirely with people his own age. He will constantly be interacting with people whose ages vary drastically from his own, and if he can't do that well, he will not succeed. Home schoolers, on the other hand, will be very adept at such interaction because of their experience. I have friends varying in age from four months old to seventy-eight years old, and I love these people very much. I consider these extremes and many other people in between all to be my friends. But many times I have observed my friends talking to an adult and being quite uncomfortable if the conversation lasted beyond a minute or two. If they have that much trouble now, they will have difficulty in succeeding in an interview for a job. Home schoolers also just generally enjoy their lives. Fifty-nine percent of home schoolers say they are "very happy" with their lives, and another 39% say they are "pretty happy" with their lives. A mere 2% of home schoolers consider themselves "unhappy" with their lives. In the general U.S. population, only 27.6% are "very happy," 63% are "pretty happy," and 9.4% are "unhappy" (Ray 6). When asked about job satisfaction, 95.9% of home schoolers said they were satisifed with their jobs, and 85.3% consider hard work as the key factor to success, compared to 68.2% of the general U.S. population (Ray 6). These statistics show and explain what home schoolers have always known: home schooling is very effective in every area of life, from socialization to real-life experience. I realize that we cannot lean entirely on numbers and statistics to quantify happiness. What I am saying, however, is that these statistics represent a healthy degree of satisfaction with life among home school graduates.

The final argument my opponents might have is the fact that home schoolers might miss out on some of the "intangibles" of public school, such as attending lab sciences, talking with a friend by your locker while exchanging books, attending school football games, and, of course, attending school dances like Homecoming, Turnabout, and Prom. Home school students do not have the opportunity to do science labs in their homes, and that is a problem. Throughout high school, I did miss having that opportunity. But I attended Harper my senior year of high school and was able to take two lab sciences. As far as the friends you might

make in between classes, I suppose that is something home schoolers don't have, a small deficiency when considered in light of the bigger picture. Last but not least, my opposition might point out the missed football games and dances. A high school student can attend any game or dance that she wants. I chose not to attend any dances because I had no interest, although I could have attended with my friends. I have several home school friends who have attended various dances and games at their local public high school. Ultimately, even weighing these small socialization concerns against home schooling, home schooling comes out far ahead of the other options.

Home schooling is a viable third option to be considered along with public and private school, for the education of our children. People should not send their children to public school just because it is the average thing to do; rather, they should home school their children for the high quality of education it provides. Statistics overwhelmingly show that home schooling delivers students who are better educated, more civically involved, and prepared for the realities of life. Home schooling succeeds in every aspect, evidenced by some of the most influential men and women in history and continuing to the present. Home schoolers are not better people just because they were home schooled while growing up, however. Home schooling is not just for evangelical Christians, but for all people who desire a superior education for their children. Home schooling produces strong citizens that will actively lead our country in the days and years ahead.

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Evaluation: *This essay is well organized, beautifully written, and genuinely convincing.*

The Otherness

Miriam Hymes
Course: English 101 (Composition)
Instructor: Anne Davidovicz

Assignment:
Write a literary analysis of one essay in the textbook.

What do we see when we look at animals in the zoo, or by the roadside when we're camping? Better yet, why do we go to the zoo, or even bother to stop the car for that family of mountain goats by the tree line? What is it about animals that grabs our attention and holds it? In Robert Finch's essay "Very Like a Whale," he addresses this very question of our intrigue when he looks at a beached whale and says, "What was it? What had we seen?" "…why had we come to see it?"

Finch suggests there is a personal need to acknowledge and experience nature. According to Finch, this need is as great and vital to our humanity as our most basic physical needs are to our survival. This is apparent when he says, "Man, I believe, has a crying need to confront otherness in the universe." He continues: "This sense of otherness is, I feel, as necessary a requirement to our personalities as food and warmth are to our bodies."

There must be truth in what Finch suggests; why else would we stare silently at a wild animal or capture them for our amusement, save them or hunt them, write poetry and stories about them, or paint and photograph them? When we aren't admiring our own amazing feats as human beings, we are marveling at the beauty and mystery of our fellow planetary roommates.

In the beginning of his essay, Finch compares the gathering of crowds around the whale to "flies around carrion." This metaphor is visually vivid in that we can see the swarms of tiny black flies invading upon the carrion eater and the dead carcass. It is interesting that Finch uses this visual since it is quite different from the way we view ourselves. Flies are lowly creatures that feed off the death and decay of other creatures. They are driven by a need to feed only themselves, and they are content to settle for the scraps. For the most part, flies are an unwanted presence. But we, like flies, can't help but be drawn to the carcass.

Finch further illustrates the idea of being drawn to nature when he refers to the whale carcass as a "human magnet," showing that all people are drawn to it, not just one sex, class, or age. He sees people from "electricians and oil truck drivers" to "women in high heels and pearls." No one is unaffected by the pull of nature. It's as futile for us to resist nature as for iron filings to resist the magnet. Finch then tries to answer the question why all these people had come: what exactly was this pull?

As Finch points out, the obvious answers are "Curiosity," "a break in the dull routine," or "An old human desire to associate ourselves with great and extraordinary events." Yet, these responses are not enough to answer his question, so he must dissect it further: "from what perspective were we looking at it?" and "what did we see in it that might tell us why we had come?"

Finch notes many approaches taken to understand the whale, and by doing so understands what it was that people were looking for by coming to the whale. To Finch and the crowds, it was "*Balaenoptera physalus*," "A cause for conservationists. A remarkably adapted swimming and eating machine. Perfume, pet food, engineering oil. A magnificent scientific specimen. A tourist attraction. A media event, a 'day to remember'. A health menace, a 'possible' carrier of communicable disease. A municipal headache and a navigational hazard. Material for an essay." Despite the numerable

attempts to understand the situation, the reason why they had come and what they were seeing remained a mystery. Unfortunately, these explanations were too superficial to answer Finch's lingering question.

The whale was large and real and sitting on our domain, land. The crowds had an up close view of the whale and the scars that marred his hide, while scientists had access to a vast amount of tissue and organ samples. Despite having the whale within their reach, they still could not understand its life, what had happened to it, or what they had hoped to learn from it. "On the whale's own hide seemed to be written its life history, which we could remark but not read." This massive creature, literally washed up into their hands, still eluded everyone, even in death.

In the struggle to understand this fascination, people slathered the whale with human compliments and behaviors: "very intelligent," "highly complex language," "sophisticated communications," "social structures," "personal relationships," "loyalty," "affection," and many more. It is in this flattery that Finch claims we are being "exclusive, anthropocentric" and do not "recognize nature in its own right." He claims that we are actually doing ourselves a "grave disservice" when we label the whale in human terms, as well as denying ourselves the truth about why we have this gravitation to nature. Finch believes that when we label the whale, or anything in nature, in terms of human beauty, achievement, strengths, etc…then we are narrowing our view of it. Thus we have done ourselves a disservice because we have taken away much of what should be appreciated. It is in this sense that humankind corresponds to those lowly flies Finch mentioned earlier, still drawn to and trying to label and understand the whale from one tiny point of view.

Finch's final conclusion is that we simply have a "…crying need to confront otherness in the universe." Our fascination with nature is in response to an unfulfilled need, a need that we've neglected with our cities and cars and machines. "So mankind is today in a similar, though more subtle, danger of cutting himself off from the natural world he shares with all creatures." Finch suggests that by absorbing ourselves in our own man-made world, we are slowly killing ourselves as a species. "Our growth as a species depends equally upon establishing a vital and generative relationship with what surrounds us." He strengthens his point when he compares our obsession with ourselves to the destructive dangers of inbreeding. "We need plants, animals, weather, unfettered shores and unbroken woodland, not merely for a stable and healthy environment, but as an antidote to introversion, a preventative against human inbreeding." This implies that nature is not only a need but also our salvation from self-inflicted isolation and the eventual emotional deterioration of mankind. We need nature for more than meeting our basic survival needs; we need it to create open, healthy minds. This means, to be healthy as a species, we must meet the need for "otherness" by creating external relationships with nature. These external relationships, outside our species, are as critical to our survival as food, water, and even our relationships within our species.

By going to see the whale, or any little piece of nature, we are on some level recognizing this need and attempting to satisfy it. "Only now are we slowly realizing that nature can be confined only by narrowing our concepts of it, which in turn narrows us. That is why we came to see the whale."

Initially I agreed with Robert Finch and, in some respects, I still do; however, as a species with the ability to contemplate and reflect, I believe it is unfair to suggest that our beliefs are often "exclusive" and "anthropocentric" when it comes to our understanding or interpretation of nature. Undoubtedly, we see nature as a source of usefulness, and use nature to our advantage in, what may seem, a self-serving way. We use trees for houses and paper, we find value in only nutrient-rich soils that will give us the best crops, we raise animals solely for consumption, and so on. But what animal does not use nature to meet its needs? What does a wolf see when a hare bounds across its path? Does it see an animal that deserves "admiration and respect" because of its "inalienable right to exist," or does it see an animal that will serve as its next meal? It seems to me that every being in nature has its own centric view. In fact, the "inalienable right to exist" could be considered an anthropocentric human ideal. It is human-kind that coined this term, and it is an ideal that we apply to all of

humanity. As well, it is probable that we are the only beings to live by this belief, thus making it an anthropocentric value.

To better clarify, I must point out that we are the only beings to sit and observe other animals, to study them purely out of wonder, or to make efforts to protect a species that is not our own. We are the only beings to create art in the form of poetry and stories or paintings and photographs. To say we are anthropocentric is to suggest these actions are selfish and self-centered. Naturally, our minds have limitations. We can only appreciate something using the words, feelings, and ideas that are familiar to us. A human will never be a whale, and I do not believe it is possible, nor should it be expected, to admire and respect the whale, or nature, completely free of anthropocentric influences.

On the other hand, I find Finch's belief that we have a survival-like need for nature to be true. We all have this need whether we are aware of it or not. From the avid outdoorsman to the city dweller with a potted fern sitting on the window sill, from protection of endangered animals to caring for a house pet, from hiking through the forest to admiring that tiny flower that blooms between the cracks in the pavement, we all need and desire this "otherness" of nature. We are as much a part of nature as any other species of plant or animal and are therefore drawn to it and its fulfillment of needs, whether they are physical or emotional.

Evaluation: *Miriam has adroitly composed an analysis of Robert Finch's essay that accurately assesses his technique and theme. In addition, she critiques and challenges some of his notions near the end of her essay. We clearly witness her critical thinking in action.*

A Dope Fiend's Guide to Drugstores

Michael Kereluk
Course: Literature 112 (Literature and Film)
Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment:
Explain whether or not the book Drugstore Cowboy *is more compelling than Gus Van Sant's movie.*

James Fogle ends his novel *Drugstore Cowboy*, "Bob Hughes arrived at Memorial Hospital…at seven twenty-one P.M. and was pronounced dead on arrival" (214). Matt Dillon as Bob in Gus Van Sant's movie *Drugstore Cowboy* says, "I was still alive. I hope they can keep me alive." These are the final lines, albeit one is more final than the other, from a story that shared the same name, same characters, and same plot. The story is *Drugstore Cowboy*: a tale about a junkie named Bob and his rag-tag group of accomplices who are caught in a vicious cycle of doing drugs and robbing pharmacies. Like twin siblings, James Fogle's book and Gus Van Sant's movie share much of their physical make-up with one another, but when their surfaces are scratched, we see a stark contrast in tones, ideologies, and scope between the two. With the movie taking a stylized, consumable approach, it ultimately falls short of confronting the real issues that create and perpetuate drug use. The book harnesses the raw, undisciplined energy found in the writing of then imprisoned author Fogle. This bleeds into its characters, allowing them to illuminate a poignant and often eye-opening view of the subculture within a subculture where the characters exist. These different approaches make Fogle's book *Drugstore Cowboy* far more compelling than Van Sant's interpretation on film.

The most obvious advantage found in Fogle's book is dynamic characters that build off one another to create a wider and deeper scope that is almost nonexistent in Van Sant's movie. Central character Bob Hughes best demonstrates this while he's ruminating over a "30-day hex" that falls upon him. His stream of consciousness meanders from early childhood memories as a burgeoning criminal, to time spent in jail, ultimately leading to an unfocused tirade about the politics of drugs. These awkward reflections transition Bob from a confident leader to a fallible, uncertain human being who feels trapped by his past and the potential of his future. Later in the story, when Bob decides to try to get off drugs, thoughts like these make it more believable and compelling that his character would do so. Bob is not the only one who benefits from wider development in the book. Diane, Rick, and Nadine all reveal part of the reason they would choose to live in such chaos. Diane is shown to be a negligent mother of multiple children who condones, if not insists on, using violence to feed a drug habit that makes Rush Limbaugh look like a piker. Nadine's wisdom and immaturity amalgam by comparing the drug lifestyle to "trying to bail out the ocean with a tomato-soup can" (106), and yet she chooses to stay with it for lack of better direction. Conversely, Van Sant's movie version chooses to steal these characters' dimensions by often assigning their important dialogue to Bob. They more or less become foils to streamline the themes of a movie designed to fit one digestible character, resulting in a less compelling viewpoint provided by the people actually living the lifestyle.

Just like the characters, the movie's ideologies and subject matter also get a Hollywood makeover, while simultaneously acting like a tea kettle in the book, compelling readers while they wait for it to blow its steam. Fogle's book is not afraid to delve into the convoluted

muck of flaws in the justice system, the drug wars, and politics in general. He succeeds by keeping them pure, simple, and, most importantly, from the perspective of his characters. Never does he go fishing with statistics or specific names; instead, he explores the world through the eyes of his junkies. These characters do not read the newspaper and would not know who the attorney general is, but they are experiencing the systematic control of their lives. These considerations become invaluable when watching Bob try to change his life, how he feels suffocated by a seemingly never-ending bureaucracy and life of institutionalization. On the other hand, the movie is careful never to step onto these potentially slippery slopes by not going into specifics about Bob's past or his real feelings and experiences. Keeping away from these issues allows the movie to be more stylized and entertaining, but negates must of the potency that the book delivered.

An interesting divergence between the book and movie was the tone that each used to tell this controversial story. There was no doubting where the tone of the book was coming from and how it wanted us to feel; it was written in prison, and it showed. Bleak, disturbing, and unforgiving, the novel shines light on a world that was dark to most people, exposing the horrors, the beauty, and, ultimately, the helplessness. The director of the movie chose a different, often light-hearted path by sprinkling quirky, unnecessary situations throughout it. For example, when Bob gets into a fight with his crew over the negative impact dogs have on one's luck, every channel he changes on the TV contains dogs on them. Although it is certainly humorous, it trades a quick joke in exchange for giving validity to Bob's cockamamie idea that superstition is a reasonable system to live your life. The soundtrack of the movie also adds greatly to its light tone, by attempting to be irreverent more than it tries to set real tones, often draining much of the poignancy. Even when Bob is burying Nadine, the carnival like music that is playing makes one surprised that a muzzled bear on a unicycle does not peddle by. These tone discrepancies are no doubt intentional, on Van Sant's part at least, and are effective at bringing the viewer to different places, but the book's honest tone resonates as the more compelling of the two.

Common ground can be found between *Drugstore Cowboy* the movie and *Drugstore Cowboy* the book in that they are both quality pieces of art. Being helped by its drug-chic veneer, its impeccable time of release, and its smooth, slick directing, one might say that the movie is even higher art than the book. Unfortunately, for each of those things the movie does so well, it sacrifices something pure and basic from the book. Whether it be the characters, the scope, or the ideas that the story is grounded on, the film loses some of the novel's honesty. That is why the long-winded diatribes we find in the book are more persuading than watching a spoon and a cow fly by Matt Dillon in the film. The movie *Drugstore Cowboy* may be the more enjoyable of the two, but the book is certainly the more compelling.

Works Cited

Fogle, James. *Drugstore Cowboy.* New York: Delta, 1990.

Van Sant, Gus. *Drugstore Cowboy.* Avenue Pictures, 1989.

Evaluation: *Michael's essay does an excellent job of explaining how Gus Van Sant transformed James Fogle's novel into a movie with a very different tone.*

Autism and Parents

Anka Koprivec
Course: ESL 074 (ESL Writing V)
Instructor: Wallis Sloat

Assignment:
In order to practice the conventions of a comparison/contrast essay in American English, advanced ESL students were asked to write about a familiar topic of their choice. Ms. Koprivec chose to compare two parenting styles.

"Daniel, stop! Please, Daniel," a woman repeated for the third time. The four-year-old boy was spinning and throwing his toys around at the same time. Then he grabbed cereal and started throwing it according to some internal dance rhythm; the rhythm and dance were always the same. That woman was me, and the boy was my cousin's autistic child. Before I came to the U.S. and started living with my cousin's family, I never had a chance to meet or spend time with somebody who had autism. Then, several months ago, I met Careen and her son Tim. Tim is a cute five-year-old boy who also has autism. Looking at them, I could not stop myself from making comparisons between my cousin's parenting style and Careen's because they are so different.

The major difference between them is the quantity and quality of time they spend with their children. My cousin never has time for Daniel. His excuse is his job—he owns a restaurant—and his working hours. I admit that it must be difficult for him to wake up early if he goes to sleep at four or five o'clock in the morning, but Daniel needs his attention and care. In addition, if my cousin is forced to spend a day with Daniel, the child is in the house "playing" with his toys by himself almost the entire time. I must explain what it looks like. Daniel puts his toys around him, opens books with pictures, lies on the floor, and spends hours and hours just looking at them. At the same time, my cousin is "busy" doing nothing, with both legs on the table enjoying music or talking on the phone. What a "wonderful father!" Sometimes, he puts him and Philip, the oldest son, in the car and drives them around. In the house, the TV is usually on, and since Daniel has autism and reality dos not exist for him, he spends his time closed in his world. Unlike my cousin, Careen is a person who gives all her time to Tim. When she discovered that Tim had autism, she left her job and decided to spend as much time as she could with him. She did not care for career or money because Tim was an important person who needed her. Looking at the two of them together is both depressing and enjoyable. Tim looks at his mom with an empty expression in his eyes while she tries to keep his attention. Sometimes he expresses his feelings by giving her a hug or just by smiling at her, which he does not do to anybody else, filling her with joy and sadness at the

same time. She has been trying for a long time to teach Tim to count, so now he is able to count up to 25. Also, he knows almost all of the entire alphabet and how to play several games specially made for autistic children.

Learning about autism and researching other parents' experience is the second big dissimilarity between their parenting styles. My cousin has read, up to now, perhaps two books about autism. He likes to spend his time playing computer games instead of searching for materials that can help him to raise a child like Daniel. Since he is not a sociable person, as my cousin has said, he does not try to make contact with the parents who have similar problems. On the other hand, Careen's house is full of the books that help her fight the everyday problems with Tim. She also spends a lot of time searching the internet for articles about autism. Several organizations that have been established by parents with autistic children are very helpful to her. Careen and Tim enjoy going to their meetings. Talking with those people and exchanging information and experiences with them helps her feel less isolated. It is, most importantly, good for Tim because he has opportunities to be with children that are like him, and maybe a small drop of happiness will enrich his empty life.

Unlike Careen, who has always been aware that Tim is different and who spends a lot of time trying to enter his world, my cousin waited almost five years to admit that Daniel had a problem; however, he still hides behind curtains of ignorance. He refused to see that the way Daniel played with toys was not typical and that he was not able to make any contact with the people and children around him. For him, everything was normal. He kept saying that Daniel would talk when he was ready, but it did not happen. Maybe because he is scared or he does not know how, my cousin today is still not able to make any contact with Daniel, even with his eyes, which is very important in communication with autistic people. Unable to stop Daniel's tantrums, he usually gives up. In contrast, Careen was aware that something was wrong when Tim was only 18 months old. The child could not respond if she tried to call him, and he never looked at her when she talked to him. Since Tim did not say anything at the age of two, she started visiting doctors and investigating what was going on. The truth was painful for her—Tim was an autistic child. She gave all her time to help him and herself to live with it. Once she told me, "I have spent almost four years on the floor playing and talking with Tim. That whole time I was trying to make him look at me when I was speaking to him. I needed almost four years to make my son look in my eyes, and I am proud of the great success."

Looking at my cousin and my friend Careen, I feel sorry for them. Having autistic children and raising them must be very difficult. However, the path Careen chooses and her parenting style are things my cousin has to follow and learn if he wants to make Daniel's and his life less difficult. Careen is, for me, a model mom, but my cousin is the kind of parent I never wish to be.

Evaluation: *Because of its excellent organization, sentence structure, and grammar, Ms. Koprivec's essay is clear and easy to read. The examples and vivid details which she includes are very engaging. Most importantly, Ms. Koprivec convinces the reader that she has analyzed her topic thoroughly and feels strongly about it.*

Simply Unforgettable

Konstantin Kostov
Course: ESL 074 (Writing V)
Instructor: Lin Cui

Assignment:
Write a narrative essay about your first day in the United States.

My first day in the U.S. was actually quite short. If I have to be accurate, from the moment my plane touched the runway of O'Hare International Airport to the moment I fell asleep in my friends' house just lasted seven hours. However, I counted these hours much later. In the meantime, all my senses were too busy to collect, analyze, and memorize every first site, every first smell, every first sound, and every little part of the big picture around me. Today, almost five years later, it seems simply impossible to forget my first day in America.

After a three-hour flight from Sofia to Zurich, twelve hours of delay at Zurich Airport, and a nine-hour flight from Zurich to Chicago, my wife and I were exhausted. The first step out of the jet bridge showed me an airport bigger than any other airports I had seen before. A long colorfully painted corridor brought us to the American Customs. With a little help from an officer, each of the passengers from our flight found a line for himself. I thought that Bulgarian Customs could really use a little of the American efficiency at work. When our turn came, I could not speak to the customs officer because my English was nonexistent at that time. Despite all the language difficulties I had, the officer was doing his job very professionally and with a smile. When the whole procedure finished, a boy and a girl in green jackets with a sign "Prospect Airport Services" came near and asked us in our language, "Guys, are you Bulgarians?" We were stunned. What was this place? We had been here for less than one hour and somebody spoke to us in Bulgarian! These two children were very friendly. They helped us to find our luggage and welcomed us as the newest members of the Bulgarian community in Chicago. After such a short time, I felt like I was coming home from a long journey.

On the other hand, my wife and I found out soon enough that reality bites even in America. Going to a foreign country for the first time is a bit scary, but things get even scarier when the person who is supposed to wait for you is just not there. After waiting for one hour, we decided to spend ten dollars of our precious $520 for an AT&T calling card and try to reach our friend on her cell phone. We almost lost any hope after 20 minutes of dialing, realizing that nobody was going to pick up the phone. Truly frustrated, I started walking around just to help myself in finding an exit from this unpleasant situation. Suddenly, I almost crashed into somebody, and I could not believe my eyes! That was our friend, with an even more hopeless look on her face than mine. We were so happy to see her that in the same second we forgave her for the delay and for the fact that she had forgotten to turn on her cell phone. The drive to our friends' house was extremely pleasant after the whole stress with the missing welcoming party. The ride in a brand new and full-of-extras Grand Cherokee was smooth, and I enjoyed seeing the wide streets and the beautiful houses of Rosemont, Des Plaines, and Mount Prospect. Then we stopped in front of a beautiful condominium, and I saw well-maintained landscaping, a gorgeous pond with some ducks in it, and a great sports complex with a couple of tennis courts. I realized that I wanted to live in a place like this and was ready to work hard for it. Also, I might have thought, "Life is not that bad after all."

Because hospitality is really important to all Bulgarians, our first dinner in the U.S. was simply unforgettable. Our friends cooked a Bulgarian welcoming dinner for us. A big chicken, the real reason for our waiting at the airport, was being roasted in the oven; the potato salad was ready; a couple of bottles of white and red wine were also waiting to be opened. Impressed by the portions of the food, we were truly shocked to understand that this was simply the American sized meal. After discovering the giant's nature of the American eating habits, there was another surprise for us. The meat and the vegetables were tasteless! Later, we learned that the taste adjustment would take months, and every Bulgarian used to the 100% organic Bulgarian food would have to suffer in the beginning. However, two hours after our arrival, this little inconvenience seemed a fair price to pay for the much greater opportunities in any aspect of life in the U.S.

Every now and then, I think of my first day in America as a little overture of the big drama "Life in the United States." I feel really fortunate because those hours gave me an initial impression of my new country and they put me into the right mood to build and fight for my new future. For that short period of time, I realized that home is not "before and there," but "now and here."

Evaluation: *This essay is interesting and witty. The beginning of each paragraph connects very well to the end of the previous one.*

My Grandfather's Radio

Dan Kugler
Course: Journalism 234 (Mass Communications)
Instructor: Becky Nicol

Assignment:
This was one of a series of ten journal assignments on media. This entry is in response to a question aout students' early memories of radio.

When I was four years old and my grandparents lived with us for half a year, my grandfather taught me the power of radio. It wasn't anything I experienced directly, it was more like going to church as a child and watching unknown rituals; one day I was able to look back and know it was part of me.

As a small boy, his only grandchild, it seemed there was not time when he did not smile at me, tell me a joke, sing me snatches of a song, give me candy, or play a game like checkers. I was the center of all his attention, except for when he listend to the radio. He did none of those things then. He listened to the radio like a monk in prayer.

Actually, it was not every time he listened to the radio that he became so solemn. Most of the time that he listened, he was his usual easy-going self, never minding an interruption. "There is nothing good on anyway," he would say in his broken English, turning the knob on his small transistor and opening up a coloring book for me, asking me what I wanted to draw. In these leisurely times he listened to his radio as a harbinger of information, for news and weather, and, in the days when my grandmother was still working, for traffic. Although I would often see him slowly read the morning paper, in those days before cable news, the radio was much easier for him to comprehend. American music was generally foreign to him.

Twice a week, he listened to radio as voices spoke in the language of his childhood, his parents, his friends, a language banned in his homeland, a language that, in a life of displacement, was the only one that was truly his own.

There were two shows, one referred to by my mother and grandparents by the name of the host—Marika Chachula—and another which was produced by a local church. If I came into my grandparents' room when these shows were on, I was expected to be silent. My grandfather sat on his bed, nothing in his hands or in front of him, listening. He did not listen to it in the living room, he always listened in his bedroom. Sometimes my grandmother would listen too, her hands on a magazine, and sometimes she wouldn't. Sometimes my mother would call from the kitchen and ask my grandfather to make it louder, and sometimes

she wouldn't. But my grandfather never missed a show. I would sometimes come in and listen, understanding the Ukrainian words in a cloudy and uncertain way, not that differently, I assume, than the way my grandfather understood the words and events of American radio, which he listened to often as well, but never with the same intensity.

So that was one of my first memories of radio. It has made it difficult for me to accept radio as anything that doesn't connect that deeply with its listeners. Later on, of course, I listened to pop stations like Magic 104.3, B96, and, as Nirvana brought back rock to my generation, Q101. Other than a year listening to 950 AM, an all rap station that I listened to for a year until it changed format to rap and R&B, I did more channel flipping than listening. When I lived in Chicago I enjoyed listening to WLUW and WNUR, the Loyola and Northwestern Stations, and even had a memorable chance to deejay for WLUW for awhile. But whenever I listen to the radio, I am still wishing for something that connects to me as strongly as the Ukrainian radio did to my grandfather.

Evaluation: *This journal entry features excellent sensory detail, descriptive phrases, and a real feeling of emotion, and it shows how others view what some might take for granted.*

Filling the Void: Viktor Frankl

Danielle LaGrippe
Courses: English 101 (Composition) and
Philosophy 105 (Introduction to Philosophy)
Instructors: Kurt Hemmer and Herbert Hartman

Assignment:
Pick a philosopher studied in class and discuss his or her contributions to the field.

Wandering through life, men and women search desperately for meaning. Satisfaction comes only when one can attach worth to the daily struggle. For centuries, this worth has unequivocally manifested itself in the form of romantic love and attraction. It seems for many the only reason to live, for without this sense of fulfillment, life for most would be too lonely to bear. Turning to philosophy, specifically existentialism, for a breakdown of this concept, a most valuable instrument of self-discovery emerges from the work of one of the twentieth century's most esteemed minds. Viktor Frankl, creator of logotherapy, suggests three directions one can go in pursuit of the meaningful life, stating love of another as the most significant.

In order to explore Frankl's philosophy, one must be familiar with logotherapy. As stated in *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, logotherapy is "often called the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy…[it] incorporates Frankl's belief that man possesses an innate 'will to meaning' and that the search for significance in one's life is a psychologically beneficial process" (192). For a man imprisoned in Nazi death camps, finding meaning in life seems an inconceivable, and therefore praiseworthy task. The lesson to be learned then must be that any soul, no matter how dejected, has the capacity within him or herself to find a purpose to their brief existence. As Frankl explains in *Psychology Today*, "*Logos* is a Greek word that denotes 'meaning.' Logotherapy focuses on the meaning of human existence as well as on man's search for such a meaning" (57-63).

To put Frankl's logotherapy into therapeutic perspective is an all too easy task. As he states in *Psychology Today*, "This will to meaning is frustrated today. More and more patients are approaching psychiatrists with the complaint of an inner void and emptiness, with a sense of meaninglessness, with the feeling of a total and ultimate futility of life" (57-63). This deficiency of the spirit can be felt by everyone and therefore allows for inherent understanding. Existential anguish is the international language. There exists but an extreme minority of individuals who exhibit total disinterest in life's higher purposes. For it is the intelligent man who asks "why?" and remains unsatisfied with the answers he receives. An incredibly subjective psychological approach, logotherapy elicits highly personal results.

Above all, each person must decide for him or herself what gives life meaning. As personal as anything can get, the will to meaning is part of a journey of self-discovery that cannot be forced or taught, only guided. As Frankl puts it in *Man's Search for Meaning*, "The meaning of life differs from man to man, from day to day and from hour to hour" (113). How then, does one begin this search for meaning? Frankl points out, rather than inquiring about the purpose or meaning of life, one must be aware that life asks the questions and it is the individual who must answer (113). Frankl himself answers this question in *Man's Search for Meaning,* which states that meaning can be found in three ways: "by creating a work or doing a deed; by experiencing something or encountering someone; and by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering" (115).

Namely, it is the second approach to meaning that carries the most weight for Frankl. Humans have a primal need for love and intimacy. It is no wonder, then, that so much has become attached to this "end all be all" of human existence. Any skeptic need only observe the tragic consequences of a neglected newborn to see that to be deprived of love is to be that much closer to death and therefore meaninglessness. Now, an obvious difference exists between familial love and romantic love. Romantic love must be exclusive and requires commitment as well as a great deal of emotional intimacy. Perhaps the simple reason that love does not come easy and requires constant effort gives it worth.

In addition to self-discovery, logotherapy suggests the idea of discovering one another. Frankl writes, "Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him" (116). In the same way, humans are first and foremost social creatures and constantly in search of pieces of themselves in others. To be fulfilled is to recognize those parallels that provide comfort, understanding, and acceptance (all abstract notions that possess a high value). Frankl makes an interesting point, stating in *The Doctor and the Soul*, "Love is not only grace; it is also enchantment. For the lover, it casts a spell upon the world, envelops the world in added worth. Love enormously increases receptivity to the fullness of values. The gates to the whole universe of values are, as it were, thrown open" (133). He goes on to illustrate that love does not hinder one's ability to see the truth, but heightens it, illuminating all the values and meaning of life.

To go a step further, how might this mission to meaning through love be inhibited? Assuming a task is worthwhile is to assume that it is also difficult. What then, stands in the way of finding meaning through love of another? Frankl describes three layers of the human condition regarding intimacy. The first, being sexual attraction, is rather common and therefore not very valuable; it coasts on the surface, uninterested in anything deeper. Second, is infatuation, or as Frankl calls it, the erotic. He states, in *The Doctor and the Soul*, that the erotic goes a step further, "[It] penetrates into the next deeper layer, enters into the psychic structure of the other person" (134). Unlike the sexual attitude, the erotic transcends physical attraction while still exhibiting certain limits. Thus the deepest, most intimate layer is pure love—love that goes straight to the core of the other person's being. Frankl explains, "Love represents the end stage of eroticism, since it alone penetrates as deeply as possible into the personal structure of the partner" (134-35). This "ultimate attainable form of partnership" is seen by Frankl as spiritual: "The lover is no longer aroused in his physical being, nor stirred in his emotionality, but moved to the depths of his spiritual core, moved by the partner's spiritual core [which] is the carrier of those psychic and bodily characteristics…[it] is what lies back of those physical or psychic appearances" (135). In order to achieve this highest level, then, one must break through the others, leaving behind short-lived excitement and temptation.

If love is the deepest realm, a spiritual connection, what makes it so? Frankl believes the answer lies in the unique quality of a person's spiritual core. It then follows that the worth of love is determined by "its own warrant of permanence" (136). Continuing in *The Doctor and the Soul*, Frankl argues (rightly so) that "true love as a spiritual relationship to the other person's being, as the beholding of another peculiar essence, is

exempt from the transtoriness which marks the merely temporary states of physical sexuality or psychological eroticism" (136-37). Thus, transcendence is the key.

As important a goal as love is, it can be understandably devastating to the individual if not achieved. Stanley J. Rowland, Jr., writer for *The Christian Century*, speaks of an interesting phenomenon: "If the patient doesn't realize his drive to love, then it will come back to him like a boomerang, in the form of anxiety—as an anxious desire to be loved" (722, 724). How true! If ever there was a universal neurosis, the anxiety and depression resulting from this void is it. Everyone is looking for love in one way or another, and many (if not most) go to extraordinary lengths to attain it. Therein lies an interesting dilemma. In his essay, *The Will to Meaning* (published in *The Christian Century*), Frankl chooses to focus on just that rather than the will to pleasure for the simple fact that "the will to pleasure is a self-defeating principle inasmuch as the more a person really sets out to strive for pleasure the less likely he is to gain it. The more a person directly aims at pleasure, the more he misses it" (515-17). Often, the choice one is left with is not to force the matter, but simply let it happen.

In an attempt to reduce the enigmatic to simple and intelligible notions, Frankl offers his take on the importance of physical beauty. Appearance, he says, is secondary and not at all the focus of romantic love. Ever enlightened, he warns against upgrading one's physical appearance by means of plastic surgery or extreme use of cosmetics. A person truly in love, he argues, will love his or her partner's body just the way it is—flaws and all—and will be narrow-minded towards the idea of any drastic change (even for the better). Less than perfect men and women can rest assured, according to Frankl, who points out in *The Doctor and the Soul,* that "a person's physical appearance…has comparatively little to do with his being loved. His actual physical traits and temperamental features acquire their erotic significance from love itself; it is love which makes these characteristics 'lovable'" (140). He goes on to demonstrate how people often forget the error they make when giving priority to flash over substance; personality is the real concern. He underlines his point by saying, "Stress on appearance leads to general overestimation of the value of 'beauty' in erotic life. At the same time the person as such is devalued" (142).

Beauty, as well as meaning, is where you find it. Frankl says himself that "love is only one of the possible ways to fill life with meaning, and is not even the best way" (141). (It is important to note a possible contradiction, here. On the other hand, perhaps he is only pointing to the potential for unhealthy codependence.) In order for one to be happy in love, one must look beyond the surface. Beauty is at best skin deep and at worst degrading. Frankl states (in *The Doctor and the Soul*), "There is something insulting in identifying a woman as 'beautiful.' A high rating in a category of relatively low valuation arouses the suspicion of tacit unwillingness to give any rating in a category of higher valuation" (143).

With the dangers of the superficial in mind, one can now explore the consequences of such a lifestyle. Frankl describes it (in *The Doctor and the Soul*), as a "crippled form of love" (144). For that is exactly what superficial people do to themselves. Women, who focus solely on appearances, disregard their own uniqueness, favoring instead the unspecific quality of a member of her sex (145). It is a sad fate for the woman who chooses to conceal her real self and fall in line with the scores of "contemporary urban 'dolls' [who are] completely engrossed in [their] appearance" as Frankl eloquently puts it (144). This is the type who begs not to be taken seriously, but rather wishes to hide any trace of genuine personality. In doing so, she surrenders to conformity, "slavishly [attempting] to imitate that popular type, and in so doing she must necessarily be unfaithful to herself" (145).

Men are obviously no exception, although their shallow ways seem to serve them better. The superficial man concerns himself only with surface qualities, viewing the opposite sex as interchangeable possessions. His distasteful habits are revealed, but he still retains the upper hand. While a woman sacrifices her individuality, a man greedily takes all he can get—his only possible disadvantage being a lack of sex appeal, which can easily be made up for. Clearly, this is no way

to pursue meaning in life for either men or women, and only leads to a harsh, depressing reality the day the glamour of the lifestyle, as well as one's allure, fades.

Surely one can have great appreciation for the invaluable insights Frankl has achieved and the legacy he leaves to both the fields of psychology and philosophy. His theories on interpersonal relationships are only one minor aspect of his brilliant work. His brand of psychotherapy, known as logotherapy, offers an alternative approach (to Freudian and Adlerian thinking) for overcoming the all too common symptom known as the bane of human existence. What intelligent person can deny the desire to find meaning in life, to have a purpose amid the chaos? Stanley J. Rowland, Jr. quotes Frankl, saying, "The striving to find meaning in life is a primary motivational force in man" (722, 724). Who dares to argue with that?

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Evaluation: *Danielle's essay is remarkable because it astutely focuses on Frankl's emphasis on love and deftly explains how this emphasis separates the great philosopher/psychologist from his existential contemporaries.*

Growing Up

Mirja Lorenz
Courses: English 102 (Composition) and
Philosophy 115 (Ethics)
Instructors: Andrew Wilson and Barbara Solheim

Assignment:
Write a research paper that blends the content of both courses.

Imagine a world where all people know their appropriate places and ranks in society, where all humans faithfully follow their duties in obeying their authorities. Wouldn't this be a wonderful world? Parents as well as teachers wouldn't struggle with difficult children; they rather would have more strength and time for themselves; this world would not need the police, lawyers, or courtrooms because nobody would offend the law; prisons would be used as museums, and slaves would sacrifice themselves with grateful expressions on their faces. A soldier would, with a dull smile, kill his family because his authority just feels like ordering him to do it. Wouldn't this be a wonderful world?

In the stories "Guests of the Nation" by Frank O'Connor and "Barn Burning" by William Faulkner, the main characters, Bonaparte and Sarty, are trapped in the conflict of finding their duty, which, in their case, is also the conflict of growing up. They have to find out whether or not it is their duty to follow orders from authorities, and they have to struggle with which decision is morally more valuable than the other. Does following duties automatically mean the action is morally correct? Or rather, does choosing the morally right decision mean the action automatically is one's duty? By accompanying these two troubled creatures, Bonaparte and Sarty, as they make their decisions, and with advice from the great philosopher Immanuel Kant, we will find out whose decision is morally more valuable.

Throughout history, philosophers have developed theories to help people to find out how to live a good life and how to discern right and wrong. Whereas John Stuart Mill's theory is based on consequences and Aristotle's on goals, Kant's moral theory is based on duty (deontological), which makes it ideally suitable for Bonaparte's and Sarty's case. According to Kant, all rational beings have moral law in themselves, whether consciously or unconsciously, and all are able to discover it and to try to act accordingly. Kant doesn't require people to behave perfectly, but it is indeed all rational beings' duty to at least try to follow moral law; in fact, solely the good will to follow moral law makes an action morally valuable. Since this good will is one's duty, following duty makes an action morally valuable; nevertheless, Kant's duty exclusively refers to following moral law but not orders from authorities, as is the question in Bonaparte's and Sarty's conflict. The following two examples will clarify Kant's sense of the good will. From there it is possible to provide an explanation of Kant's moral law.

A comparison of the good will of a successful doctor's and an unsuccessful doctor's daily care for patients should help to illustrate Kant's ideas. Doctor A, the successful doctor, likes his job, helps patients every day, and saves numerous lives. He is very ambitious and always up to date with the newest, best medical improvements. The patients trust him and prefer him over many other doctors. According to Kant, however, only the will to follow moral law, not the result, is important: "A good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes . . . it is good through its willing alone . . ." (50); consequently, we can stop regarding Doctor A's success, and should instead carefully observe his intentions, which are composed of his pleasure to help people in making them healthy. He intends, also, to satisfy his medical curiosity and to earn both money and a good reputation. His concern about medical curiosity, money, and reputation are self-

ish inclinations and therefore morally worthless. Surprisingly, however, also his wish to make patients healthy is valueless since it is based on a result (the restored health), and the same is true with his pleasure in helping people because it is his (selfish) pleasure that makes him help others. Unfortunately, Doctor A behaves well for the wrong reasons, for, as we know, only the will is important but not the result. In Kant's words, he acts "*in conformity with duty*, but not *from the motive of duty*" (51).

On the other hand is Doctor B, who is not exactly skillful and therefore not very successful either. He is a surgeon, but his hands are clumsy and his vision "limited." In fact, he more often increases the patient's problems than solves them. His intention to be a doctor is helping people because he just knows it is good to help people. Remarkably, despite all the healing successes of the skillful Doctor A, Doctor B's actions are indeed morally valuable (in contrast to Doctor A's), since his will is not selfish but truly concerned about helping patients, regardless of the results (his failures), which don't count in Kant's moral theory. "Even if, by some special disfavour of destiny or by the niggardly endowment of stepmotherly nature [Doctor B's clumsiness, bad vision, and lack of skill] . . . if by its utmost effort it still accomplishes nothing, and only the good will is left . . . even then [the good will] would still shine like a jewel for its own sake . . ." (50).

The meaning of good will is certainly clear now, but what exactly is this "moral law" that everybody has somewhere in his or her mind? First of all, moral law is objective, meaning that we don't invent moral law ourselves. It exists just as the laws of physics or logic exist. So, we cannot appoint what we wish to be morally right and wrong. Besides being objective, moral law is also universal, which means, first, that once one has succeeded in discovering one moral law, such as "always tell the truth," the person can count on this law remaining the same forever, and second, that moral law is valid for all situations and places. Consequently, Kant doesn't accept one single condition that gives moral permission for lying!

There are, of course, sometimes situations where people just don't know which decision is right. For these cases, Kant formulated the categorical imperative. In fact, "categorical" means just the same as "universal": namely, moral law is unconditional; thus, again, lying is absolutely never allowed. "Imperative" means command. Therefore, the categorical imperative is a morally obligatory command, valid for every rational being in every situation in which a moral decision is at hand.

Kant developed two versions of the categorical imperative, equal in value and exchangeable. The first version, "Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (52), commands people to ask for the universal validity of their decisions. According to the notes of Professor Barbara Solheim, Kant established a step-by-step instruction to find out the right decision. First, one should formulate the maxim of one's proposed action, then second, universalize the maxim and finally see whether one can rationally will that the second step (universalizing the maxim) holds.

For better understanding, we will observe how this principle works on the example of Faulkner's Sarty Snopes (ignoring that Sarty is a child whose rational abilities are not fully developed; therefore, Kant probably wouldn't have accepted him as a rational being). When, in the beginning of "Barn Burning," Sarty stands in the courtroom before the judge, his father demanding that he lie, he could have used Kant's method to check out his father's demand in the following way: first, I ought to lie; second, everybody always ought to lie. Finally, he couldn't have rationally willed that everybody always ought to lie—yet not because always lying seems to be especially evil but rather because lying and truth are opposites. Mixing these opposites is not logical in the same sense as nobody can just insist minus be plus and plus be minus.

Kant's second version of the categorical imperative is "*Act in such a way that you always treat . . . [rational beings], whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always in the same time as an end. . . .*" (54). In other words, a rational being should never treat another rational being only for his or her own sake, ignoring the other person's interests, but he or she should always respect the other per-

son's own value. Consequently, people should "always show respect, always be honest, never take unfair advantage, never coerce" (Solheim). Sarty's father Abner Snopes, a negative example, doesn't show respect for anybody, lies in the courtroom, takes unfair advantage of everybody, and tries to talk Sarty into lying.

In Frank O'Connor's short story "Guests of the Nation," our first victim of moral confusion is Bonaparte, who is always willing to be a good buddy and soldier but struggles with the conflicts of growing up." Being a soldier, he is an adult, of course, but he still needs authorities who guide his way. He cannot make decisions based on his own values if they disagree with orders from others. Always meaning the very best, he probably has been used to obeying for his whole life; first there were his parents, then his teachers, and now the military. Needless to say, nobody has ever told him not to obey; on the contrary, everybody probably has praised and honored him regularly, patting him supportively on his shoulder. "What a good boy," they might have said; "just go on like this." And suddenly he finds himself playing the main character in this disturbing, sinister story that chronicles the destruction of his innocent, sunny life. The story forces him to decide between his own values and his duty to obey; he finally obeys, receives his deserved pat on his shoulder, but leaves the scene with a wretched feeling. Why is something suddenly wrong with obeying? Didn't he just fulfill his duty? By looking at this story closer, we will find out.

Together with his buddy Noble, the adult-but-not-grown-up soldier Bonaparte has to watch over two English prisoners, Belcher and Hawkins, for several weeks. The four of them learn to like each other and eventually become friends. Although Bonaparte and Noble are supposed to have power over the English men, Belcher and Hawkins just don't behave like prisoners; instead, they show personal strength and dignity both in immediately "tak[ing] root . . . like a native weed" (O'Connor 46) in Ireland, their enemy-country, and in generously offering familiarity towards their guards: "At dusk the big Englishman Belcher would shift his long legs out of the ashes and say 'Well chums, what about it?' and Noble or me would say 'All right, chum' (for we had picked up some of their curious expressions)" (46). Soon Bonaparte and Noble respectfully look up to them like to older brothers, which has a powerful influence especially on Bonaparte, who, as we know, faithfully believes in authorities.

All of a sudden, Bonaparte and Noble receive an order to kill the prisoners. Bonaparte is terrified. He hasn't thought about this possibility at all. They, his authorities, cannot demand from him to kill his friends, his "chums," his big brothers! He definitely is not willing to kill them, but another resort besides trying to talk his major out of this dreadful plan (which, of course, doesn't work) just doesn't occur to him. He namely is a good soldier; he has learned that obedience is his duty—and he has learned this lesson well—so he refuses to look at other possibilities, for example, disobedience.

While the clock relentlessly yet innocently ticks toward the hour of fate, not knowing that there are catastrophes in the world of humans, Bonaparte desperately hopes somebody else will save the Englishmen; in fact, he wishes that another power besides his own would take responsibility for solving his conflict: "And all the time I was hoping that something would happen; that they'd run for it or that Noble would take over the responsibility from me" (51). However, his current authorities simply don't care about his conflict; his parents are probably far away; and his friend Noble is overstrained by the same problem himself. Therefore, nobody can help him, and the burden of solving his conflict unmercifully weighs on Bonaparte all alone. Donovan, the major, asks the prisoners, whom he is just about to kill, in ridiculously foul attempt at apology: "'You understand that we're only doing our duty?'" One of the English men, Belcher, gives a bitter answer: "'I never could make out what duty was myself . . .'" (53). This rotten situation could have helped Bonaparte to think about the deceiving bipolarity of duty, but unfortunately, Bonaparte is too anxious to think. Also, the screaming voice of his conscience demands him to wake up, to think about his own values, and above all, to decide with his own head at last. However, he is even more afraid of this disturbing voice that questions his learned values and asks him to grow up, to take the responsibility for life—and

therefore also guilt—in his own hands. This voice is so loud and frightening that he desperately tries to shut his ears and to ignore his own conscience when he finally kills the prisoners, his "chums."

They are dead now—but at least he obeyed. He therefore is a good soldier, isn't he? And a good soldier doesn't carry the albatross for killing people, for it is not the soldier's fault when he fulfills his duty, is it? Therefore, he is a good person, and everything can be as it was before, can't it? But why does he feel so miserable then?

We actually know the truth: although he tries so hard, he cannot totally ignore the voice of his conscience. Shutting his ears doesn't eliminate his responsibility, so he cannot be innocent anymore. Consequently, he has to carry the enormous burden of guilt now: guilt for killing his friends, guilt for obeying a power that disagrees strongly with his own values, guilt for not listening to himself, guilt for refusing responsibility, and guilt for trying not to grow up. Like a black, heavy, iron curtain, the burden of guilt falls crashing over him, muffling and isolating him from his surroundings, taking him "a million miles away" from life (53). He cannot even pray together with Noble and the old woman, who fall next to each other on their knees, seeking and finding comfort. Rest, comfort, closeness, ease are for other people now, not reachable for him. Similar to the narrator's expression of hopelessness in the poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot, Bonaparte would also say: "I do not think that they [the mermaids] will sing for me" (Eliot 1014). And they never will indeed. We know this from Bonaparte himself: "anything that happened afterwards, I never felt the same about again" (O'Connor 54).

If we analyze the moral value of Bonaparte's decision according to Kant's theory, Bonaparte comes off badly. First of all, Bonaparte is (in theory) an adult rational being, capable of finding out and thus following moral law. Kant wouldn't respect Bonaparte's weakness not to look for other possibilities besides trying to persuade Donovan to retreat from the terrible order because for Kant, fulfilling orders has no moral value at all; in fact, Bonaparte's duty is merely the will to follow moral law. Maurice Wohlgelernter strengthens Kant's point of view, observing that O'Connor in the story "Guests of the Nation" projects "Duty" (meaning following orders) as "a shield for monstrous acts of evil . . ." (36). Indeed, Bonaparte, ignoring his conscience, hides behind his long-learned version of duty as behind a "shield for monstrous acts of evil" and kills his friends. Instead, Bonaparte could have used, for example, the step-by-step instruction of the first version of Kant's categorical imperative to find out if killing the prisoners is right: first, I ought to kill; second, everybody always ought to kill. Finally, he couldn't have rationally willed that everybody always ought to kill because killing is against life, but the moral theory is a theory for life. It is important to remember that Kant's moral theory is universal and does not include any conditions. Killing, therefore, is always wrong, regardless of Bonaparte's circumstances: his growing up with obeying as an absolute good, his will to be a good person, his weakness and confusion. For Kant, Bonaparte's inner, rational knowledge speaks in his conscience, telling him what is right and wrong, but Bonaparte doesn't listen.

In contrast to Bonaparte, Sarty Snopes in Faulkner's "Barn Burning" is only ten years old when he successfully masters his ordeals of growing up. But before the conflicts of both stories begin, Bonaparte and Sarty actually are in a pretty similar situation. As a ten-year-old child, Sarty is dependent on authorities, like Bonaparte, with the difference that Sarty's main authority is his father Abner Snopes—whom he deeply loves—whereas Bonaparte's authority is the military. Sarty, too, means the very best when he tries to fulfill every order as faithfully as he can, but his motive is different from Bonaparte's. Whereas Bonaparte just believes in authority, Sarty obeys because he is hungry for his father's love—and only for this reason. In contrast to Bonaparte, Sarty has developed his own awareness of values in the beginning of the story. He tries to obey as well as he can, but he just cannot if the orders disagree with his own values. In fact, unlike Bonaparte, Sarty is very aware that not all decisions, actions and orders of authorities are acceptable; on the contrary, he hates his father's cruel, cold, mean, ferocious attitude and his habit of burning other people's barns down. Sarty, in contrast to Bonaparte, succeeds in learning to prefer his own values before his father's; he frees him-

self from his dirty, sticky family bonds, even if he loses his father, and finally grows up.

Sarty's conflict already starts in the very beginning of the story, being in the court room, not knowing if he should lie for his father or tell the truth. Luckily, he finally doesn't have to say anything. In James B. Carothers' opinion, "[a]t this point [Sarty] intends to do what is expected of him, though he knows it is wrong . . . . he tries to be a dutiful son" (62). In fact, however, even though Sarty, tied to "the old fierce pull of blood," thinks "[my father] *aims for me to lie . . . . And I will have to do hit*" (Faulkner 397, 398), he and Abner absolutely know that Sarty finally would not have done what is expected from him; verily, he would have told the truth: "'You were fixing to tell them. You would have told him,'" Abner scolds Sarty, but Sarty "didn't answer" (400). With good reason, Abner is concerned that Sarty will revolt one day. Not answering betrays that Sarty definitely would have told the truth if he had to, despite the "pull of blood." He unconsciously starts to prefer his own values (truth) before the family bonds (lying for his father), although he loves his father so much that he certainly would like to do everything for him.

The family has to leave their home for the twelfth time in Sarty's life, but this time, they arrive at a different place. Their new home is small and plain, just like all houses before, but as soon as Sarty sees their landlord's house, he is overwhelmed by the beauty, the size, the "dignity" (401). "He had never seen a house like this before," and with a sudden "surge of peace and joy," he not just hopes but rather knows that "[t]*hey are safe from him. People whose lives are a part of this peace and dignity are beyond his touch, he no more to them than a buzzing wasp: capable of stinging for a little moment but that's all; the spell of this peace and dignity rendering even the barns and stable and cribs which belong to it impervious to the puny flames he might contrive*" (401). This house is like a holy place for Sarty and thus taboo for his father, so his father just must not, cannot smudge this house. For if Abner is to stop tormenting people, then the line is here. If he won't respect these people, he will never respect any people.

Unconsciously, Sarty decides to actively defend his new truth, his hope, his line; he will not, under any circumstances, allow his father to step over this line, whereas consciously, he desperately hopes his father will change out of his own intentions: "*Maybe he will feel it too. Maybe it will even change him now from what maybe he couldn't help but be*" (401). Like Bonaparte, he tries to give the responsibility for solving his own conflict to somebody else. Since Sarty is a child, he actually is very right when he expects this responsibility from his father; nevertheless, people and the world usually don't change just because we want them to, and so also Abner, neither aware nor caring about Sarty's new inner discoveries, is to continue his old, mean habits. So, Sarty bitterly has to learn that his father neither "feel[s] it too," nor desires to change; instead, Abner takes Sarty with him to his next beastly act, which is ruining the landlord's expensive rug. Sarty's hopes shatter while his desperation grows, but so does his disgust toward his father, slowly entering Sarty's consciousness. Under the surface, Sarty's indignation inevitably flourishes with every misdeed of Abner, since with smudging the rug of the people in the nice house, Abner steps over the taboo line. He directly attacks Sarty's sanctuary, and thus Sarty. Yet Sarty cannot fight back, first, because he loves his father, and second, because he feels too weak against his father's power.

Not until his father is about to burn his landlord's barn does Sarty finally fall into a rage. At last, all of his anger boils over and gives him the strength to defend his sanctuary. Yes, he loves his father; yes, he wants to please him; yes, he might lose his father when he does what he is about to do; but all these doubts and thoughts just don't count at this moment. Running to de Spain, warning him of Abner, something more powerful bursts out of Sarty: his anger of ten years, his will for freedom, his will for truth, his will for growing up—his will for life.

The moral value of Sarty's action, with respect to Kant's ideas, is difficult to identify. Theoretically, Sarty can find out if his plan to warn the landlord is right through, for example, Kant's second categorical imperative. Warning the landlord de Spain means preventing Abner from "taking unfair advantage" and "showing disrespect" towards de Spain. Furthermore, the warning shows "respect towards de Spain's interests and value." Therefore, it seems that there lies a double-moral value

in warning this neighbor, both in protecting de Spain from Abner's evil plan and preventing Abner from pursuing it. Risking his father's life and love, Sarty's action is clearly focused on the action but not on the result. In fact, Sarty complies with moral law even if he is a child and therefore not a fully developed rational being. Therefore, he either must be a prodigy, whose rational ability is surprisingly high for his age, or, like Doctor A in my earlier example, he acts "*in conformity with duty*, but not *from the motive of duty*," which makes his action morally worthless, since he doesn't rationally know about his duty to follow moral law.

As good, thoughtful, logical, and optimistic as Kant's moral theory might sound, the universal, categorical character of moral law also has a very questionable side. For example, Bonaparte's decision to kill the prisoners is morally wrong; however, only a cool judge, as Kant is, regards and evaluates Bonaparte's offense without taking conditions into account. Kant, refusing to include contexts, ignores the fact that almost all decisions are results of more or less complex circumstances and that balancing these is more complicated than just following an isolated categorical imperative. For instance, what if the soldiers had failed in completely killing the prisoners and had left them in a hopeless, painful state? What if Bonaparte were alone with them, and his "chums"—screaming of pain—pled for his mercy to relieve their pain and kill them? If then Bonaparte used the first version of the categorical imperative, he would find that killing is absolutely never allowed. However, if he used the second version, he could conclude that "showing respect" demands killing the prisoners. And if the two versions of the categorical imperative can suggest different solutions, where, then, is the universal validity of moral law? Maybe Bonaparte had better regard the conditions before deciding whether killing is right or wrong instead of following Kant's questionable advice. As a matter of fact, although Bonaparte doesn't listen to any advice of Kant and behaves morally wrong, he is not a monster that cold-bloodedly (and with a dull smile) kills his friends, spitefully ignoring his duty to follow moral law. He rather is honestly and desperately torn between following his order or not. His genuine intention to do the right thing is definitely good. His offense starts, however, when, out of fear, he ignores his conscience. He finally kills his friends out of weakness but not out of pure malignity, which is, although still foul, a remarkable difference!

Kant's emphasis on rationality is another questionable point about his theory. Whereas Kant accredits intellect as the only basis for decisions of moral value, he rejects inclinations altogether: "Inclinations themselves, as sources of needs, are so far from having an absolute value . . . that it must rather be the universal wish of every rational being to be wholly free from them" (Kant 54). Nevertheless, Sarty's decision is far from any intellectual thought. Rather his intuition, his inner voice, his inclination drives him into his rage, enabling him to do the inconceivable. "[I]n spite of his sensitivity and his intuitive sense of right and wrong, the little boy is far too young to understand . . . the complexities of the moral choice he must take" (Ferguson 95). Again, his "intuitive sense of right and wrong," not his intellect, leads Sarty to his decision. How can inclinations be corruptive if they enable people to behave in such a brilliant way as Sarty? Unlike Kant, I indeed give Sarty credit for his decision. Rather than with Kant's cool judgments, I agree with Annette Baier, who proclaims that intellect is one useful guide for actions, yet it cannot substitute for emotions. She suggests that people should cherish good emotions instead of, on the one hand, just learning how to control bad inclinations or, on the other, simply ignoring emotions altogether: "the emphasis in Kantian theories on rational control of emotions, rather than on cultivating desirable forms of emotion is challenged . . ." (93). Also, Bonaparte presumably could have decided for not killing his friends if he had learned to value his positive emotions (his love and friendship) better, instead of ignoring these strong and good guides.

In summary, although both Bonaparte and Sarty have genuine intentions, although both of them have to go through hell, although Bonaparte is an adult and Sarty a child, Sarty clearly is the triumphant winner of these stories. Both Bonaparte and Sarty start faithfully bonded to authorities; then their conflicts demand a decision, either for their own values but against their authorities or in reverse. Both of them react by hoping

and expecting that someone else will take over the responsibility to solve their conflicts; nevertheless, the only persons whom they can change are themselves. And here their paths divide. Bonaparte, on one side, cannot handle this truth; he keeps his eyes closed out of fear and struggles. Finally, he has to pay for exactly what he had so desperately tried to avoid: misused responsibility.

On the other side is Sarty, our little hero, who finally succeeds in accepting the truth (that he can only change himself) and lives. He is only ten years old when he turns against his father, the person he loves and needs most, after all. His decision doesn't only include warning his neighbor, but also leaving his father forever, and worse, risking his father's life! This he can only accomplish driven by his rage, where his doubts, thoughts, and rational sensibilities are just switched off: "presently he was in the road again though he could not see it. He could not hear it either: the galloping mare was almost upon him before he heard her, and even then he held his course, as if the very urgency of his wild grief and need must in a moment more find him wings . . . " (408). The severity of his decision seems to be suitable for very old, wise people, rather than for children, just as Kant thinks, too; however, what Kant does not see is that sometimes children, especially, seem to be the only ones able to make decisions as big as these since they haven't learned to ignore their inner voices yet, which are often wilted in older people, such as in Bonaparte. Finally, Bonaparte's as well as Sarty's fates remind us of the significance of our own inner voice (not merely our rationality). Something in us most likely knows the right way. We only have to listen.

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Evaluation: *This is truly a remarkable essay. It transparently explains a difficult philosopher (Kant); more than that, Ms. Lorenz offers a beautifully wrought "Kantian" reading of the two stories, all the while comparing men's obedience to children's natural (and morally intuitive) rebellion. When Ms. Lorenz begins to question Kant's stark emphasis on unemotional rationality near the end of this essay, she strikes the reader as being particularly judicious.*

Marriage Was a Wretched Institution

Nik MacTavish
Course: English 101 (Composition)
Instructor: Trygve Thoreson

Assignment:
Take a position in response to Mervyn Cadwallader's "Marriage as a Wretched Institution," and argue your position with relevant examples and details.

In "Marriage as a Wretched Institution," Mervyn Cadwallader asserts that marriage as it is now is an institution headed down the wrong path, one that can end only in unhappiness. He believes that marriage's function has changed, but the nature and details of the institution of marriage have not been updated with the times, and as such it does not serve the purpose it is expected to. In ages past, he says, it was an institution designed "to meet some very specific functional needs of a nonindustrial society" (Cadwallader 271). In its modern incarnation, it is expected to provide many things it was not originally intended to, such as "friendship, erotic experience, romantic love, personal fulfillment, continuous lay psychotherapy, or recreation" (272). He admits that not every marriage suffers from this wretchedness (indeed, very many are successful and happy), but that enough do suffer that the institution as a whole needs to change.

Though marriage is not entirely different from how Cadwallader describes it (he is largely correct), marriage itself has and is still changing to suit industrial society better. Form follows function, and when function changes, form follows; Cadwallader recognizes this and presents options on how marriage should be changed to suit its new function. Though he provides solutions to a problem he sees, one critical problem remains: Cadwallader's information seems out of date. In particular, three points he mentions in passing as simple fact seem outdated: that people marry young to legitimize sex, that marriage is used to fill a void created by people's loss of a sense of community, and that marriage is given romanticized expectations it cannot live up to.

The idea that people marry young to legitimize sex is wrong on both parts: people no longer marry so young, nor do they do it to legitimize sex. Television shows such as *Sex and the City* are a sign that premarital sex has become accepted, and that people often don't get married even well into their thirties. In fact, premarital sex is not only accepted, but expected, as nobody wants to rush into a marriage without making sure they know whether or not they are a good match in as many ways as possible. Additionally, rather than marrying right away, couples are starting to cohabitate first to see if they can get along while living with each other before

taking that final hurdle. The notion that people marry young to legitimize sex is an outdated one that is fading as new generations become a part of the institution and change it to fit their needs and wants.

Cadwallader's assertion that marriage fills a void created by a lost sense of community is truer than his belief that it is used to legitimize sex. While America has a far more diminished sense of community now than it did in preindustrial times, another growing trend is the creation of centers, such as churches, whose sole purpose is to provide that sense of community; some of them are even called "Community Centers." Willow Creek is a prime example of one such place. This new trend is perhaps a direct result of the problem Cadwallader observed; people are building such community centers because they realize that America is losing its sense of community and have come to realize that marriage was not meant to provide a "community in microcosm" (272).

At one time, marriage was thought of as the great and wondrous thing that could solve all emotional ailments. In more recent times, however, the view of marriage is far more realistic. Common marriage problems are recognized as being not only common but almost inevitable. It's become expected that married couples fight; it is a matter of "when," not "if." Marriage is viewed more as a difficult road (but one worth traveling) than as a sunshine-and-rainbows paradise that everyone should strive for.

Cadwallader's solution to the problem of marriage is to make marriage a renewable contract rather than a binding contract that can only be escaped through a painful divorce. The problem with this solution is that he's saying the solution to marriage is divorce itself; the only difference between not renewing the marriage contract and simply getting a divorce is in name alone. Both are effectively the same thing: an end to a marriage that doesn't involve someone dying. If divorce were changed to be more like a renewable contract expiring, rather than being a painful separation process requiring lawyers and costing a lot of money and heartache, the negative repercussions of divorce would be lessened. What he's really saying is that divorce is what is wretched and should be changed, not marriage.

This is not to say that marriage is perfect and sits perfectly within the boundaries set for it by modern society. Marriage is given a tax penalty by the same government that tries to protect the sanctity of it; many people get divorced simply to get a tax break and avoid the marriage penalty. The expectation of marriage as a tool for personal and romantic fulfillment remains; once married, we are expected to remain faithful to our spouse, as we are expected to not need or desire anyone else. Premarital sex has become more accepted, but having children too young or out of wedlock (a possible and natural result of premarital sex) remains a road to hardship and poverty. Marriage isn't broken, but it's far from fixed.

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Evaluation: *Nik acknowledges the merits of Cadwallader's argument, but offers a nuanced and thoughtful rebuttal.*

Breaking the Mold: Women of the Beat Generation

Jessica Crow Mermel
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment:
Choose a subject area related to the Beat Generation and write a nine-page research essay about it.

Joyce Johnson experienced the convergence of people and ideas known as the Beat Generation on the cusp of its metamorphosis from subterranean to pop culture. The etymology of the term "beat" can be traced back to Times Square hustler Herbert Huncke, who used it to refer to a life of "exalted exhaustion" from treading against the mainstream (Knight 2). Her award-winning 1983 memoir *Minor Characters: A Young Woman's Coming-of-Age in the Beat Orbit of Jack Kerouac* offers a candid snapshot of the time of flux that was created by the publication of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. That publication launched him and the term "beat" into public popularity. "Beat" has further been defined in spiritual context as "beatific." Richard Peabody poses the question, "If *Beat* really means *Beatitude*, who else has been down longer or mistreated more as wife or girlfriend or trophy, and risen up to sing out?" (Peabody 3). Male writers associated with the Beats such as Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, and Gregory Corso, have found their way into pop vernacular, but equally present at the height of the Beat movement were women like Hettie Jones, Elise Cowen, Diane di Prima, Carolyn Cassady, Janine Pommy Vega, Eileen Kaufman, Joanna McClure, and Joyce Johnson. These women not only inspired the prominent men of the literary movement, but also were integral creators themselves. However, they have often been overlooked by the male Beats, literary historians, and critics alike. Brenda Knight wrote in her anthology *Women of the Beat Generation*:

> Jack Kerouac would be the first to tell you that the mainstream and the media were the death of the Beat Generation. Sensationalism and mass success, by its very nature, negates that which is Beat . . . . Ironically, because the women in the movement have, to a certain degree, been ignored and marginalized, they represent the precious little of that which remains truly Beat. (5)

Because the women of the Beat Generation had a heavier yoke of societal constraint to cast off, they embodied "beat" by living their lives beyond the edge, constantly struggling against mainstream culture without being consumed by it.

Although it is easy to label these female writers, primarily poets and memoirists, "women of the Beat Generation," these women tend to reject the generalization and classification. They certainly were involved in the period that has come to be defined as the Beat Generation, but the "writers themselves want to elude that context" (McLemee). On a panel discussion with women writers at the San Francisco Book Festival in 1996, some writers like Joanna McClure and Eileen Kauffman did not mind the association with the Beat Generation, whereas others, namely Joyce Johnson, Carolyn Cassady, and Hettie Jones, felt boxed in by this tag. Johnson responded, "Although I have written about the Beat Generation, I don't consider myself a Beat Generation writer. I have my own aesthetic. I've always done very different kinds of writing, and I'm my own kind of writer" (qtd. in Charters 618). Cassady agreed that individual qualities are lost when people are stereotyped. These women writers had more to rebel against than the men; they were rebelling by living on their own, writing, having sex outside of marriage, and raising biracial children so they did not feel as much of a need to rebel against the restrictions of literature. Hettie Jones noted that the Beat Generation tag itself was a "misnomer because at one point everyone identified with it could fit into my living room and I didn't think a whole generation could fit into my living room" (qtd. in Charters 618). But she felt, for the purpose of literary history, that everyone will be identified with a period. She stated, "I don't care particularly how people want to remember me as long as the truth of my existence on this planet is somehow adhered to in some fashion" (qtd. in Charters 618). The paramount responsibility of these women has been to chronicle their lives in memoirs so that they can assure their correct place in history. In her essay, "Snapshots, Sand Paintings, and Celluloid," Nancy Grace writes, "Life writing also takes on political and artistic import for women writers in its connection to self-validation, self-expression, and authority, a conceptual link assuming heightened importance for women writers effectively erased as legitimate artists from the historical Beat record" (143). They certainly could not leave it to the men to paint a clear portrait of these women in their writing; the men usually only described types.

Flesh and blood women represented as types, rather than individuals, are especially apparent in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. This, the most famous of Kerouac's novels, was written years before Joyce Johnson would meet and fall in love with him. Several women are encountered in *On the Road*, many of whom are fictionalized representations of real-life women Kerouac had known. Present throughout the novel, hovering in the shadows to swoop down and bail out Sal Paradise, the narrator-protagonist, whenever he gets in a jam, is his aunt. This aunt is the maternal-caregiver type and mirrors Kerouac's own mother. Then there is Terry, "the cutest little Mexican girl . . . her breasts stuck out straight and true; her little flanks looked delicious" (Kerouac 81). This woman is diminished to a little girl sex object that Sal loves for several weeks and then leaves, not before getting one last meal and lay. Sal recounts, "She walked on back to the shack, carrying my breakfast plate in one hand . . . Well, lackadaddy, I was on the road again" (Kerouac 101). It was easy for Sal to be so flippant about leaving, because to him Terry was only a type. It was convenient to treat women this way so as to remove all levels of emotional attachment. Johnson discovered at age sixteen, "that just as girls guarded their virginity, boys guarded something less tangible which they called Themselves. They seemed to believe they had a mission in life, from which they could easily be deflected by being exposed to too much emotion" (Johnson 56). The men of the era protected "themselves," defined by their mission apart from relationships, by closing themselves off to love in the emotional sense. It is ironic that the Beats would choose to do this since they were on a never-ending quest for experience and ultimately enlightenment, but by closing a part of themselves off, they were missing out on a substantial portion of the experience.

In *On the Road*, the only woman privileged enough to share the road with the boys was Marylou, Dean Moriarty's first wife. Marylou was ideal and fun when she was riding naked between Sal and his best buddy, Dean, but when Sal saw her leaving the building with another man, he realized "what a whore she was" (Kerouac 172). Even though her husband, Dean, test-drove many other women, Marylou was typed as a

"whore" for enjoying the same sexual freedom. Galatea Dunkel and Camille Moriarty play the roles of harping wives out to kill Sal and Dean's good time. As a foil to this "sewing circle," Dean and Sal meet the ideal woman when they accompany a man back to his apartment from the bar (Kerouac 193). The man stands over his wife to screw in the light bulb, awakening her from her slumber; she only smiles. Dean elucidates this perfection for Sal, "Now you see, man, there's *real* woman for you. Never a harsh word, never a complaint, or modified; her old man can come in any hour of the night with anybody and have talks in the kitchen and drink the beer and leave any old time. This is a man, and that's his castle" (Kerouac 203). This sleepy woman is the model of perfection because she does not complain or say a cross word to her husband, who is bringing strange men back to their apartment in the middle of the night. This idyllic silent type is recognized by Elise Cowen, who notices that the women at Fugazi's bar "are all beautiful and have such remarkable cool that they never, never say a word; they are mere presences" (Johnson 74). Even in the underground circles, women should be seen and not heard. The gender paradigm presented in *On The Road* treats men as though they are cleared of responsibility, whereas women provide the safety net, and also the buzz kill, but ultimately women are used as empty sexual outlets.

This double standard is pervasive in the nonfiction of the women writers as well. The Beat women were a lot different than their mothers' generation and even their mainstream contemporaries, whose lives consisted of housekeeping. Johnson explains in "Beat Queens: Women in Flux," that "[g]round that women had won in the Jazz Age and during the war years was suddenly gone, as if society had deliberately contracted amnesia. Women who had worked were now relegated to the home . . . Sexual intercourse was reserved for married couples" (43). Women, who had stepped up to take the place of men off to fight in WWII, were sent home to become wives and mothers in the 1950s. The Beat women rebelled against the expectations placed on them to take on the roles of mother/housewife. Many of them eventually became mothers, but they raised their children in unconventional ways. Joan Haverty Kerouac and Joyce Johnson raised their children as single mothers, as did Diane di Prima, who had her five children in tow as she traveled around the country to Buddhist ashrams and poetry readings. Hettie Jones faced the difficulty of raising her biracial children in the 1950s and 1960s. Because the men refuted familial responsibility, the women alone had to be responsible for raising the children and holding down a job to pay the rent for apartments that the men would float in and out of as they pleased. The men avoided employment because it tied them down. The women held down the employment to support the men. Johnson wrote, "It was all right for women to go out and earn wages, since they had no important creative endeavors to be distracted from. The women didn't mind, or, if they did, they never said—not until years later" (Johnson, *Minor Characters*, 207). Facetiously, Johnson illustrates how the products of the men's creativity carry more importance than the women, which is why it was viewed that the women should be the ones to hold down the mind-numbing jobs so the men's creativity and freedom would not be stifled.

However, the women did not openly seem to mind caretaking the men. Like the men, they had not completely broken away from this societal pressure for a woman to nurture her man. John Atlas remarks in his review of *Minor Characters*, "Like Joyce Johnson, these women had strong wills and literary ambitions, yet ended up ministering to men famous for their incessant philandering, flamboyant nervous breakdowns, and perpetual hysteria" (Atlas). Although they were strong, independent women, they still took on a caretaking role to men, who viewed them as inconsequential. Johnson notes the women's status in *Minor Characters* when she writes, "they were mere anonymous passengers on the Greyhound bus of experience" (79). The women of the time are never exalted in the beat literature of the men. They are treated with a cold anonymity, or worse, with misogyny.

Although finding their place was more difficult for the women than the men, especially in light of how they were treated by their lovers and husbands, the women do not view themselves as victims of misogyny. They chose to embark on this journey, fully conscious that it would be difficult. They too felt the "bottled eagerness

for talk, for joy, for excitement, for sensation, for new truths" that John Clellon Holmes spoke of, as quoted in *Minor Characters* (Johnson 70). Johnson said, "I don't consider myself a victim. I consider my years with the Beat Generation the really formative experience of my life, my real education . . . I wanted the life of an outlaw rather than the kind of life my mother had had" (qtd. in Charters 616). The women were not passively experiencing life; they were active participants in a time of great transition for women. This was before the feminism of the 1960s, and these women were paving the way for the next generation to be even more liberated. Johnson notes, "It was a different time and the attitudes towards women throughout the whole culture were absolutely terrible" (qtd. in Charters 616). These women were constructively making positive changes in their lives by making choices for themselves even though these choices were sometimes self-destructive, or sometimes ended with casualties.

Joyce Johnson and several other women of the Beat Generation survive, although not unscathed. "For all her vulnerability, Johnson was sturdy enough to weather that strenuous era and record its pathos without self pity" (Atlas). Johnson lived to tell her history, but many women, her friends and predecessors, did not make it through this tumultuous time. Joan Vollmer Burroughs was shot and killed accidentally by her husband, writer William S. Burroughs. Joan was an intelligent, strong woman who was devoted to her husband and who gave up much of her own life so that he could live his. Eventually, whether consciously or accidentally, she gave her life completely to her husband, "A final gift to Bill," Johnson theorizes in *Minor Characters* (5). Joan's story is not the only tragedy. Another brilliant woman on the scene, Johnson's best friend and poet Elise Cowen, committed suicide by throwing herself through a locked window shortly after being released from a mental hospital her parents forced her into.

Even for the women who survived their involvement in the era of the Beats, there was still a great deal of trauma and pain. Anne Waldman writes in the foreword of *Women of the Beat Generation* about the difficulties of "being dominated by relationships with men—letting our own talents lag, following their lead—which could result in drug dependencies, painful abortions, alienation from family and friends" (qtd. in Knight x). Gregory Corso notes at the Naropa Institute's tribute to Allen Ginsberg, "There were women, they were there, I knew them, their families put them in institutions, they were given electric shock. In the '50s if you were male you could be a rebel, but if you were female your families had you locked up" (qtd. in Haapanen). The dangers that the women faced were far more extreme than what the men faced. Even sex was a "serious and anxious act" for women in the 1950s, said Johnson (*Minor Characters* 89). Sex was free for the men and socially acceptable, but the women had to be cautious of avoiding pregnancy in a time before contraception was readily available, not to mention being perceived as a whore for being a sexual creature. There was a legion of unwanted pregnancies in this time before abortions were legal and safe. Elise Cowen underwent an abortion that ended in a complete hysterectomy. The man who impregnated Johnson did not accompany her to have an unanesthetized abortion. She was forced to go with a strange man who knew the doctor. Johnson said of her experience, "When I later understood Beat in terms of its original definition—'exhausted, at the bottom of the world, but looking up or out'—it seemed to me that in my own way I had reached that state of being even though I was a woman" (Johnson, *Door Wide Open* xvii). Women of this era suffered eating disorders, abuse, and forced institutionalization for being lesbian or for taking a black lover. Life could be excruciating for these women, but like the men, they lived their lives unapologetically for the experience.

Just as it is easy to pity the female Beats for the misery they experienced as a result of the 1950s climate, it is easy to demonize the male Beats for their misogynistic behavior, as they have been by many feminists. Certainly, they were a far cry from being enlightened on issues of women's equality and liberation. However, there was little difference between the Beats' perception and treatment of women from the majority of men from their generation. Johnson explains, "The Beats have often been accused of having no respect for creative women. But in truth this lack of respect was so pervasive in American culture in the postwar years that

women did not even question it" ("Beat Queens" 44). What is interesting is that they felt the need to rebel from society in so many ways: they railed against racism, consumerism, and the societal expectations placed upon them to take a job and raise a family, yet they easily accepted and perpetuated the post-war attitude toward women. Johnson writes in the introduction to *Door Wide Open*:

> The Beats—now routinely castigated by doctrinized feminists for their macho behavior and attitudes—ushered in sexual liberation, which would not only bring a new and permanent openness to American art and literature but transform life for everyone . . . But in the bland and sinister 1950's there were thousands like me—women as well as men—young people with longings we couldn't yet articulate bottled up inside us. Ginsberg and Kerouac would give powerful irresistible voices to these subversive longings; they'd release us from our weirdness, our isolation, tell us we were not alone. (xv)

The male Beats were products of their generation, as far as their views on the gender model, but their progressive vision on art and literature inspired both males and females toward freedom. The longings of this post-war generation had no gender boundaries. Although not often given credit by their male counterparts, the women were there right with them, allowing them to realize their creative potential, unhindered.

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Evaluation: *This is the strongest research essay I have read during my teaching career at Harper. Jessica does a fantastic job of situating the often neglected women of the beat generation.*

The Land of the Equal

Brian Mullen
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Barbara Butler

Assignment:
Write a literary research paper.

There is inequality in the world: some people are more intelligent, or more athletic, or wealthier than others. The problem that societies face is how to provide for those who have less. Some think that it is necessary to limit the best and the brightest so that the less gifted can catch up; others think that nothing should be done for people with less, since they were born that way. But as Kurt Vonnegut's short story "Harrison Bergeron" demonstrates, a society that fails to inspire all of its citizens will lead to its destruction (Labin 8). Through the use of various literary techniques in "Harrison Bergeron," Vonnegut shows that the best way to improve society is to allow all people the chance to improve their lives.

At its heart, "Harrison Bergeron" is a story about politics. It was published in 1961, near the height of the Cold War. At the time, the Soviet Union and its communist allies claimed that their citizens were equal, unlike the people in the West, supposedly. They also predicted that communism would eventually triumph worldwide. After fighting on and off with communists in several countries, Americans were afraid of the emergence of communism in America. Will people still be free? Or will everyone be forced into being equal? Vonnegut attempted to answer those fears in this futuristic American tale in which everyone is completely equal.

In the story, it is the year 2081 and America has, at least on the surface, eliminated all inequalities among people. According to the narrator, "[People] were equal in every which way. Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else" (243). The U.S Handicapper General, Diana Moon Glampers, maintains all of this equality through the use of elaborate handicapping devices. For example, people with any physical strength are required to wear heavy weights strapped to their bodies. Beautiful people have to wear grotesque masks. And those with above average intelligence are not able to form an original thought because radio transmitters in their ears blast loud noises. Anyone who attempts to remove his or her handicaps, even just for a short time, faces heavy fines and a stiff jail sentence.

Although he is known as a science fiction writer, Vonnegut does not write about technology for its own sake. As Jerome Klinkowitz points out, Vonnegut's writings have less to do with technology, and are more about the impact those technologies have on people's lives (68). In their essay on Vonnegut's science fiction stories, Karen and Charles Wood explain that Vonnegut writes about the problems of technology as a way to highlight the flaws in the human character (146). Kevin Boon and David Pringle also suggest that the handicaps themselves represent ideological systems (189), and in this story, the ideology of the system is extreme.

In the story, despite the hardships they have to endure, most Americans believe in the actions of the U.S. government. After all, the people established this equality through the ratification of the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution. And George Bergeron, a man who suffers because of his above average intelligence and whose son, Harrison, was recently taken away by the authorities, still agrees with the government. After Hazel, George's wife, notices how much pain he is going through, she suggests that he take out a few of the lead balls that are weighing him down:

> "If I tried to get away with it," said George, "then other people'd get away with it—and pretty soon we'd be right back in the dark ages again, with everybody competing against everybody else. You wouldn't like that, would you?"
>
> "I'd hate it," said Hazel. (244)

It is clear from this story that America's purpose in the world is no longer to provide freedom to all, it is to enforce equality ("Harrison" 1).

The theme of "Harrison Bergeron" is the most important part of the story; but the theme is not explicit, it is implied. Instead of stating his beliefs up front, Vonnegut uses all of the story's elements—its style, tone, narration, setting, characters, and symbolism—and tells it in a satirical manner to help the reader understand the point he is trying to get across.

Vonnegut tells the story in his own unique style. For example, he writes, "A buzzer sounded in George's head. His thoughts fled in panic, like bandits from a burglar alarm" (243). Vonnegut's diction, or choice of words, like his use of the word "buzzer," captures the reader's attention, just as the noise does to George. Writing that the thoughts "fled in panic" personifies the thoughts, and it makes the noise appear more threatening. And, finally, Vonnegut uses a simile when he compares George's thoughts to "bandits." This is an appropriate comparison to use since, in this society, intelligence is discouraged.

There is a somber tone that runs throughout the story. A society that would feel threatened enough to arrest a boy like Harrison is, as the narrator says, "tragic" (243). The pain that people have to go through is also tragic. For example, after one particularly loud transmitter noise, "[…] George was white and trembling, and tears stood on the rims of his red eyes" (244). But the worst aspect of the story is the fact that some people, like Hazel, are not smart enough to function in life, and they can never hope to. At the end of the story, after having just watched the televised murder of her son, Hazel is sitting on the couch, crying to herself. George, who was in the kitchen when Harrison was killed, asks Hazel why she's crying. "I forget," she said. "Something real sad on television" (243).

The narrator of the story is omniscient, or all-knowing, and is able to see into the characters' thoughts. This gives the reader a chance to experience the agony of someone who is intelligent. In one instance, George is sitting on the couch with Hazel, watching ballerinas perform on television. George was thinking that if the ballerinas weren't so burdened down with weights and covered up that maybe they'd be be…PING! A terrible noise, like the sound of "somebody hitting a milk bottle with a ball peen hammer" (243), suddenly disrupted George's thoughts. To make sure he wouldn't remember, more noises would soon follow.

There are several false statements throughout the story, which Vonnegut included to give the reader a hint that the story shouldn't be taken literally. For example, the description of April as being "clammy," and the statement that it "drove people crazy by not being springtime" (243) give the reader the impression that the government somehow equalized the seasons. And then at the end of the story, Harrison and the ballerina dance and leap high into the air—so high, in fact, that they kiss the thirty-foot-high ceiling, stay suspended in

the air and "kissed each other for a long time" (247). The explanation of this bizarre event is that, since the two of them had already broken the "laws of the land," they could break the "law of gravity and the laws of motion as well" (247).

In addition to the physical impossibilities, it is the first line of the story that is revealing: "The year was 2081, and everybody was finally equal" (243). The word "finally" implies that the narrator thinks that, by limiting the rights of those who have more, America has achieved the equality that it had fought for in the past. But this is not true. Whether by abolishing slavery or by allowing blacks and women to vote, the government did not take away rights, it added them. The society in this story has not achieved equality at all; it has merely covered up the differences that exist among people.

The reason Vonnegut set the story in the future was so that the reader, especially in 1961, could see what would become of the U.S. had it adopted a Soviet-style government. But unlike many science-fiction stories, there are no exotic environments (except for the "clammy" April weather outside), just a couple sitting in their living room watching television. It is a scene that could be from the present day, and the reader can identify with it.

For the same reason, Vonnegut carefully designed the characters in the story. As Carl Mowery points out, a satire is possible only if the characters are believable (11). Both George and Hazel, the two characters that the reader gets to know the most, seem believable. They have all the characteristics of real-life people. They offer their opinions, they make small talk, and they use everyday language, as when Hazel says, "Boy! That was a doozy, wasn't it?" (244) after hearing George's ear-piece go off. There are some characters, like Harrison and Diana Moon Glampers, that are not believable at all. But Vonnegut meant for them to be symbols, not characters to identify with.

The symbolism that appears in the climax of the story helps to form the theme. The scene opens when Harrison barges his way into the television studio where the ballerinas are being filmed. He stands in front of the cameras and proclaims "I am the Emperor! Do you hear? I am the Emperor! Everybody must do as I say at once!" (247). He continues: "[…] I am a greater ruler than any man who has ever lived! Now watch me become what I can become!" (247). Harrison tears off all of his handicaps—his scrap metal harnesses, his rubber-ball clown nose, his radio transmitter—and proceeds to select his empress from among the ballerinas. After Harrison offers the musicians the chance to be his subordinate rulers if they played good music, he and the ballerina dance and leap and then hover in the air, just below the thirty-foot ceiling. It is while they are suspended in air that Diana Moon Glampers comes into the studio and shoots Harrison and the ballerina to death.

Both Harrison and Diana Moon Glampers are symbols of political extremism. Although Harrison could be thought of as a symbol for freedom, he is really a symbol of the belief that the strong should rule the weak. Instead of just freeing himself of his handicaps and encouraging others to do the same, he goes overboard and tries to grab all the power for himself. He wants to bring society back to feudalism, a system in which emperors ruled over their subjects absolutely. Diana Moon Glampers is a symbol of the society in the story. She will go to any length, including murder, to preserve equality.

"Harrison Bergeron" is meant to be a satire of the political extremes of society. As Carl Mowery explains it, a satire is a form of literature that ridicules foolish ideas and customs by exaggerating certain parts of society (3). The first object of Vonnegut's satire is the extreme left. Immediately after throwing off his handicaps, Harrison doesn't stop to cherish his newfound freedom; he tries to re-establish a feudalistic society in which he is the "emperor," who rules with his "empress," alongside his "barons and dukes and earls" (246). Many extremists on the left fear that, if given the opportunity, strong people will always try to use their strengths against the weak and bring society back to the Dark Ages. Vonnegut then goes on to satirize the extreme right. In addition to the fact that the government is able to change the seasons, it is when Harrison and the ballerina kiss the ceiling—and then remain suspended in the air—that the reader knows something isn't right. Darryl Hattenhauer explains that this physical impossibility should cause the reader to understand that the entire

story is just not possible (391). A society where everyone is completely equal is what extremists on the right fear. Vonnegut is saying that this fear is overblown and that absolute equality can never be achieved.

Vonnegut is making the point that all people should be given the chance to improve their lives. As people better themselves, society is better off. The danger, Vonnegut believes, comes when people are forced into becoming the perfect ideal. As William Allen says of Vonnegut, he is wary of all mass political movements, both from the left and from the right (33). Carl Mowery also notes that, after having worked in several bureaucracies, Vonnegut believes that people should not be thought of as mere numbers (1). And as Joseph Alvarez points out, throughout his career, Vonnegut has condemned the legal, economic, and social inequalities that minorities and women must face (9). Vonnegut wants all people to be able to achieve what they want to in life, with the opportunity to be what they want to be.

This theme of opportunity should become clear at the very end of the story. Right after Harrison is killed, George asks Hazel why she's crying, but she can't remember. She only knows that she just watched "something real sad on television" (247). Vonnegut wants the reader to sympathize with Hazel, someone who is truly suffering, but who has no hope to lead a normal life because of the society she lives in. Without any encouragement, this society is stagnating, and it must maintain itself through the use of force. A good society, Vonnegut is saying, is one that allows all people the freedom to live their lives as they see fit.

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Evaluation: *In Kurt Vonnegut's "Futuristic American Tale," "Nobody was smarter than anybody else." Not so in today's academic world, where Brian's essay is far better than anybody else's.*

Towering Above

Amanda Nielsen
Course: English 101 (Composition)
Instructor: Kurt Neumann

Assignment:
Write a 750- to 1,000 word argumentative essay that is relevant and significant.

I remember almost everything about the day it happened. I was a sophomore at Barrington High School, and I had just gone to my second period of the day: Mr. Nelson's design class. Mr. Nelson always had his radio on for us to enjoy while working on our projects, but when I got to class at about nine o'clock that morning, everyone was crowding around the speakers, their faces troubled and confused.

"What's going on?" I asked Andrew.

"Some planes have been hijacked and two have just crashed into the World Trade Center Towers," he answered.

To be honest, the World Trade Towers did not mean very much to me at that point in my life; I was not in the business world yet, and I had no family or friends in New York City. I was merely a Chicago-suburban teenage girl interested in good grades, friends, boys, and movies. However, I did know that the "Twin Towers" were enormous skyscrapers filled with hundreds of people, parents, bosses, siblings, tourists, and family members. At lunch that day I watched my fellow peers call these family members on cell phones, praying that everything was all right with their loved ones.

Unfortunately, not everything was all right with people's loved ones; that was something I quickly learned as I got home from school and sat in front of the news playing constantly on every television station. I sat on the couch with my brothers, intensely watching the unforgettable "replays" of the airplanes purposefully flying into the towers, which then effortlessly collapsed from the skyline like waterfalls, toppling everything and everyone around and below them.

Over 2,000 people and firemen died that day, September 11, 2001. It was a day that devastated and angered America and other countries around the world. The site of the attack became known as the symbolic Ground Zero. In the three years following these attacks, architects, businesses, and people have been actively suggesting and competing for something to happen with the site. Recently, a decision has been made: architects Daniel Libeskind and David Childs have designed Freedom Tower for the site. Freedom Tower is a 1,776-foot twisting tower that spirals upward with a sharp, spiked antenna that will make it the world's tallest building. It was designed to be an "'exclamation point' on the skyline" and "a 'soaring tribute' to the 'heroes we lost.'"

However, Freedom Tower is not a memorable tribute or memorial to those that died for and in our country on September 11, 2001. Monuments are meant to make the viewer feel sympathy and empathy, and to realize the sacrifice that was made for them; to make those that are being honored feel like they were and are an important part of the country and its citizens; and to be thoughtful of all people involved in the event, including those who died, those who survived, and those related to the survivors or ones who died. Freedom Tower lacks all of these characteristics.

When I see the plans for Freedom Tower, I do not feel sympathy or empathy. I feel revengeful and say in my head, "Look at *this* world. See…we *are* better than you and we *can* take whatever you throw at us!" Patriotism is a good thing; however, this is a cemetery where thousands of people are buried. Imagine a giant building in the middle of Arlington National Cemetery; it would not commemorate the dead. It would inspire

and be useful to those living, but then it would not be considered a memorial.

How can I realize the sacrifice that hundreds of firefighters made for people on September 11th, or make for me everyday, when the ideas for the tower are so rushed, forced, and cliché? "Freedom" Tower? 1,776 feet? Freedom does not make me understand the brutal deaths that innocent tourists and citizens experienced that day. Freedom does not make me accept the fact that there is terrorism and war around the world and our country. How does referring to the year the Declaration of Independence was signed relate to or honor my friend Emily's Uncle Jim, who was a New York City fireman who died on September 11th?

Freedom Tower does not focus primarily on the people who are being memorialized and honored, like Emily's Uncle Jim. It focuses on other issues like the valuable office and consumer space in that key area of New York City, the money that is being lost in the "empty" space, and the overwhelming pride of our country. If I were a fireman looking at Freedom Tower, I would not feel like an honored or an important part of this country, which seems so interested and engrossed in money and revenge. If I were a relative of someone who died on September 11th, I would not feel that the designers considered the fact that this is the grave of my loved one. I would consider it to be a thoughtless, steel-and-glass gravestone that wouldn't have a name or a memory.

People who support the design of Freedom Tower praise the patriotism that it explicitly conveys. It shows that America can overcome disastrous events with a prevailing spirit of nationalism. We are a successful and powerful nation that will continue to thrive and spread freedom around the world. I agree with this manifestation of national pride, but this is not the place to exhibit it. A tower to show American liberty would be more appropriate in Washington, D.C., than among the ashes of this devastating memory. On the other hand, the "Twin Towers" were attacked because they were a symbol of America's superiority and capitalism. The Statue of Liberty, a well-known American monument, is also a pretentious display, but a historical one, too. She stands tall, strong, and proud, presenting her glowing torch for all to see. Nothing about her is humble; instead, she is assertive and knows who she is and what she stands for. At the same time, she honors the history of our country and of our relationship with France, who gave her to us as a gift. The creation of Freedom Tower proclaims the idea of American supremacy and flaunts it into the faces of other countries, showing that we have not learned as a nation from these attacks.

Freedom Tower does not emotionally commemorate and memorialize the horrible and realistic events that happened there on September 11, 2001, unlike the "simple and pure" Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, which does have the qualities of a monument. The sleek, black granite obtrusively juts out from the soft, green hillside, much like the memories of the war in the veterans' minds. The war is a dark, but real experience to Vietnam veterans, and one that will haunt them forever. This memorial concentrates solely on each of these soldiers and the obtrusive black memory that they live with because of what they died for and gave to our country and each of us. On the contrary, Freedom Tower ignores the painful, unimaginable, unexpected experiences that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial acknowledges, and overshadows these still-raw emotions with a revengeful, in your face, attitude that towers far above emotions and memories.

Evaluation: *The essay presents a good argument about a timely (if somewhat overlooked) issue.*

Transformation of the Soul

Marnina Patrick
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Catherine Restovich

Assignment:
Write an 8- to 10-page literary analysis incorporating six to eight outside sources.

There is the unavoidable theme of masculinity and the solidifying of character in Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*. The stories relay the experiences of young men at war and the ways it affects them. In order to deal with the horrific situation they are in, many of the men stay linked to the person they were before they became a soldier. The majority reject the violence of war and deal with it through different ways. It is assumed by society that they make the best of things because they are men and therefore possess the ability to endure it. Yet Tim O'Brien does not stay constant with the theme of masculinity in all his stories. In "Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong," O'Brien introduces the character Mary Anne Bell, who strives for a bond with the environment even though she has the choice to not be involved with the war. This character becomes seduced by the jungles of Vietnam and sheds all trace of her former self. This character's contrast to the other characters is highlighted by the difference in gender. Tim O'Brien uses a female character to show that even the most innocent of people are not immune from the corruption of war.

Throughout his stories, O'Brien shows how the young soldiers get emotionally and mentally affected by the war and how many carry the mental burden home with them. The most intense story, which emphasizes an extreme reaction to the war, is about a young female civilian. One interpretation is that O'Brien is showing how dangerous women can be when given the chance. "Women who never go to war are not innocent so much as they are ignorant of their own capacity for violence" (Smiley 12). Looking deeper into O'Brien's style of storytelling, it is apparent that there is a bigger meaning to the character Mary Anne. One of the narrators in the story, Rat Kiley, states how the story would not be so intense if it had happened to a man. "If it was a guy, everybody'd say, Hey, no big deal, he got caught up in the Nam shit, he got seduced by the Greenies" (O'Brien "Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong" 107). O'Brien wants the story to hit a nerve with the reader and for them to question if it could really happen. With a character like Mary Anne, the reader can apply it to someone they know or to themselves and that would make the horror more real to them.

> Readers don't need to have conscious memory of events in their lives that aroused certain feelings in order to imagine a fictional situation and relate to it either positively or negatively. But those feelings can be touched by the characters in a story and the events in their lives, and when that happens, readers begin to care (Franco 11).

When asked why he chose to place a midwestern female in Vietnam, O'Brien claimed "it would be more fun, it would be more instructive, it would be more artistic, more beautiful, to include as much as possible the whole of humanity in these stories ("An Interview with…" 98). Tim O'Brien creates the character of Mary Anne Bell to express how people are susceptible to the corrupting effects of being in battle. He wants to articulate how it has an intoxicating and yet destructive effect that could change the most innocent of people. As one critic puts it,

> O'Brien delves into an aspect of war not often expressed—its attractive side, which can overwhelm even those like Mary Anne who

> enter it the most innocently….One of the hardest feelings for veterans to explain is the bizarre attraction they possess toward an event that while horrific, also exhilarates them like nothing ever before (Braswell 148).

Mary Anne's alteration is startling in "Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong." She changes from a pretty girl from back home to a renegade warrior. There is a significant loss of innocence and a drastic change of personality. Her character may be looked upon as someone who has lost her mind, but that would be too simple. With his style of character conception, O'Brien shows the reader how complex human beings are. He states,

> My focus here is on the construction of literary character, and my general argument is that characterization is achieved not through a "pinning down" process but rather through a process that opens up and releases mysteries of the human spirit. The object is not to "solve" a character—to expose some hidden secret—but instead to deepen and enlarge the riddle itself (O'Brien, "The Magic Show" 182).

O'Brien constructs his characters with a variety that shows the range of effect the war has. Each soldier uses different methods to help cope with the situation they are in. One character, Azar, uses his crude sense of humor as a distancing tactic. When a well-liked soldier is missing and presumed dead, Azar is constantly cracking jokes. "Like those old cowboy movies. One more redskin bites the dirt" (O'Brien, "In the Field" 165). Another soldier, Ted Lavender, could not handle the war if he was sober. "Ted Lavender carried 6 or 7 ounces of premium dope, which for him was a necessity" (O'Brien, "Things" 3). He did not want to immerse himself in the adrenaline rush of war, so he completely negated the effects by getting high. "Like when Ted Lavender went too heavy on the tranquilizers. 'How's the war today?' somebody would say, and Ted Lavender would give a soft, spacey smile and say, 'Mellow, man. We got ourselves a nice mellow war today.'" (O'Brien, "Spin" 33). The soldiers acted differently, but each had their own motivation to attempt to cope with the war.

Some men took part in the war only because they were drafted and were embarrassed not to go. In "On the Rainy River," the character Tim O'Brien is wrestling with his decision of what to do when he gets drafted. He is entirely against the war and contemplates fleeing to Canada to avoid it. The conclusion he comes to shows that his heart was not in the idea of dodging the draft. "The shore [of Canada] just twenty yards away, I couldn't make myself be brave. It had nothing to do with morality. Embarrassment, that's all it was. I would go to the war—I would kill and maybe die—because I was embarrassed not to" (O'Brien, "On the Rainy River" 59). O'Brien presents the range of emotions and coping techniques that the soldiers experienced. The common theme with these characters is that they were handling it the best they could but did not want to be in Vietnam. O'Brien widens the scope of possibilities when he presents a character that chooses to go to Vietnam and stay.

In "Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong," the setting is an aid station that seems cut off from the rest of the war. Except for the predictable incoming of wounded, the medics enjoy their leisure time. But an idea is planted in one of the medic's head. "'Bring in a girl. I mean, what's the problem?' Rat shrugged. 'Nothing. A war'" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 93). It is such an improbable notion. Mark Fossie surprises the men in his unit and has his girlfriend flown out to be with him. When the men all lay eyes on Mary Anne, they are dumbfounded by the fact that she is with them in Vietnam. Mark and Mary Anne's history together and plans for the future sound normal and predictable; it is incredible that they are together during his tour of duty in the Vietnam War. Mark wants to be with Mary Anne so badly that he did not think about the effect the experience would have on her.

At first Mary Anne is a reminder to the men of the girls back home. She shows up at the helipad dressed as if she is on a weekend outing: "White culottes and this sexy pink sweater. There she is" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 90). She is a refreshing and comforting change of scenery for the men; she is a link to the lives they had before becoming soldiers. She is pleasant to have around and all the men genuinely like her. "There was a novelty to it; she was good for morale" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 95). She was full of questions and eager to learn all she could about the land. The soldiers were

amused to be able to show this girl the basics of what they did, and amazingly, she wanted to be a part of everything.

Instead of being comfortable at the compound with relatively few reminders of the war waging on, Mary Anne desires a deeper immersion. She insists on visiting a village and seeing how the people live, despite Mark's warnings of danger. "If the girl was nervous, she didn't show it. She seemed comfortable and entirely at home; the hostile atmosphere did not seem to register" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 96). On the way back from the visit to the village, Mary Anne stops for a swim in the Song Tra Bong. After the submergence in the waters of the river, the extreme change begins to take place in Mary Anne. She experiences a rebirth or spiritual awakening. Upon returning to the compound, she starts helping out with the incoming wounded and takes great pleasure in the work. "She seemed fascinated by it. Not the gore so much, but the adrenaline buzz that went with the job, that quick hot rush in your veins when the choppers settled down and you had to do things fast and right" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 98). Mark is proud of her but begins to see the change taking place in his girlfriend.

Mary Anne's appearance starts to drastically change, and she no longer resembles the girl she was when she first arrived. "There was a new confidence in her voice, a new authority in the way she carried herself" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 98). Mary Anne also does away with the habits she had before coming to Vietnam. "No cosmetics, no fingernail filing. She stopped wearing jewelry, cut her hair short and wrapped it in a dark green bandana. Hygiene became a matter of small consequence" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 98). Rather than her trying to maintain her female presence, Mary Anne feels no need for the niceties of being clean and feminine. That is quite a difference from when she first arrived and how she acted in the following days, when "She shows up with a suitcase and one of those plastic cosmetic bags" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 90). Many soldiers carried items that showed their individuality and set them apart from the others. "Dave Jensen, who practiced field hygiene, carried a toothbrush, dental floss, and several hotel-sized bars of soap he'd stolen on R&R in Sydney, Australia" (O'Brien "Things" 3). They were deep in the jungle of Vietnam, but this soldier wanted to still floss his teeth and feel clean. Those actions may be irrelevant, but they can help the soldier feel like he is the same person he was before. Mary Anne feels no desire to stay linked to the person she was before coming to Vietnam.

Mary Anne arrives in Vietnam to be with the man she loves, but there is no mention of the family and friends she left behind. When Mark suggests that it is time to go home she says, "Everything I want…is right here" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 99). It is hard to conceive that a person would want to stay in Vietnam by her own choice, so it would be an easy assumption that she wanted to be close to her boyfriend. But there is a deeper reason for her staying. Her attitude about their relationship begins to change. She no longer wants to get married right away, and her priorities seem to be shifting. The source of the changes is revealed when she comes back from an ambush with the Green Beret soldiers. Mark was not happy with what she was doing, and he makes arrangements for her to go home. At first, she accepts it, but then she withdraws into herself. "A couple of times [Mark] Fossie approached her and tried to talk it out, but Mary Anne just stared out at the dark green mountains to the west. The wilderness seemed to draw her in. A haunted look…partly terror, partly rapture" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 105). The next morning, she is gone, and Mary Anne is not seen for three weeks. The narrator, Rat, sees her return from an ambush, and it is apparent that she is an entirely changed person with no intent to rejoin Mark. "Her eyes seemed to shine in the dark—not blue, though, but a bright glowing jungle green. She did not pause at [Mark] Fossie's bunker. She cradled her weapon and moved swiftly to the Special Forces hootch and followed the others inside" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 106). Mark makes one final attempt to reclaim her. The description of what Mark saw of her, for the last time, is shocking. Death was not only on display but celebrated with carcasses, bones and a necklace of human tongues around Mary Anne's neck. "It took a few seconds, Rat said, to appreciate the full change. In part it was her eyes: utterly flat and indifferent. There was no sense of the person behind it" (O'Brien, "Sweetheart"

110). The full effect of what being in battle had done to her is completely clear, and it is not what any of the other characters experienced.

The male narrator in "How to Tell a True War Story" talks about the effect fighting in battle has on him:

> After a firefight, there is always the immense pleasure of aliveness…. All around you things are purely living, and you among them, and the aliveness makes you tremble. You feel an intense, out-of-skin awareness of your living self—your truest self, the human being you want to be and then become by the force of wanting it (O'Brien 81).

This character feels very alive because he comes so close to death. He desires to expand so he can relate to the world and find his place among it. It makes him reexamine who he is and gives him motivation to be a better person. "In the midst of evil, you want to be a good man" (O'Brien 81). This is a major revelation—he understands just what is truly important to him. "You recognize what's valuable. Freshly, as if for the first time, you love what's best in yourself and in the world, all that might be lost" (O'Brien 81). The experience of fighting in battle has the opposite effect on Mary Anne. Instead of expanding, she wants to take it all inside her. The final words she spoke to her boyfriend explain what she is feeling.

> Sometimes I want to eat this place. Vietnam. I want to swallow the whole country—the dirt, the death,—I just want to eat it and have it there inside of me. That's how I feel. It's like … this appetite. I get scared sometimes—lots of times—but it's not bad. You know? I feel close to myself. When I'm out there at night, I feel close to my body, I can feel my blood moving, my skin and my fingernails, everything, it's like I'm full of electricity and I'm glowing in the dark—I'm on fire almost—I'm burning away into nothing—but it doesn't matter because I know exactly who I am. You can't feel like that anywhere else (O'Brien, "Sweetheart" 111).

O'Brien comments that he uses Vietnam to get at the human heart and the pressure exerted on it (Bloom 11). O'Brien does an excellent job showing the reader the mystery of the human spirit and the extent to which someone can be repulsed by war and yet drawn to it. Mary Anne undergoes such a transformation that she is not easily recognizable in appearance and behavior. The change she underwent is proof that war can not leave an individual emotionally untouched. Her change was not due to a damaged personality but an entirely altered identity, as if there was no capacity for the original person to exist outside of this environment. "Together we understood what terror was: you're not human anymore. You're a shadow. You slip out of your own skin, like molting, shedding your own history and your own future, leaving behind everything you ever were or wanted or believed in" (O'Brien, "The Ghost Soldiers" 211).

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Evaluation: *Marni is the first student I have had who has analyzed a female character (a female soldier!) in Tim O'Briens* The Things They Carried. *She proves that the effects of war do not discriminate on the basis of gender.*

Fact or Fiction: *The Things They Carried* Is Both

Vince Payne
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Catherine Restovich

Assignment:
Write a literary research paper.

The Vietnam War is a touchy subject to talk or write about. The people who lived and fought through it have been forever changed by it. By writing about the war and "subjecting his memory and imagination to such harsh scrutiny, [Tim O'Brien] seems to have reached a reconciliation, to have made his peace—or to have made up his peace" (Harris 3). The stories contained in *The Things They Carried* are, as Mr. O'Brien puts it on his title page, "A work of fiction." Many people question what is truth and what is not when they read this book. "Truth be told," Tim O'Brien, in *The Things They Carried,* uses a perfect blend of fact and fiction to create stories and characters that put readers knee-deep into the jungles of Vietnam during the most controversial war in history.

The Things They Carried is a different kind of writing than anything O'Brien, or anyone for that matter, ever did before. This book eludes normal means of classification, such as fiction or nonfiction, novel or group of short stories, or even if it is memoirs or journalism. It seems to be a little bit of all of those combined. The technique O'Brien uses seems to "illustrate the elusiveness of the truth…O'Brien seems to be exploring his own life from different angles that combine facts and invented details" (Herzog 115). In *The Things They Carried,* O'Brien touches on many similar topics he touched upon in his other books, but they are viewed "from many different angles and with much more story depth and emotional impact" (115). This book examines Vietnam from many viewpoints, and even though it covers the same topics as his other books, *If I Die in a Combat Zone* and *Going After Cacciato,* he is still able to garner interest and sympathy for this platoon.

Obviously, since this book is a "work of fiction," then the characters are fictional creations. Yet, the book *The Things They Carried* is dedicated to "the men of Alpha Company, and in particular to Jimmy Cross, Norman Bowker, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Henry Dobbins, and Kiowa" (O'Brien, *Things*). This would lead people to think that maybe these men were real and thrown into fictional stories. When O'Brien was asked about this, he replied, "Well, yes I dedicated the book to my characters…. After all, I lived with them for five years while I was writing" (qtd. in Bruckner 3). O'Brien made these people so real that it is stunning to find out they are fictional. All of his characters are given background stories, and we are given the complete tour as if we were lifelong buddies with them. We find out right away in the title story, "The Things They Carried" about Lieutenant Jimmy Cross. "First Lieutenant Jimmy Cross carried letters from a girl named Martha…they were not love letters but Lieutenant Cross was hoping, so he kept them folded in plastic at the bottom of his rucksack" (O'Brien, "Things" 1). Throughout this story, we learn about everyone and what they carry, both physically and emotionally.

Another question about this book is about the identity of the narrator himself. His name is Tim O'Brien, which of course is the name of the author. "The

narrator O'Brien is 43 years old and comes from Minnesota just like the author; everything else, even most of the convincing personal details about his life and family, is made up" (Bruckner 3). When O'Brien is asked why he used his own name, he replies by saying, "A month into the writing of the book [*Things*]…I found my name appearing" (Herzog 114). After he wrote for about an hour, he started to feel the words and stories in his stomach and heart as a result of writing and reading his name in the manuscript (114). "Such a magical intersecting of his writing life and real life became an important influence on this book and resulted in O'Brien's decision to continue using his name" (114).

Fact and fiction are not easy to separate in this book. Perhaps the best example of the fine line between them is "How to Tell a True War Story." The first line of the story is simply, "This is true" ("How to…" 67). Throughout this story, we are shown how a true war story should go. A true war story is "never moral" (68). You can also tell one if "it embarrasses you" (69). O'Brien tells us the story of Curt Lemon. Curt and Rat Kiley were playing a game that involved a smoke grenade, sort of like the game hot potato. Curt Lemon steps on a land mine and is blown to smithereens. His best friend Rat Kiley writes a letter to Curt's sister, telling her how great of a guy he was and how his attitude was right for the war. He tells her the story of how on Halloween, "the dude paints up his body all different colors and puts on this weird mask and hikes over to a ville and goes trick-or-treating almost stark naked, just boots and balls and an M-16" (68). The letter then goes into how Rat thought Curt was a great guy and "he was his best friend in the world" (68). He then tells her he will look her up when the war ends. "Rat mails the letter. He waits two months. The dumb cooze never writes back" (68). After the letter is described to us, we are given another reassurance about the factual content of the story by the line "it's all exactly true" (70). Immediately after the story of Curt Lemon, O'Brien tells us "pictures sometimes get jumbled; you tend to miss a lot" (71). The story seems surreal and makes it hard to believe, but this in fact "represents the hard and exact truth as it seemed" (71).

The next paragraph begins with, "In many cases a true war story cannot be believed" (71). Immediately following this is the story told by Mitchell Sanders. He describes to the narrator, Tim O'Brien, six guys that did a simple listening post operation for a week. Mitch assures the narrator and the reader this story is true by starting it out with the words, "God's truth" (71). He goes on and discusses how they heard a glee club and an opera while they were laying in the underbrush. They heard martini glasses and voices, but "not human voices, though. Because it's the mountains. Follow me? The rock—it's talking. And the fog, too, and the grass and the goddamn mongooses" (74). After hearing all of this, the six commandos pack up and return back to the camp. They don't say a word about anything that happened, and then Sanders ends the story. O'Brien starts off the next paragraph by telling us you can tell a true war story by "how it never seems to end" (76). He then remembers the way Sanders told the story. "I could tell how desperately Sanders wanted me to believe him, his frustration at not quite getting the details right, not quite pinning down the final and definitive truth" (76). The next morning Sanders confesses to O'Brien that he had to stretch the truth for a few parts, such as the glee club and the opera. When the narrator asks about the moral, Sanders answers by saying "Hear that quiet, man...that quiet—just listen. There's your moral" (77).

Throughout the rest of the chapter, we are given many revisions of the original Curt Lemon story. "Curt Lemon is referred to in seven of the fifteen sections that make up this story, and his death is the topic of four of them" (Heberle 193). O'Brien goes into much more detail describing everything, such as the baby buffalo that was shot by Rat Kiley just so he could make it feel pain. We are told once again that "Curt Lemon was dead. Rat Kiley had lost his best friend in the world. Later in the week he would write a long personal letter to the guy's sister, who would not write back, but for now it was a question of pain" ("How to…", 79). The narrator also states, "The gore was horrible, and stays with me. But what wakes me up twenty years later is Dave Jensen singing "Lemon Tree" as we threw down the parts" (83). By having Dave sing the song,

the author is demonstrating how people will "inject seemingly inappropriate humor into an emotionally traumatic situation" (Herzog 30). It is a way for people to make a terrible traumatic event slightly more bearable. O'Brien ends the story by saying "None of it happened. None of it" ("How to…" 85).

"A true war story is made up…but missing its subject is worse than mistaking its fictionality" (Heberle 191). When Rat Kiley doesn't receive a reply to the letter he poured his guts out in, to him, "the sister is dismissing his love for her brother, even invalidating the Curt Lemon that Rat admired; we can perfectly understand and support her silence, but to the doubly spurned lover her failure to answer is an act of betrayal that leaves his own wound unhealed" (191). Curt Lemon's sister in the story "resembles the narrator's well-meaning but theme-deaf listener, who weeps for the baby water buffalo while ignoring the point of the episode: Rat Kiley's pain" (192). The lady tells the narrator she likes the story of the water buffalo, which obviously was not the main point of the story at all. "The poor baby buffalo, it made her sad. Sometimes, even, there are little tears" ("How to…" 84). O'Brien is criticizing the people that aren't getting the subject. He sums his thoughts of this lady up, while he thinks of all the grief that Rat Kiley went through and how the lady missed it, in three words, "you dumb cooze" (85). Rat Kiley and Curt Lemon's sister belong to separate parts of the community (Colella 43). They both went through the same experience, Curt's death, but since they both have a different set of "experiences and expectations," they interpret it differently (43).

The large discrepancy between the different tellings of the Curt Lemon story brings another point into view; that "trauma, however displaced, can never be buried" (Heberle 195). The narrator Tim O'Brien tells the story of Curt on four separate occasions, each time trying the get the story "right." As "How to Tell a War Story" states, "In any war story, but especially a true one, it's difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen" (71). The trauma of the incident causes many of the pictures and images to become smashed into pieces. It is very difficult to discern the fact from the fiction in an event such as this. "And then afterward, when you go to tell about it, there is always that surreal seemingness, which makes the story seem untrue, but which in fact represents the hard and exact truth as it seemed" (71). The narrator is recounting the event as he remembers it, yet as different as some of the details may sound between the different views of the story, there are a few ideas that always stay. The "sunlight on Lemon's face" is how O'Brien begins the last telling of Curt Lemon's death (Heberle 195). The narrator wishes he could get the story right by constantly retelling it. If he ever could "somehow recreate the fatal whiteness of that light, the quick glare, the obvious cause and effect, then you would believe the last thing Curt Lemon believed, which for him must've been the final truth" ("How to…" 84). O'Brien then refers to the sunlight again, toward the end of the story, when he tells us a "true war story is never about war. It's about sunlight" (85).

Curt Lemon's death is based on something that Tim O'Brien the author actually experienced in his life. A friend of his, Chip Merricks, stepped on a booby-trapped artillery round and was blown up (Herzog 30). O'Brien himself didn't witness the event, "but he did see the aftermath" (30). The death of Curt Lemon is a much more vivid and detailed account of the death O'Brien actually witnessed.

We are led on a wild goose chase throughout this story by the narrator as he goes through the same event from different views. We are given much more detail and different images each time. We are given reasoning for this by the narrator himself. "I want you to feel what I felt. I want you to know why story-truth is truer sometimes than happening-truth" (O'Brien, "Good Form" 179). Whether an event is true or not we as readers are supposed to feel it. A true war story, as stated by O'Brien, "if truly told, makes the stomach believe" ("How to…78). The narrator gives us examples to help us better understand what is happening and why so many events change through each telling of the stories. "Here is the happening truth. I was once a soldier. There were many bodies, real bodies with real faces…now, twenty years later, I'm left with faceless responsibility and faceless grief" ("Good Form" 180). This is the truth as it may have actually happened when the narrator

O'Brien was in Vietnam. The story truth is "He was a slim, dead, almost dainty young man of about twenty. He lay in the center of a red clay trail…his one eye was shut, the other eye was a star-shaped hole. I killed him" (180). Obviously these two accounts are quite different from one another. What the story truth does that the happening truth doesn't is make the story present, both for the narrator and for the reader" (180).

Tim O'Brien has explained, "I think exercising the imagination is the main way of finding truth…over the course of time your imagination is going to do things with that experience to render it into something that you can deal with and that has meaning to it" (qtd. in Napersteck 8). O'Brien stated this about how his narrator in "How to Tell A True War Story" came to remember the ending of him and Dave picking Curt out of the tree while Dave sang "Lemon Tree" (8). The exact order and nature of events that happen in a traumatic time in someone's life, such as a war, becomes unclear to the person trying to remember. The narrator of the book was mixed up because "In war we tend to block out the long, hard moments of boredom, standing around, sitting around, and waiting" (8). After we block out all of those memories, our mind tries to reorder the remaining ones and give a sense of purpose or meaning to them.

Even though this whole book is "a work of fiction," we as readers get that feeling in our stomach. In "How to Tell a True War Story," we are given descriptions of what a true war story should be; and the story itself seems to follow many of those patterns. It doesn't really have a moral, it proves to us that it is difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen by telling us the Curt Lemon story so many times, and this one in particular can't be believed no matter how real it seems, because we know it is fiction. Yet, reading this story definitely makes our stomachs believe what is happening; especially the story of Curt Lemon being picked out of a tree or when Ted Lavender is shot on his way back from going to the bathroom. O'Brien has created a new form of literature by using his real war experience mixed in with his creativity and ability to create deep emotional characters from a simple piece of dialogue. He feels very strongly about this book, and in his own words describes it quite simply by saying, "*The Things They Carried* is my best book" (qtd. in Napersteck 6). And that's the truth.

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Evaluation: *Vince's analysis is mature; he sifts through the "normal" topics that surround Tim O'Brien's* The Things They Carried *and tackles the not-so-mundane topic of "truth."*

From Garbage to Golf:

The Transformation of Spent Landfills into Golf Courses

Kurt Reynolds
Course: Plant Science Technology 110 (Soil Science)
Instructor: Chet Ryndak

Assignment:
Write a research paper to analyze or discuss a process or a problem issue relating to soils.

Each year, the United States produces millions of tons of garbage. Most of this solid waste ultimately finds its way into one of the country's 2,500 active landfills. This has been the accepted means of disposing of the majority of our solid waste for a good portion of the last century, but what happens after the landfills have reached their maximum capacity has been an issue of contention ever since.

The practice of using landfills is a hundred years old, and the concept is simple. Solid waste is disposed of by spreading it into thin layers and compacting and compressing the trash into the smallest particle volume. This is sometimes done by burning the refuse, turning it into a powdery ash (landfills of this type are known as fly ash facilities), but generally the waste is untreated. Covering the waste with a thin layer of soil, or other materials, to a depth of about 3 to 4 inches, is generally the second step, which protects the waste from scavengers and exposure to the elements. Another layer is then added. This layering process continues in an alternating fashion until the site reaches its capacity, which most often is anywhere between 50 to 100 feet above the original ground surface ("Brownfield Golf"). Typically, the site is then "capped" with heavy clay to a depth of two to three feet to seal in the refuse and seal out water, which can cause the refuse to decompose unevenly and at an undetermined rate. This contaminated site, known as a "brownfield," now becomes one of 450,000 to 1 million other brownfields across the nation, according to an EPA estimate (Glanton par. 23).

One argument avows that this new brownfield is "scarred acreage" with little or no value, while others believe that this open space is too precious to let sit unused. At an age where space is at a premium, these abandoned sites generally span 40 to 120 acres, depending on the facility size (Glanton par. 1). With that much land available (at a sometimes bargain price), efforts to build homes on this landfill will most often meet with much resistance from potential buyers. The Not In My Backyard mentality surfaces, bringing with it fears of offensive odors on hot days, potential contaminants in the groundwater, and general instability of the terrain. This land is inherently ill-suited for commercial building. High-rise offices would require anchoring the structure deep into the surface of the landfill to find stable ground. This, coupled with a necessity to maintain the site in accordance with all safety regulations and codes, turns this into an expensive economic venture, where often the profits fall short of the costs. The upkeep of a closed landfill can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars a year (Parks. 17). Some of these spent landfills have been turned into park district or recreational facilities. However, without some other means of producing revenue, parks generally fail to generate adequate income to sustain the cost of maintaining the site.

So what then becomes of this virtually unsellable land? Nearly all converted landfills have been turned into facilities that do not disturb the entombed waste.

Over the last forty years, these brownfields have been converted into thousands of yards of greens, fairways, and bunkers; they have become golf courses. From the very first course (Marine Park in Brooklyn, New York in 1961), the concept has gained increased acceptance as a means of best utilizing this unique patch of land. Since 1961, close to 70 courses have been constructed, (a relatively small number of the estimated 16,000 golf courses in this country). New types of insurance are giving landfill developers more protection from lawsuits, and better technology has helped ensure that landfill facilities are operating as safely and efficiently as possible. Despite all this, turning these sites into beautifully landscaped courses can sometimes be quite challenging.

One of the most important factors is cost. Most often, construction on a landfill costs more than a traditional development. Ron Whitten, architecture editor for *Golf Magazine*, points out that typical course construction is about $3 to $4 million, whereas a course converted from a landfill can be expected to cost 25% more. One of the biggest expenses lies in the upkeep of the site. As these massive tons of garbage break down, a landfill produces two byproducts that must be dealt with very precisely. Methane gas is produced from decaying organic material that is generally not considered toxic, but which can be highly explosive (Gold par. 12). This gas must be vented to keep the landfill stable. Underground explosions can occur, and pockets of landfill gas can also cause settling if the gas is not vented correctly and efficiently. Another environmental issue to be dealt with is the necessity to collect leachates (liquid resulting from the decomposing trash) and adequately disposing of this byproduct. Keeping the technology up to date to effectively handle these two factors make up the bulk of the site's ongoing maintenance costs.

Another factor contributing largely to high cost is the need to rely on all raw materials being brought in from offsite, since digging down into the terrain could potentially upset the clay cap. All terrain sculpting must be done before constructing the cap, or outside material will need to be brought in. Blue Heron Country Club in Sandy Springs, Georgia, brought in 750,000 cubic yards of dirt for course shaping, bringing their costs of conversion to over $5 million (Glanton par. 4-6). Even with this money being spent to generate the terrain necessary for a satisfying round of golf, the land itself can become quite unstable as the waste continues to decompose and pockets of methane gas create bubbles in the landscape. It is not unheard of for this garbage to resurface as settling occurs. Built in 1982, Englewood Municipal Golf Course in Colorado has reported wigs, bowling balls, and even car bumpers coming to the surface as fairways and greens settle (Glanton par. 12), and some sections of Mountain Gate Country Club in Los Angeles have settled as much as 50 feet in the past 15 years (Parks par. 16). This can wreak havoc not only with the course but also with irrigation and drainage systems that lie buried beneath the surface.

Another potential snag in the process of conversion involves criticism from those who argue that these brownfields are unsafe for public use. Benzene and vinyl chloride, two known cancer-causing agents, are typically found in landfills. Older converted courses are often lacking the necessary protective bottom liner and clay cap that have been required of facilities since 1980 (Glanton par. 21). Experts warn that without these particular features, the threat of contaminating the groundwater increases greatly and is thereby dangerous to those living in the community. To combat this potential problem, most courses have been equipped with dozens of monitoring wells, which must be checked in strict accordance with the EPA. This involves extensively testing samples to ensure that no contaminants have leached down into the groundwater supply. Despite arguments from some, most would agree that capping the landfill is the most effective way to contain these potentially harmful materials.

Landfill capping is a complex system. The size of the cap is usually determined by the need to isolate the contaminated sediments and minimize chemical releases during the remediation process, and the capping process should be economically and environmentally viable. Sediment conditions, levels of contamination, and the required degree of protection can be site-specific factors. Because the technology is relatively new, it is unknown how the caps currently in place will perform over a long period of time. The actual cap is composed

of three parts. According to Beth Ravit, in her article "Real Science for Real People: Golfing on a Landfill,"

> there is a base layer, which usually consists of sand with some organic material that may contain stabilizing and isolation sub-layers. The stabilizing layer separates the underlying sediment and the sand cap, provides stability to the sediment in order to support the weight of the cap, and minimizes resuspension of contaminated sediment during construction. The sand layer must withstand the worst case physical and chemical events at the site, and stop the movement of contaminants from the landfill into the cap. The base layer is covered with a filter layer, usually gravel, that provides stability for the lower layer. The filter layer helps distribute the load evenly and protects the base material from hydraulic forces—the velocity and direction of water flow. The size and pores of the gravel determine the effectiveness of the filter material in protecting the base material. The top of the cap is the armor layer, usually composed of rocks to protect the filter and base layers from erosion (par. 3-5).

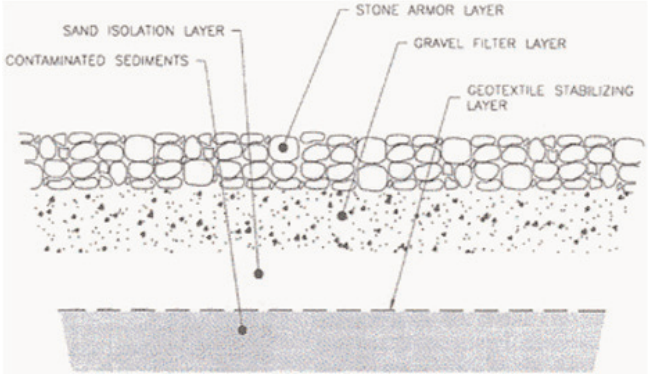

Fig.1 (Ravit).

Figure 1. Diagram of typical landfill cap. From Ravit, Beth. "Real Science for Real People: Golfing on a Landfill." <www.hackensackriverkeepers.org/newsletters/winter2003/09_winter_2003.html>.

Additional safety issues arise with the question of how to safely and effectively handle venting of methane gas and proper disposal of the potentially dangerous leachates (addressed earlier as being two of the biggest problems facing these projects). Landfill gas is a combination of methane and carbon dioxide that must be captured. The collected gasses can then either be burned offsite or recycled to generate heat or electricity. Newer landfills have incorporated better technology and in some cases have become models for new landfill courses. Industry Hills Golf Course in Industry, California, has developed a state-of-the-art landfill gas collection system that recovers enough energy to heat a 240-room hotel and an Olympic-size swimming complex, saving over $16,000 a month in heating costs. Fairwinds Golf Course in St. Lucie, Florida, created an extensive water collection and treatment system that captures and treats the reclaimed water, which is then used for irrigating the course (Saunders). This type of recycling is key to appeasing those who argue that the methods of handling these two factors are in need of rethinking.

Once all of this work is done, another huge challenge is to bring in grasses and plant life that can handle this newly created terrain. Designers are basically starting from scratch because they are unable to utilize any sort of existing landscape material. All plant life brought in will need time to mature, and golfers who are used to playing at older courses may not appreciate the lack of established plant material that may take considerable time to adapt to the heavy clay soil conditions if they can even survive at all. Most often, the golfer just wants a quality course and has little care where its been built or what history it holds. It is also important to understand that not all brownfields are destined to become golf courses. Many sites are unsuitable for this type of conversion due to poor location, extreme topographic situations, or inadequate acreage. It takes a great effort from regulatory agencies, as well as community planners, to make operations like this possible. Yet, there continues to be an increase in these types of golf course projects (Saunders). In the last eight years, three such courses have been constructed in Illinois. These success stories include: Settler's Hills Golf Course in Geneva

(built in 1989), Harborside International Golf Center in Chicago (1996), and Willowhill Golf Course, in Northbrook, constructed in 1997. ("Landfill Golf History" par. 7).

As this growing practice of conversion comes to gain further acceptance in our communities, we may continue to see many golf courses arise out of our towering mounds of refuse, which is something that the EPA sees as a win-win situation for everyone involved (Glanton par. 23). Ultimately, landfill courses may not be the engine that drives golf course development in the future, but they do offer a small contribution to solving one of our pressing environmental problems (Saunders).

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Evaluation: *This paper, about an unusual subject, demonstrates thorough research skills and an attention to the important details of the subject. Overall, through its logical structure and smooth writing, the paper is a good, informative read for a general audience.*

Mozart and Salieri:
A Myth Better Than History

Christine Rhim
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Nancy L. Davis

Assignment:
Write a literary research paper.

Every artist must decide how much creativity he wants to put into his work. This might sound awkward because we always draw a strong connection between "artist" and "creativity," but we seldom recognize what "creativity" really means to the "artist," the creator. I, who also am an artist, believe that the work of an artist is, simply, a representation of the artist's personalized interpretation of already existing things. No matter how creative the work is, there must be a basis that influences the artist to come to such a creation. No work of an artist is created from an absolute vacuum; thus, every artist must judge—consciously or unconsciously—how "creative" he wants to be with his or her work. I believe this whole concept—no creation comes from nothing—applies to writers as well. While we categorize fiction from nonfiction, how fictitious do we want the fiction to be? If a writing would be so conceived that it has no connections whatsoever with our real life, how would we respond to that? The writers must consider such things when they write, because works of writers as well as artists are strongly capable of influencing others just as others influenced them. Alexander Pushkin, the great Russian author and poet, wrote four short plays in *The Little Tragedies*. "Mozart and Salieri" is probably the most well known piece among them; it became further well known through Peter Shaffer's adapted screenplay for the movie *Amadeus* in the 1980s. Through the biographical fiction "Mozart and Salieri," Pushkin alters our viewpoints on the relationship of two musicians and creates a myth far more believable than the historical truth. This is because the portrayal of Salieri's fictional characters is so embedded in our subconsciousness through familiar satanic archetypes portrayed in much literature and the Bible. Thus, Pushkin's fictional representation of two great musicians upon the basis of biographical truth has gained more credence than a historical truth.

"The plot of 'Mozart and Salieri' was suggested to Pushkin by a persistent though unfounded rumor that Mozart died as the result of poison administered by a rival composer, Antonio Salieri" (Anderson 131). That such a rumor inspired Pushkin to come up with "Mozart and Salieri" is clearly presented in an undated note, where Pushkin wrote the following:

> At the premiere of *Don Giovanni*, when the whole theater, filled with astounded music lovers, was hushed, intoxicated by Mozart's harmonies, a whistle [of derision] was heard—everyone turned in indignation, and the celebrated Salieri stalked out of the hall—in a fury, consumed by envy…. The envier who could whistle at *Don Giovanni* could poison its creator. (Anderson 131)

It is troublesome to figure out how such rumors arose in the first place. In spite of the fact that forty years had passed since Mozart's death, Pushkin was inspired to come up with "Mozart and Salieri," in which he creates an absolute incompatibility between two great composers. However, the history—veiled under the overwhelming plot of the play—tells us many biographical

facts are "modified to suit his [Pushkin's] purposes" as is "his custom" (Harzen 361). Pushkin had not completely conceived biographies of two composers, but he had "modified" some to attain the finest moment of literary climax. Regardless of the playwright's intentions, many of us bear a misconception that "Mozart and Salieri"—and further, *Amadeus*—is more like an official biography of Mozart. Many literary critics are concerned with this issue, and some are fervent to "clarify many historical inaccuracies regarding both Mozart and Salieri in the film [as well as in Pushkin's original work]," as Gregory Robbins depicts in the *Journal of Religion and Film* issued in 1997 (par. 1). Robbins clarifies many facts that have been completely altered in Pushkin's play. "It [the inspiration for the diabolical character of Salieri] is in that poem [indicating "Mozart and Salieri"], that work of creative fancy, that Mozart and Salieri became enemies. In reality, Mozart and Salieri were not enemies; Salieri did not kill Mozart as the legend would have it" (3). Interestingly, Robbins' concern directly indicates how much fame and recognition Pushkin has earned in his work. For the piece of literature to be capable of veiling history, we cannot deny its influence and captivation upon our society. In 1974, a Russian critic, D. Ustyuzhanin, states that:

> By the 1830s Mozart's fame was, as it were, fading somewhat. But something over a century after the appearance of "Mozart and Salieri," "Mozartism" would become virtually a part of aesthetic and academic terminology, a synonym for the prescience of genius, of inspired and lofty thought, which outstrips its age. I do not think that this occurred without the influence of Pushkin's tragedy. (qtd. in Reid 6)

While the preceding quote shows the influence of "Mozart and Salieri" as of 1974, Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus*—a play based on Pushkin's "Mozart and Salieri" and further adapted into a screenplay—itself is a continuing influence, starting from the 1980s. Shaffer has taken Pushkin's short, yet extremely condensed, verses of "Mozart and Salieri" into rather detailed and more comprehensible plots. Such a work has made *Amadeus* more approachable than "Mozart and Salieri," and has earned the story extreme popularity among all different classes of audiences; furthermore, it has contributed itself to finalize the myth that Pushkin had created since 1830. Robbins suggests that "Milos Forman [the director of *Amadeus*]'s film and Peter Shaffer's original play *continue* the honorable tradition, begun by Pushkin, of spreading mis- and dis-information about Mozart… Forman and Shaffer have 'mythologized' the Mozart legend" (Robbins 21). If we realize that an unproven rumor was conceived into a plot of literature, and the literature bore a legend which then matured into a *myth* in our society, we cannot help but acknowledge the powerful impact of these fictional elements to have stubbornly made their way into our fascination. As in Robbins' words, "Shaffer capitalizes on Pushkin's ruse. The play and the film, then, include historical elements, but depart from history to explore more fundamental and universal human issues" (3). If so, what must be these "human issues" that have captivated audiences ever since Pushkin's "Mozart and Salieri" and that have become a "myth better than history?" (26).

The key to the previous question lies in Pushkin's portrayal of *fictional* characters of Salieri. In history, Mozart was indeed a rival composer to Salieri. Both of them worked in the same region as well as the same period at some point in their lifetimes. It is obvious to sense that one could have envied the other in such a rival relationship, and such an apparent fancy leaves no surprise as to how such a rumor—Salieri poisoned Mozart to death—might have risen in the first place. While the (unaltered) history bears a potential development for the same plot, Pushkin takes further steps to "embellish his tale with fictional ornaments… [and] enthralls his audience and emblazons his theme" by applying satanic archetypes to *real* Salieri (Shaffer 56). Pushkin's defamation of Salieri in "Mozart and Salieri" was so strong that now Salieri has gained a reputation as a malicious envier who murdered his colleague, Mozart, rather than as another great musician who was a little bit less than a perfect human, just like all of us.

The first character of *fictional* Salieri we shall discuss is that he is an envious man. This "envy" is the most apparent theme of the play, and it is more of a "universal human issue" than a satanic archetype at this point—yet it becomes a force driving Salieri into

absolute blasphemy and malice later on. This is Pushkin's spellbinding strategy; he understands human nature. He knows where our subconscious virtue starts to split into our own good and evil, just like human Salieri was driven into unjustifiable malice from the moment of deep envy.

> No! I [Salieri] never once felt envy then,
> No, never! [...]
> Who will say that proud Salieri
> Was ever a contemptible envier […]
> No one! … But now—I say it myself—now
> I am an envier. I feel envy; deep,
> Tormenting envy. Oh heaven! (1. 1. 49-59)

If we fancy that the *real* Salieri, in *real* history, might have envied Mozart's musical works and his giftedness, the *fictional* Salieri created by Pushkin envies far more. He envies Mozart because he is the chosen one by God. Salieri recalls Mozart as "Appearing like an angel,/ He brings us a few of Heaven's songs" (1. 1. 126-127) in his second monologue, and he even directly calls at Mozart: "What boldness and what just proportion!/ You, Mozart, are a god, and you yourself don't know it;/ I know it, I know" (1. 1. 106-108).

Salieri's envy does not stop at a level of human's natural wickedness, but it leads him into a self-confrontation—also one of the other themes of the play—that makes him realize that one is chosen by God and the other is not. This vital realization becomes a critical point in the play because it now expands the plot and engulfs us with the solid evil character of Salieri dealing with much heavier themes—blasphemy, temptation, and murder. Hedy Weiss, in her theatre review in *Chicago Sun-Times*, states the interrelationship between Salieri's envy and other parts of the play: "Salieri will be the instrument of destruction of the man who inspires awe in him, but whom, finally, he can only respond to in terms of blistering envy" (par. 8).

The play's preliminary yet fundamental subject, "envy," directs us into the second character of *fictional* Salieri, "blasphemy." This starts to build satanic archetypes into Pushkin's Salieri. The attitude of Salieri is clearly stated in the opening lines of the play: "They [people] say there's no justice here on earth,/ But there's no justice higher up, either. To me/ That's as clear and simple as do-re-mi" (1. 1. 1-3).

Nancy Anderson, one of the translators of "Mozart and Salieri" into English, "spoken by a man of the eighteenth century,…evoke the challenge to God of the radical enlightenment" (132). While we discussed Salieri's self-confrontation that made him realize Mozart was the one chosen by God and Salieri was not, there is another interesting observation about the play's verses. Golstein, a literary critic, suggests that "Salieri always acts in accordance with his own reasons and will" and "his self-reliance" is apparently clear in that Salieri prefers to employ the form of "I" over "me," which, in contrast, Mozart prefers (Golstein 165). We can easily notice Salieri's arrogance and the vanity of his goal—to be God's only chosen one—became so uncontrollable that he cannot settle himself down when he realizes that he is not the chosen one. Such high egoism and self-reliance brings him tremendous agony in having to accept "providence." Golstein, in his brief comparison of "Mozart and Salieri" with other parts of the *Little Tragedies*, states:

> These actions [the wickedness of protagonists' actions due to the vanity of their goals] are directed against Providence and its earthly manifestation, time. Rather than obeying time's call, protagonists [Salieri, in this play] attempt to subject time to their will, to deny that 'to every thing there is a season.' They challenge time and Providence by challenging …preordained outcome and successions. (171)

Salieri fails to accept "Providence" and challenges God, and he even further proceeds to challenge God's chosen one, Mozart.

> No! I [Salieri] cannot set myself against
> My destiny—I am the one who's chosen
> To stop him [Mozart]—or else we all will perish,
> All of us, priests and servitors of music,
> Not only I with my empty glory… (1. 1. 116-120)

Here, Salieri reveals his madness to betray both God and his chosen one. It is interesting to discover how such madness came upon him and then drove him into unrecoverable doom. In the beginning, it was nothing more than the disharmonious fusion of Salieri's envy (toward his rival), passion (for his vocation), vanity (of his goal), and arrogance (toward his Master.) We notice these fac-

tors are not something extraordinary for this specific satanic archetype but some of our "fundamental and universal human issues" (Robbins par. 3).

Following the first and second characters of *fictional* Salieri, "envy" and "blasphemy," the third subject, "temptation," now builds solid satanic archetypes in Salieri. Pushkin portrays him as a great tempter and gives a more apparent relationship with satanic images from the Bible. From Salieri's first extensive monologue opening the play, he confesses that he became a great envier of Mozart, and he portrays himself as an image of a snake.

> Who will say that proud Salieri
> Was ever a contemptible envier,
> A snake trodden powerless underfoot,
> Left half-alive to bite the dirt and dust?
> No one! ... But now—I say it myself—now
> I am an envier. (1. 1. 55-59)

This is an interesting parable by Pushkin that the imagery of a snake directly associates not only with the well-known tempter serpent from Genesis, but also with the fallen angel Lucifer. Anderson states the powerfulness of this parable:

> The full magnitude of Salieri's ambition, and thus the depth of his horror at the thought of its failure, is revealed in the extraordinary forcefulness and detail of the metaphor he [Salieri] uses to depict his humiliation. Surely it is no accident that, in the image of the serpent, he evokes the downfall of the greatest of all ambitions—that of Lucifer himself. (Anderson 136)

It is also unavoidable to compare the portrayal of Salieri in his own word—"I made myself a *craftsman*; my fingers/ Acquired obedient, cold dexterity/ And my ear, accuracy. I killed sounds,/ Dissected music like a corpse"—with the portrayal of the evil tempter serpent in Genesis: "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals that Lord God had made" (Gen. 3.1-2). This serpent-like figure, Salieri, "tempts Mozart with comfort, friendship, and inspiration" (Garrett 59) and further, he tempts Mozart into death by poisoning him. However, this is not the only temptation Salieri shows. Ironically, his own temptation to challenge God and to destroy Mozart brings himself into his own fate of damnation. "He [Salieri] prefers to envy and kill Mozart rather than to wait for the reward due him for his 'labors, efforts, and prayers.' In other words, Salieri … refuses 'to humble himself,' and thus brings down damnation upon himself" (Golstein 160). Temptation, being one of the most distinctive features of Satan, has created another famous parable by Robert Louis Jackson. He perceives that:

> … In Pushkin's play the theme of the 'demonic' musician merges with the myth of the rebellion and 'fall' of the archangel Lucifer as this myth finds epic embodiment in Milton's Paradise Lost. In Salieri—his language, character, and behavior—we recognize the archetypal deceiver, the elusive Adversary in Romantic disguise. (262)

The parallel of the "mythical satanic archetypes" is unavoidable; Jackson states "Salieri and Satan [Milton's Satan] share not only a superhuman malice, the mark of the serpent, but a common descent from lofty heights" (265).

The final part of the play's plot, also the pivotal point of Salieri's satanic characters, is the murder—not only in its physical sense but the significance of "destroyed brotherhood." "Pushkin's deep concern for and knowledge of the Bible has been often discussed and his observations on religion often quoted…the Bible not only has provided Pushkin with the literary source of reminiscences and archetypal imagery…" (Golstein 155). We cannot ignore the parable of Salieri's murder of Mozart with Cain's murder of Abel from Genesis, especially when we realize how the Bible influenced Pushkin, as in the preceding quote from Golstein. He continues:

> The play, or rather the conflict between Mozart and Salieri, has a biblical antecedent: the story of Cain and Abel, which gives us a better perspective from which to view the crime and punishment of Salieri. At the time of Pushkin, envy and rebellion…were often associated with Cain. (Golstein 157)

The significance of the parallel is not only from the fact that the story of Cain and Abel is about the first murder

in the history of mankind, but also that the story is about the first *fratricide*. It is amazing to notice how Pushkin manipulated the plot of "Mozart and Salieri" to maximize the irony and tension of the play; he creates a solid brotherhood relationship between these two right before Mozart becomes poisoned. In the text, Mozart replies to Salieri, who has just poured a poison into Mozart's glass and offers him to drink. Mozart states, "To your/Health, my friend, and to the faithful union/That binds together Mozart and Salieri,/Two sons of harmony…" (1. 2. 205-208). Mozart then drinks. It was Pushkin's impeccable choice to create such an ironic moment in the play; it intensifies the satanic characteristics of Salieri and drives him into an absolute inhumanity. Now, it is more than clear how satanic archetypes have been built upon Pushkin's Salieri. Salieri began with ordinary and "fundamental human issues" just as an envious man who passionately wanted to worship God; however, Pushkin transformed him into a satanic figure, that of the serpent from Genesis, a fallen angel from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Cain, the first murderer of mankind.

If an artist has the power of free will to manifest his or her own perception through artistic creation, the public, in contrast, has the power to judge the acceptance of the artist's work into society. Doubtlessly, no conscious artist would want negative reactions to his or her work. As I discuss an artist's abilities and powers, we must realize how many crucial decisions one artist must go through in order to reach the creation of one's work; and not all artists succeed in this imperative combining step of "creativity" and "reality." However, Pushkin's "Mozart and Salieri"—which deals with "fundamental and natural human issues"—is successful, in combining the zest of dramatic effects with the basis of historical and biographical truth. Robbins speaks of a myth as "We do so [call something a myth] not because it is *untrue*, but to signal that it is a human story that is *most* true" (Robbins par. 28). Norman Perrin further explains: "A myth is a complex of stories—some facts, some fiction—which for various reasons humans regard as demonstrations of the meaning of the universe and human existence" (Perrin 215). Whether Pushkin's alteration of the biographies of Mozart and Salieri is controversial or not, I do not hesitate to state that Pushkin has created a "myth better than history."

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Evaluation: *This paper is professionally written and researched, and Christine's passion for the play and film* Amadeus *has taken her understanding of the story to new heights.*

Best Friends

Meghan Riley
Course: English 100 (Composition)
Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment:
Write an autobiographical essay about a long struggle in your life, and what you have gained and/or lost from it.

I remember February 12, 1999 as if it were yesterday. I was upstairs in my bedroom when I heard my dad crying, which is something that never happened. Automatically, I thought of my grandmother and ran downstairs. My father had his head in his crossed arms on the wooden mantel above our fireplace, and my mother was in the kitchen, crying into her hands. I kept asking what was wrong, but no one would tell me. A large lump formed in my throat, and I started crying. My brother came up behind me, grabbed my arm and whispered in my ear the words that I will never forget: "Mom has cancer." With those three little words, my life was forever changed.

When my mother started chemotherapy, I was eighteen years old, and I acted as her primary caretaker. My father traveled out of town every week for business, and my brother was away to school at Michigan State University. As her caretaker, one of my jobs was to get her to and from doctors' and chemotherapy treatments. The oncologists' is a three-story brown brick building with a parking lot too small for its size. The first floor housed the radiation department. X-ray and MRI machines were on the second floor. The inside of the entire building is painted in what I like to call hospital beige. The majority of my time was spent on the third floor. This is the oncology floor. There are the exam rooms, a lab, blood room, and treatment area. The treatment area became our home away from home. More than a dozen cubicles surrounded a large nursing station. Each cubicle contained a large green Lazy-Boy recliner, Baxter I.V. pump, a stool, chair, VCR and a small television that got horrible reception. I remember sitting on the floor of the chemotherapy treatment cubicles while my mother got her medication, because the chairs were so uncomfortable.

Even though I wasn't the one hooked up to an I.V. pump for hours at a time, just sitting in an oncologist's office can be depressing. I would walk around and see the other patients all hooked up to I.V.'s; in fact, despite it all, they seemed happy. Considering what they were all going through, I couldn't imagine why. Looking back, I guess it was because they were all so glad that they had made it that far. To make sitting there for hours more enjoyable to me, we would do anything to keep our minds off where we were; play card games, watch movies, and talk. When my mother and I talked, our conversations were always about what we were going to do once she beat the disease. By talking about how she was going to be cured, she made everything we were doing seem worth it.

When my mother started chemotherapy, she lost a tremendous amount of weight. The treatments were so physically draining that I often had to help her get dressed in the morning. Watching her put on clothes that everyday became bigger on her was hard. When she tried on a shirt or a pair of pants that fit her a month before, she would make comments about how someone must have stretched out all of her clothing. I remember once she put on a t-shirt that had sleeves that went past her elbows, and she then looked in a mirror and commented on how she looked like a nerd. Watching

her lose her hair was very difficult, but once again she made it fun for my sake. At the time when she had lost patches of hair and it would stick up, she would compare herself to Albert Einstein.

The second part of my job as caregiver dealt with medications. Since she was on multiple medications, it was my responsibility to give her the correct medication at the right time. This was sometimes very difficult. There were times when she just flat out refused to swallow one more pill. The worst medication was the liquid I had to force her to drink before having tests done at the hospital. I literally had to stand next to her and basically treat her like a child refusing to eat his or her vegetables. Whatever chemotherapy she was on at the time determined what medications she received. I often had to wake up multiple times during the night to give my mother her pills. I frequently had to call from work to remind her to take her medications. I would also wake up in the middle of the night, just to make sure she was still breathing.

The hardest part was giving up my role as her daughter and in a way my own identity, though I did it gladly. Being the one she cried to when the pain became too much to bear, as her daughter, I wanted to cry along with her, but I knew I had to be strong for her sake. I constantly had to miss work for doctors' appointments or if she was too sick to be left alone. There were times I had to leave in the middle of work because my mother needed something at home. School was also a part of my life that suffered. I was always missing classes and assignments. Eventually, I had to leave school all together. The people that I was friends with, those from high school and new friends from college, I no longer speak to. After years of putting them off for my family responsibilities, we eventually lost touch. During the time that she was sick, I was only away from my mother for eleven days.

My mother passed away on October 20, 2002. She died eight days short of my twenty-second birthday. Like most people in their twenties, I had to learn to live my own life, but for different reasons. I no longer had to live by doctors' appointments and medication schedules. I had the freedom to go out on the weekends and stay out as late as I wanted.

I have not been able to go to her grave at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois. In a way, all that is left of my mother is a name on a headstone, and I do not think that I am ready to face that. Even when I drive by the cemetery, I cannot help but think that my mother is so close, but I cannot see her or touch her. Those thoughts always make me break down into tears.

It has been almost two years now, and I still occassionally wake up in the middle of the night in a panic because I forgot to give her the medications she needed. In the four and a half years that she was sick, my mother and I became best friends. The greatest thing my mother did for me was making her cancer something I can look back on and laugh about, rather than cry about. As difficult as that time of my life was, looking back, I would not trade it for anything.

Evaluation: *This essay touches me deeply, for the story of selflessness that it tells, but also because of its emotional restraint. The writer's emotion has been sacrificed to a great degree, in favor of frankness and clarity. That's not a bad thing, in telling a story.*

On Embracing Rain

Heather Salus
Course: English 220 (Creative Writing)
Instructor: Anne Davidovcz

Assignment:
In this take-home midterm exam for Creative Writing, students must trace the impact of revision upon three separate drafts of the same poem. They may address a wide variety of issues from those related to content to those related to form or craft. They need to include the three drafts of their poem as well as a formal essay that discusses their process.

1.

I withdraw inside whenever it rains.
The moment water splats against skin, I run.
Are you a witch? Will you melt? shrieking
as footsteps quicken and keys thrust
into the front door. No, no not a Witch.
I've never been so brave.

I fear the initial surrendering:
Water crawling down forehead
pooling over crinkled eyelids. Sticky
droplets clinging to hair, to shoulders—
discomfort before downpour, before gushing
before saturation of clothing
turns my entire body slick.

2.

Close your mouth, I am chastised.
Are you trying to catch flies?
Close your mouth, I am chastised.
Let others speak for a change.
Close your legs, I am chastised.
Sit like a lady!

I close my mouth and bite
my hidden tongue.
My lips crack, beg for moisture
and I deprive them.
The chastity of desert
will bring relief.

I fear the rain and press my legs
together at the thigh
a human dam, damming water
wetness, blood that follows water
as it flows toward the moon
in a monthly cycle.

3.

Soon I will live as a Witch.
I will spread honey thickly over open lips
and seduce flies, all winged creatures
inviting them to descend upon my body.

It will rain, and as the ground softens
I will stand tall, sturdy
even as feet sink
embraced by muddy earth.

I will open my mouth to the downspour
and drink in the sky's release.

Water rippling over tongue over chin
flowing down flowing down neck
between breasts flowing down
down down to the river
roaring through drenched thighs.

"On Embracing Rain" portrays a female speaker's experience growing up, mainly in terms of learning to embrace her sexuality. Numerous young women are raised to feel ashamed of their sexuality, thus learning to fear it. "On Embracing Rain" gives voice to a woman learning to overcome this fear. The choices in imagery, diction, line/stanza break, and rhythm are all meant to give voice to this speaker's experience.

"On Embracing Rain" is a poem divided into three sections. The first section takes place in the present. In it, the speaker is portrayed running home as it begins to rain. She "shriek[s]" as she runs home, and doesn't merely slip a key into the door, rather, the key is "thrust" into the door. This is meant to denote the speaker's frenzy as she "withdraws inside" in order to escape from the rain. In order to add to the speaker's frenzied state, lines three and four are enjambed so that the reader must rapidly read each following line. As the speaker runs home, she hears an authoritative voice in her head mocking her, "Are you a witch, will you melt?" The speaker answers, "I've never been a Witch. I've never been so brave." Where the first voice uses the term "witch" mockingly, an allusion to the witch in the Wizard of Oz, the second speaker's use of the word "Witch" is one of reverence, noted by the capitalized "W" and association with "brave[ry]." The speaker holds the archetype of the Witch in high esteem, and wishes to possess many of the attributes associated with it. However, before the speaker can realize this ideal, she must come to terms with her own fear. In this poem, the speaker is afraid of rain, a symbol of her sexuality. More specifically, "[she] fear[s] the initial surrendering" to her sexuality. This line is set off in its own stanza, in order to draw attention to it. After being repressed for so long, how does one overcome this repression? Each movement forward is its own struggle. As a result, the speaker is extremely afraid to begin this process.

This slow process is begun in the third stanza; it is symbolized by being caught by surprise in the rain. As the speaker refuses to surrender to the rain, each raindrop upon her body makes her increasingly uncomfortable. The raindrops on her forehead are "crawling," lingering on her skin; they "pool" above her eyelids. Line three is enjambed in order to illustrate the speaker's immense discomfort, to lend dominance to the word "sticky," If only the speaker would give up the struggle, give in to the rain, she'd be far less uncomfortable. Once one's clothing is "saturat[ed]," once one's "entire body [is] slick" there is no use in attempting to run for shelter anymore.

The second section of "On Embracing Rain" consists of a childhood flashback. A parental voice "chastise[s]" the speaker three times. She is told to "close [her] mouth" so that she doesn't "catch flies." She is told to "close [her] legs" and "sit like a lady." The repetition of "I am chastised" between these commands serves to further illustrate the numerous times that the speaker was reprimanded as a child. The even rhythm of the first five lines of the first stanza adds to the regularity of the reprimands; they happened often and on a continuous basis. The latter two reprimands are symbolic of the way that female children are raised. They are told to be quiet and hide their sexuality, thus they should close their mouths and cross their legs.

The following two stanzas illustrate the child's obedience, the internalization of everything that she's been taught. She "closes [her] mouth" and "bites her tongue"—metaphors for silence. Furthermore, the speaker's "bit[ten]" tongue is "hidden." As the tongue is often portrayed as a sexual part of the human body, the speaker's hidden tongue further symbolizes her fear of her emerging sexuality. Another physical action that the speaker takes is revealed in stanza three. The speaker "press[es] [her] legs together at the thigh." Again, this is an image that serves to illustrate the speaker's repression. Her legs aren't merely crossed, but an imageof her "thigh[s]" is evoked in order to further understanding that this is *sexual* repression.

The second and third stanzas of section two employ juxtaposition between wet and dry. As a woman's physical arousal is often referred to as "wetness," this seems appropriate. In the second stanza, dryness is being portrayed both in the image of cracked lips begging for "moisture," and again with the mention of "desert." In both cases, it is thought that the dryness as "chaste" enforces this notion. Even if it's uncomfortable, even as her "lips crack" from lack of moisture, she must endure. Eventually, "relief" will come through following the

rules and behaving, rather than through release and sexuality. The second stanza is written in three complete sentences in order to evoke this sense of order, repression, and obedience.

In the third stanza, the speaker's thighs become a human "dam." With a play on words, they "damn" all water, and keep her body dry. By crossing her legs, she restricts wetness and even the natural "blood" that will soon begin to flow. This blood is symbolic of the speaker's "monthly cycle," her menstrual period. It is a sign of maturity and of her femininity. Menstruation is also thought to be controlled by the moon—a sign of witches, thus tying into the witch imagery as well. This stanza is not written in full sentences, utilizing one long sentence instead in order to evoke a sense of spilling over. Even if the speaker tries to repress her sexuality and restrict her monthly bleeding, she cannot.

The third section of "On Embracing Rain" is a manifesto for the future. The first stanza consists of one line, "Soon I will live as a Witch." The fact that this stanza only contains one line lends a sense of importance to it. This declaration is the most important one that the speaker makes. She longs to embrace the witch archetype that incorporates wildness, a connection to the earth, and most importantly to the speaker, a freedom from sexual constraints.

In the following two stanzas, the speaker declares that she will indulge in everything that she was formerly chastised for as a child. The imagery from the first stanza of section two is revisited. Now not only will the speaker "open her mouth," but she will do so in order to purposefully catch flies. She will lure them to her by "spread[ing] honey thickly" over her "open lips"—a very sensual act. In an act of defiance and communion with nature, she will invite all "winged creatures…to descend upon [her] body."

As this happens, the speaker will gain confidence. She will "stand tall, sturdy." This will happen even if natural events happen to throw her balance off. Even if her "feet sink into muddy earth," she will stand strong and tall. The image of the earth "embrac[ing]" her feet is also meant to suggest that she is becoming comfortable with nature, and all that it entails. Once this happens, she will be a step closer to living as a witch, and regaining touch with her sexuality.

The lasts stanza of the poem is the speaker's declaration of sexuality. Not only will she stand outside admist the rain, she "will open [her] mouth" (like she was told not to) and drink in the rain. While this rain is the "sky's release," it is her own as well. The water will saturate her, and she will allow it to. The constant repetition of "down" is meant to heighten the intensity and rhythm of the lines. Eventually it gives way to the final image of the poem, "the river roaring through [her] thighs." It is an image of orgasm and water. This last line is meant to conclude the poem with the notion that the speaker will eventually grow, and learn to embrace both rain and her own sexuality.

Evaluation: *In this analysis of her own poem, Salus objectively explores her choices of imagery, diction, line/stanza break, and rhythm to voice her speaker's experience. She has examined her choices in a deeply evaluative way; her observations prompt an academic respect for the creative process.*

Does Religion Do More Harm Than Good?

Ronny Serio
Course: Philosophy 120
(Social and Political Philosophy)
Instructor: Barbara Solheim

Assignment:
All of the students in Social and Political Philosophy participate in a debate of their choosing. This essay represents the written portion of the assignment.

The Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Salem witch trials, the Holocaust – these are some of the most terrible events the Western world has seen, none of which would likely have occurred were it not for the religion that sparked them. For nearly two hundred years, European rulers waged bloody Crusades against the followers of Islam in an attempt to reclaim what they believed to be the birthplace of their savior. Estimates place the death count in the millions (White). During the Spanish Inquisition, Jews, Muslims, Protestants and anyone accused of being a heretic was tried by a church council, tortured and killed, often being burnt alive. In the late 17th century in Massachusetts, a series of people, mostly women, were charged with witchcraft and of being possessed by the devil. Hundreds were accused and many executed for being witches ("Salem Witch Trial"). Hitler's Nazis attempted systematically to exterminate entire groups of people, primarily Jews, but also gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and the handicapped. Six million Jews alone were killed ("Holocaust").

Naturally, with all such events, religion alone is not to blame. Greed of the rulers played a large role in the Crusades and the Inquisition. Fear was a prime player in the Salem witch trials, and nationalism was intertwined with religion during the Holocaust. There are many reasons why people commit acts of violence against fellow human beings, but in the most heinous, religion is often the common thread. But why is that? Ostensibly, Western religious teachings are focused on compassion for others, tolerance, and nonviolence. Why then would religion find itself consistently mixed up in these terrible events? I maintain that while religion is not always the prime motivator that leads rulers to order these actions, it is the tool that those same leaders use to motivate their people to support their actions.

The Problem of Religion

Let us assume for a minute that several things are true:

- There is a single all-powerful God. No proof can be offered up of this God, because faith in his goodness and power are all important.

- This God has laid out a set of rules that must be followed in order to obtain eternal life in heaven. To not follow these rules is to live in sin and to damn oneself to eternal torment.
- This God speaks through the leaders of the religion. These leaders are the common person's most direct link to God and must be obeyed.
- There are those who do not believe in your God and instead worship another God or Gods. This is because the devil has taken control of them.

These are common beliefs of Western religion, and together they allow people to commit actions that would otherwise be irrational and, at times, even unthinkable. Let us take a hypothetical situation: You are an ordinary, god-fearing common person. Your leaders tell you that a neighboring group of people are worshiping a false God, and as such, are being controlled by the devil. Despite the fact that these false believers have committed no crimes against you or your people, your leaders tell you that the devil can not be allowed to work his evil upon the world, so they must either convert to your religion or be slain. Given that you have no way to speak to God directly and that your leaders are your closest link, you are compelled to do as they say. Even though they may have ulterior motives, to not believe them would be tantamount to going against your own God, which is the worst possible sin. So, given a choice between seeing fault or weakness in your own religion, and thus risking your own damnation, and believing in the evil of another's religion, it is easy to see why people are so easily swayed towards violence.

The Word of God

That religious teachings are put forth as the Word of God himself is inherently problematic. Western religion is, essentially, the belief in a being that can neither be questioned nor talked to, yet whose laws must be followed at all times. These laws cannot be changed, for they are the word of God himself. This inflexibility is where problems arise. When God has decreed something, it cannot be undecreed, even when logic and reason would suggest that a better alternative exists. Now let us say we have two different religions, each with its own God, and their separate Gods have each sent down a command to their people. Should these two commands lead the two groups into conflict, there can be no compromise. One cannot negotiate the will of their God. They simply must follow it, even if that means bloody conflict.

This is seen now in modern-day Israel. Both the Israelis and the Palestinians believe that that land was promised to them by their respective Gods. There can be no compromise; each feels that they have divine right to the land and will fight to claim it. Were it simply a secular disagreement, where both factions believed that they had inheritance right to the land, it is likely some deal could be worked out. But because of the inflexibility of religion, there can be no such settlement.

Despite the belief in religious text as the Word of God, leaders throughout history have interpreted the vagaries and contradictions found throughout these tomes in whatever way would meet their own agenda. Osama bin Laden in his "Letter to America" roots the justification for his terrorist actions in the Koran. He believes passages in the Islamic holy book allow the retaliation by whatever means necessary against those he feels have attacked his people, despite the fact that many Islamic scholars would emphatically disagree with this interpretation. Even in the present-day United States, we see this activity from our top leaders. We are presented with the following logic in order to justify our military action throughout the world: our leaders claim that being mere men, we cannot know God's will, but we can know that God is on the side of justice. However, since we get to define what justice means, this is simply a tool used to pacify the masses by telling them that God is on our side.

Further problems are made clear when we examine passages from within the holy books themselves. Some passages would seem to directly contradict others, allowing leaders to emphasize only those parts that support their position. Let us take one example from the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. Both these passages are taken from the book of Deuteronomy 3:3:

> And the LORD our God delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time,

> and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain. Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.

Yet, from Deuteronomy 5:17, it is stated, "Thou shalt not kill."

Both passages are only pages apart in the Bible, yet their meanings could not be more different. This openness to interpretation coupled with their accepted status as the Word of God is what makes religious texts so vulnerable to abuse, and what makes the abuse so dangerous.

Religion and Science

Throughout history, organized religion has fought against scientific progress. When Galileo dared to subscribe to Copernican theory and assert that the sun, instead of the earth, was the center of the galaxy, he was imprisoned as a heretic. It took until 1968 for the U.S. Supreme Court to declare laws banning the teaching of the theory of evolution to be unconstitutional. Even now, some religious groups are trying, and succeeding, in getting creationism put side by side with evolution in science textbooks, despite the complete lack of scientific evidence supporting this belief. Stem cell research, and its incredible potential for facilitating new medical breakthroughs, is being fought by religious organizations in the United States. Even something as innocuous as sex education is being eroded in many states, as religious groups succeed in getting into schools their message that abstinence is the only way to live until marriage. The fact that teen pregnancy is at its highest in those states where this teaching is paramount is, instead of being seen as evidence that this teaching is ineffective, viewed as additional proof of the need for their abstinence-only policy ("National Vital Statistics Report").

But why is it this way? Why do religious groups find themselves continuously working against scientific and academic progress? I believe there are three reasons. The first is that religion is rooted in faith, and science, which is in essence a search for answers and understanding, is the diametrical opposite of faith, which is belief in the absence of proof. The second is that religion is inherently opposed to change, as I have discussed previously. Thirdly, since organized religion has always maintained immense power in the Western world, they have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Anything that challenges that status quo or that can be viewed as potentially weakening belief in their religion will always be fought tooth and nail.

Karl Marx and Religion

German philosopher Karl Marx is known for having written that "[Religion] is the opiate of the masses." Indeed he felt that organized religion was a tool the ruling class used to keep the poor in line and to maintain the status quo. Marx's problems with religion centers on three main points.

First, Marx felt that religion was essentially the worship of appearances that ignore reality. Worshipers revere a God they cannot meet and live their life in such a way to reach a heaven that they can not see. All the while, they ignore the reality of the world around them (Cline).

Second, Marx believed that worshipers were made more servile and accepting of the status quo. They are taught that our lives on Earth are unimportant next to the eternal life that we experience after we die. So the poor are less likely to revolt because of bad earthly conditions, instead focusing on obtaining a good afterlife through obedience. Also, many religions teach that it is the poorest of men on Earth that will have the greatest life in heaven, thus further placating the worker class through promises of future happiness (Cline).

Last, Marx viewed the church as completely hypocritical. He felt that the church often sided with oppressors over the oppressed, such as when, throughout the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church participated in slavery and theft of land. Marx also pointed out the inherent contradiction of the church's focus on Heaven in their preaching, given their constant attempts to increase their base of power and wealth on Earth (Cline).

An Objection

There are those who agree that religion has indeed caused harm throughout time, but believe that is on the same level of nationalism. Both can be used as tools of good or evil by leaders to manipulate and motivate their people. They believe that neither is inherently bad.

While I agree that religion and nationalism are similar on many levels, there is one all-important difference. Pride in one's country and countrymen is something that is tangible and can be seen. One can look with some sort of critical eye on their nation and decide whether it is heading the right or wrong direction.

With religion, however, one must simply choose to believe or not believe. Since no one will know the truth about God or the afterlife until they die, there is no way to make decisions based on firsthand accounts of these principle tenets. One must simply take it all on faith, and often nothing can change their mind. And therein lies the problem.

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Evaluation: *Ronny considers whether religion does more harm than good in a variety of contexts: historical, political, and in the context of scientific progress. His argument is very clear and well thought out.*

Masculinity and Violence in Rita Dove's *The Darker Face of the Earth*

Amie Shadlu
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Teresa Chung

Assignment:
Write a research paper about a theme in Rita Dove's play The Darker Face of the Earth, *using a range of secondary sources, including interviews, literary criticism, and paradigms from philosophy or psychology.*

With respect to the genetically predisposed strength, dominance, and egotism that often occur in men, masculinity and violence seem to naturally go hand in hand. According to Luoluo Hong, PhD., of Louisiana State University, "Research indicates that twice as many boys as girls report believing that physical fighting is an appropriate response when someone insults you, steals from you, or flirts with someone you like…" (276). Do men, however, have the potential to be masculine without resorting to brutality? Can they be in touch with their feminine sides without sparing their manliness? Rita Dove's *The Darker Face of the Earth* examines the ways in which two male slaves respond to the discrimination and injustice of the antebellum South. When their reactions to slavery, hate, revolution, and even love are compared, only one form of masculinity is portrayed as truly honorable. Reviewing their differences, one can conclude that a man can be driven to violence by a number of reasons, but rather than acting on these violent, anti-feminist impulses, it is possible for him to define his masculinity by holding his emotions and the consideration of others to a higher concern.

Several concepts from psychological literary criticism explain the connection between violence and masculinity in relation to the play. For instance, Eleanor Ty addresses male violence issues in her article, "Abjection, Masculinity, and Violence in Brian Roley's *American Son* and Han Ong's *Fixer Chao*," where she examines the ill effects of "globalization" on Filipino immigrants and their American-born children. Another concept is that of John Hughes in his article, "Violence, Masculinity and Self: Killing in Joseph Roth's 1920s Fiction." Hughes points out that German author Joseph Roth's post World War I novels, which include numerous acts of killing, illustrate "the continuum of male psychology." He states, "I argue that [the act of killing] should be viewed as central in Roth's portrayal of the damaged psyche of young war veterans, whose strategies of self-denial and self-transformation have terrible consequences for themselves and others" (Hughes 216). Additionally, in his psychology report, "Toward a Transformed Approach to Prevention: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence," Luoluo Hong uses the term "hegemonic masculinity" to describe the

influences men have on one another that promote anti-feminist stereotypes of masculinity. Each of these concepts helps to construe the critical representations of the ascendant forms of masculinity in Dove's play.

In the play, Augustus Newcastle, a young slave sent to the Jennings plantation, is portrayed as a violent man before he is even seen by the audience. Jones, the overseer, speaks of "Twenty-two/ acts of aggression and rebellion," before Augustus has even arrived (1.2.26-27). When the stage directions indicate that he enters in chains, it becomes evident that he is threatening in some way, which is further emphasized by his *"piercing eyes,"* and *"...anger thinly concealed behind his slave mannerisms"* (1.3. p 1151). He presents himself as a very powerful, masculine figure in the way he interacts with the other slaves. For instance, he shows off his education by offering certain facts he knows related to Scylla, Diana, and Phebe's names (1.3.40-43; 48-49; 98-104). His masculinity and interest in violence are quite evident when he tells the story of the slave revolution in Haiti (1.7.13-66). As he illustrates the brutality of the revolt, the others seem to give their full attention as they join in by interjecting comments such as, "We shall be free!" (1.7.32).

The fact that Augustus suffers from the constraints of slavery may influence his infatuation with reaching freedom through violence. By being forced into slavery, Augustus is unable to benefit from a male-dominated society. This situation can be compared to Ty's concept of "globalization," which she refers to as, "…the movement of people, goods, culture in the new global capitalism…" (119). She also states, "Living in one of the centers of global capitalism yet feeling excluded from full membership leads to feelings of inadequacy." She continues to speak of "Tomas," a young Filipino American from Roley's *American Son*, who resorts to robbery, aggression, and hustling in response to his exclusion from the profits of globalization (126). Such feelings are also a factor of Augustus' violent behavior in his response to slavery, which excludes him from the ability to hold power in a patriarchal society. As much as he may expect to be a figure of authority, being a slave realistically pushes him to the bottom of the social hierarchy.

A primary example of Augustus' violent behavior in response to slavery is his decision to join the slave conspiracy, which he ends up choosing with the achievement of freedom in mind. There are several explanations for a man to make this sort of choice, one being the influential power of a large mass of people, which is part of Hughes' "continuum of male psychology." Hughes uses "Lohse," a character from Roth's novel, *Das Spinnennetz,* as an example when he explains that his corruptive behavior is amplified when associated with an uprising of many others. "The sense of satisfaction he feels…is multiplied when achieved in the context of an urban riot…" says Hughes, as he indicates not only the way a man's actions may change, but also his feeling of power when included in a large group (222). The impact of the conspiracy on Augustus bears this resemblance, as the leader says, "So the one becomes many / and the many one," and, "who is not with us / is against us" (1.6.88-89; 82-83). By plotting to overpower and kill those responsible for his enslavement, Augustus condones the necessity of violence to freedom, and giving himself to the masses is one way of claiming his masculinity.

Another reason behind Augustus' decision to join the conspiracy is highlighted by Hong. He describes "hegemonic masculinity" as the pressure that men put on one another to eliminate feminine qualities within themselves, and thus promote trite forms of masculinity, such as acting violently (Hong 269). Hong further explains how men influence each other to act out stereotypes of male toughness by using downgrading comments that derogate their masculinity, or suggest undesirable feminine qualities. For example, a coach may use insults such as "sissy," "girly," or "wuss" when a player's performance does not meet his expectation (Hong 272). Augustus experiences some of this "bullying" from the conspirators, which they do in order to pressure him into joining them. For instance, the leader says to him, "We expected a bit more daring/ from someone of your reputation" (1.6.28-29), which threatens Augustus' manhood.

Augustus also shows a selfish, anti-feminist claim to masculinity by putting his feelings for Amalia second to

his appetite for freedom. At times, he shows confusion about these feelings toward her, as they seem to complicate his dispositions of hatred and his ultimate goal to strike down his oppressors. He also seems intimidated by his emotions when he says, "If fear eats out the heart, /what does love do?" (2.4.27-28). It is as if he is hesitating to let himself feel love toward anyone, because he suggests it would produce a more unpleasant effect than fear. This also indicates that love would only get in the way of his loyalty to the conspiracy. He shows mixed feelings toward Amalia, as one moment he is caressing her neck and the next he is *"Tightening his grip…"* as indicated in the stage directions (2.5. p 1191). He also makes some comments to the conspirators that are rather arrogant and chauvinistic, "Missy needed a buck—what of it?/...Should I knock her hand away/ to prove my loyalty to the cause? / Why not charm her instead?" (2.7.57; 59-60). Because he ends up choosing his own desire for freedom and insurgent victory over his feelings for Amalia, he is proven to be profoundly selfish. Before he goes to attack Amalia and her husband Louis, he expresses to a fellow conspirator, "I've never been so close to freedom" (2.7.63), which emphasizes his top priority.

Some of Augustus' interactions with Phebe, a female slave, additionally show his conceit and his rejection of femininity. When she tells Augustus of the cruelty inflicted upon her mother, he, who is so focused on revenge, replies, "…how far would you go/ to avenge your mother's death?" (2.1.132-33). Phebe responds as if she not only has not thought about vindication, but she nearly mocks Augustus for his comment, as she says, "There you go again / with your revolution talk," (2.1.134-35). Another encounter between Phebe and Augustus shows his lack of concern for others. Just prior to his attack on the Jennings' house, Phebe says to him, "Every time you talk about / victory and vengeance, / its as if you're saying/ my victory, my vengeance. / As if you didn't care about anyone's pain but yours," (2.7.13-18). The contrast between Phebe as a woman and Augustus as a man in light of the conspiracy is indicated when she emotes her feelings to Augustus: "…I care what happens to you / more than revolution or freedom /…maybe if you hadn't let that take over your life, you might have had some left over for me" (2.7.32-33;36-38). Unlike Augustus, she is clearly more concerned about others' feelings rather than her own satisfaction. The decision of Augustus choosing the conspiracy over Phebe can also be related to a second part of Hughes' "continuum of male psychology," which is the inability to relate to women. He explains the accounts of war veterans who would rather have faced the dangers of battle in order to bond with each other, simply because women were not included. "The function of the army for these socially incompetent men is clear:" he states, "it provided a sense of wholeness and belonging they lack in civilian life" (Hughes 217-18). Correspondingly, Augustus' inability to relate to Phebe's concern may have pushed him to distance himself from her.

Hector, on the other hand, being an older slave who is later realized to be Augustus' father, provides a very different nature of masculinity. He has also suffered a great deal, but reacts to his pain in a manner dissimilar to that of Augustus. He shows pain early on when he is told that his and Amalia's baby has died, when it is indicated that he *"...falls to his knees,"* in the stage directions (1.Pro. p 1144). He also seems to have an intense flashback of being captured from his home in Africa during his brawl with Augustus in Act 2, scene 4, which obviously has a great emotional impact on him (106-09). Rather than planning revenge, Hector isolates himself. He lingers alone in the swamps, and seems to have established somewhat of a sense of power and freedom there, as he indicates, "This is my home now. / I am king here" (2.3.83-84). As Hughes states, "Only in isolation, then can this precariously constructed masculinity maintain integrity" (222), which would suggest that Hector's seclusion is a wiser choice than Augustus' connection to the conspiracy. He also seems to demonstrate anger, as with the snakes when he says, "I'm gonna catch all the snakes in the swamp! / They grow and they grow, so many of them. But I'll kill them! I'll kill them all!" (1.3.129-30). Unlike Augustus, however, the extent of his violence is taken out only on the snakes, not directly on people. Hector expresses his disapproval of the conspiracy by claiming it to be "evil," and he shows concern for all

the other slaves as he screams a warning call before his final bought with Augustus (2.4.92-98). As Hector tries to run from the swamp, possibly to alert the others of the retribution, his concern for them is contrasted by Augustus' fierce actions. To prevent his plot from being spoiled, Augustus tackles Hector and then proceeds to strangle him to his death, as the stage directions state (2.4. p 1187).

Another way that Hector differs from Augustus is with regard to the manifestation of feminine qualities. For instance, Amalia's memories of Hector in the prologue allow him to be depicted as a loving, romantic gentleman when it is indicated that the rose he holds out to her stands out among the other slaves' wildflowers (128-34). In Hong's study, he emphasizes the importance of a more constructive portrayal of manhood, which includes an extended view of masculinity. He states that this involves, "…some behaviors that may even be regarded as feminine, thus reformulating and contesting hegemonic masculinity" (Hong 272). By showing his sensitive side in the interest of Amalia, Hector demonstrates this broader definition. Although he does eventually show negative feelings toward Amalia and their relationship when he indicates, "I got lost in the smell of a rose / and snap!—the snake bit down," (2.4.73-74), he does still stand up for her safety when confronting Augustus about the conspiracy (2.4.95).

In contrast to Augustus' selfishness, the respectable portrayal of Hector becomes especially apparent at his funeral. For the slaves to assemble, sing a song of prayer, and give him a proper ceremony shows that they care for him deeply. Perhaps the most significant honor he is given is when they decide who will perform the custom of the child passing over and under the platform. Phebe says, "Every child on this plantation / was like his child…" (2.6.15-16), indicating that he cared for all his fellow slaves as if they were his own blood, they looked up to him respectfully, and he was a fatherly figure to them all. The loving attention Hector receives through custom and song makes his paternal form of masculinity stand out rather admirably. In her interview with Malin Pereira, Rita Dove communicates the importance of Hector's character, as she explains, "I didn't want him to be merely a crazy man in the swamp: I really wanted everything that he said to make eminent sense if you knew the whole story" (Pereira 186).

The ending impression of Augustus, however, is not so honorable. He is so obsessed with seeking revenge that it slows him from finding out the truth about who his actual parents are. He is quick to jump to the conclusion that Louis is his father, although Louis is hinting otherwise (2.8.130-55). Finding out the mother-son relationship between him and Amalia prevents Augustus from truly accomplishing his goal. When Amalia realizes this relationship before Augusts does, she offers bits and pieces that hint toward Hector being his father. Augustus hesitates to kill her as he presses on for the entire truth (2.8.249-62). The stage directions proceed to indicate that Amalia's own hand beats Augustus to the knife before he can carry out the orders of the conspiracy (2.8. p 1206), making his victory only apparent. Rita Dove emphasizes the importance of this seemingness, as she explains her reasoning for changing her original ending of the play, where Augustus dies. "…Augustus does live at the end of the new version; it's just not a life worth living," she says. Referring again to Augustus, she claims, "…what kind of hero is that, who's just realized that he's lost everything that could make him happy?" (qtd. in Pereira 185). Although the conspirators think Augustus is a hero as they pour in, an unsettling feeling lingers as he has previously found out the devastating truth, and hardly has had a chance to discuss or resolve anything with Amalia. Only once she is dead does he show his pure emotions toward her, and possible regret of his actions: "I had the sun and the moon / once. And the stars / with their cool gaze. / Now it's dark" (2.8.303-06).

In conclusion, examining the contrasts between Augustus and Hector shows two markedly different approaches to claiming masculinity. Although Augustus acts on a number of male instincts that lead him to become a stereotypically violent man, his behaviors of hatred, violence, and anti-feminism lead him to merely a feeling of pity from the audience. Differentially, Hector's kinder, more selfless nature, although somewhat reserved, leads him to be recognized as a positive

influence on the other slaves. He shows that it is not necessary for one to either be swayed by the influence of others, or deny his feminine side in order to become a man of respect. In being depicted as a caring, paternal figure rather than a violent one, he demonstrates that a man need not give into his machismo urges to truly be viewed as a symbol of masculinity.

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Evaluation: *Amie's analysis helps us better understand Dove's play and invites us to look more carefully at representations of masculinity.*

Obedient Extermination and the Obligatory Mind

Mike Shell
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Richard Middleton-Kaplan

Assignment:
Write a seven-to-ten page literary research paper using at least seven secondary sources.

Tadeusz Borowski wrote in heart-wrenching detail of the atrocities of the concentration camps during World War II. During the reading of "This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen," the reader is overwhelmed with vivid images of brutality and emotionless responses to the victimization of millions of people. It is in such occurrences that one cannot help but wonder how an individual can inflict so much brutality and death upon others with no regard for humanity. The answer is not so easily found in the individual; a more profound, and albeit shocking, answer will be found in the collective. Blind obedience to a higher authority and depersonalization superceded individual accountability and created a ripe atmosphere for mass extermination.

Borowski wastes no time in the introduction when he writes, "The whole camp went about naked" (2773). By doing so, the readers are immediately thrust into the center of the camp themselves. There is no pleasant introduction, no set up of characters. Borowski does not let us tiptoe into the ice-cold pool of the Holocaust. He instead throws us head first directly into the gas when he writes, "we had already passed through the delousing process and received our clothing back from the tanks filled with a dilution of Cyclon[B] in water which so excellently poisoned lice in clothing and people in gas chambers" (2773). As Rudolf Hoss, first commandant of Auschwitz wrote in his autobiography, "Cyclon B gas was supplied by the firm of Tesch and Stabenow and was constantly used in Auschwitz for the destruction of vermin" (Hoss 113). The murder of millions of humans was equated to the elimination of mice and rats in the eyes of the perpetrators. This is not interpretation; it is fact. How can someone look at another human and *truly* believe that their life is no more worthy than that of lice? It begins within the political system. Adolf Hitler's social program was focused on the elimination of non-Germans and the reacquiring of land he deemed as rightfully belonging to the German people. "First, all true Germans must rally around their heroic leaders to cast out the villains who had led them astray," wrote G.M. Gilbert in his analysis of the German leader's social mindset (54). Borowski's story is the end result of such a mindset. Adolf Hitler is at the top, commanding the elimination of all whom he deems impure in order for Germany to retake its rightful place in the world. At the bottom is the end result of "Babies, naked monsters with huge heads and bloated bellies [lying] in corners amidst human excrement and lost watches. They are carried out like chickens" (Borowski 2780).

It is in the violent and sweeping dehumanization that allows a guard to place a simple check mark in his notebook as a truck passes packed with "vermin." "Each truck means a check mark—when sixteen trucks pass, it means a thousand, more or less. The gentleman is poised and accurate. No truck will leave without his knowledge and his check mark" (2780). Sixty people are sent to their death with each mark. The process of stripping away the individuality is explained by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen this way: "Dehumanizing each person by robbing him of his individuality, by rendering each, to the German eye, but another body in an undifferentiated mass, was the first step towards fashioning their 'subhumans'" (176). The prisoners were stripped and

malnourished. Heads were shaved. They were forced into backbreaking work. In the masses, men were virtually indistinguishable from women. They indeed became vermin in the eyes of the guards. Goldhagen continues:

> By denying the camp system's populace adequate nutrition, indeed by subjecting many to starvation, by forcing them to perform backbreaking labor for unmanageably long hours, by providing them with grossly inadequate clothing and shelter, not to mention medical care, and by perpetrating steady violence on their bodies and minds, the Germans succeeded in making many of the camp system's inhabitants take on the appearance—including festering, open wounds, and the marks of disease and illness—and behavioral attributes of the 'subhumans' that the Germans imagined them to be. (176) Adolf Hitler's social beliefs saturated the minds of the camp's guards. As a result, the guards literally stripped away all individuality of the prisoners and subjected them to horrific treatment. The byproduct of such treatment showed in the appearance of the prisoners, which only made it easier to treat them as animals. It was a revolving process. It was self-fulfilling.

The narrator of Borowski's story becomes disconnected in much the same way as the guards as he becomes an employee of the systematic extermination. His focus is on food and the royalties from the transport. The instinct for survival is clear when he says, "You'd better 'organize' a pair of shoes—you know, perforated leather, with a double sole. And I'm not mentioning a sports shirt, you've promised me one long ago" (2774). This mentality is confirmed by Rudolf Hoss when saying: "They carried out their grisly task with dumb indifference" (136). The shock of treatment, of witnessing the victimization within the camp, and the desperation for survival changed the social outlook of the camp workers as seen in Borowski's story. Rudolf Hoss continues:

> Their one object was to finish the work as quickly as possible so that they could have a longer interval in which to search the clothing of the gassed victims for something to smoke or eat. Although they were well fed and given many additional allowances, they could often be seen shifting corpses with one hand while they gnawed at something they held in the other. Even when they were engaged in the most gruesome work of digging out and burning the corpses buried in mass graves, they never stopped eating. (Hoss 136)

The importance placed on food is peppered throughout Borowski's story. Detail is placed on what the food looks like and how it is eaten. Not nearly as much detail is placed on how people are killed. Bread, sardines, mustard, tomatoes, wine, onions, bacon, and fruit are all symbols of life and survival in the camp. When you are given watery soup as a daily meal you are literally drinking life. You do not think of the 2,000 people that have just been gassed. They cannot save you. According to Viktor E. Frankl, a three year survivor of Auschwitz, "When the last layers of subcutaneous fat had vanished, and we looked like skeletons disguised with skin and rags, we could watch our own bodies beginning to devour themselves. The organism digested its own protein, and the muscle disappeared. Then the body had no powers of resistance left" (Frankl 42). Frankl viewed his own body not as a life but as an "organism" needing to feed.

What happened at the camps was an efficient process of murdering men, women, and children by the thousands. Thrown in gas chambers, burned alive on piles of gasoline-soaked wood, and shots in the back of the head to those deemed uncontrollable or unfit for labor were everyday occurrences. At the same time, guards "…smiled warmly at one another, talked about letters, news from home, their children; they showed one another photographs. Some of them promenaded in the square with dignity, the gravel crunched, the boots crunched, the silver distinctions gleamed on the collars and the bamboo canes swished impatiently" (Borowski 2778). As Pery Broad, a noncommissioned officer in the SS writes in his own words, "The executioner mechanically reloaded his gun again and again, and one execution incessantly followed another. Should a pause in his work be necessary, he would put down the gun, whistle

a tune or talk with the men around him about quite indifferent things" (149). There is with no doubt a complete emotional disconnect within those in the camps. Officers shoot prisoners in the head and then talk jovially with their comrades while the camp workers scavenge the pockets of the dead for food…like animals.

It has been witnessed that dehumanization was flourishing within the camp and was indeed necessary for its continuation. In the book, *Are We All Nazis?*, Simon Wiesenthal, who has spent his life tracking Nazi war criminals, speaks of Adolf Eichmann this way: "I had been wrong to look for a motive in his earlier life. There was no motive, no hatred. He was simply the perfect product of the system….He would have done the same job if he had been ordered to kill all the men whose name begins with P or B, or all who had red hair" (27). Borowski wrote "This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen" in such a way as to provide the reader with similar feelings of emotionless brutality. The disconnectedness portrayed by the narrator, who is indeed a victim, is a clear personification of this and therefore shows that brutality is not a trait solely owned by the guards. He remarks, "You see, my friend, an unreasonable rage wells up inside me that I must be here on their account. I am not the least sorry for them, that they're going to die in the gas chambers." Henri responds, "rage can best be vented on someone weaker" (2781). They are instinctually driven byproducts of the system. They indeed became animal-like, acting on base level instinct. As one of the most villainous perpetrators of the Holocaust writes, "Overcome by the crudest instinct of self preservation, they came to care nothing for one another, and in their selfishness now only fought for themselves. Cases of cannibalism were not rare in Birkenau. I myself came across a Russian lying between piles of bricks, whose body had been ripped open and the liver removed" (Hoss 60).

There have been numerous findings explaining why the leaders carried out their crimes as they did. "I took part in the murder of many people. I often asked myself after the war whether I had become a criminal because, being a dedicated National Socialist, I had murdered men, and I found no answer. I believed in the Fuhrer; I wanted to serve my people," states a former member of the camp Gestapo (Stark 169). Hoss had written, "The killing of these Russian prisoners-of-war did not cause me much concern at the time. The order had been given and I had to carry it out" (Hoss 94). As Whitney Harris, prosecutor of the Nuremburg trials, said of Rudolf Hoss, "He simply took the position, which was the general position of all subordinates to whom I talked during this period, that he was carrying out superior orders. Himmler said this had to be done, then that was his war-task and, no matter what, he had to carry it out" (Cargas 104).

There were three main German policies in plunging the Jews into the inescapable void of dehumanization during the Holocaust. The first was that of repeated verbal violence in speeches, in print, and on radio. The hate-filled words were meant to be heard by not only Germans but also by the Jews themselves in hopes of driving them out of Germany forever. One survivor explains the Nazi policy this way: "The barrage of propaganda was directed against the Jews with undiminished vehemence and intensity. In ceaseless repetitions, it was hammered into the heads of the readers and listening audience that the Jews were subhuman creatures and the source of evil" (Goldhagen 137).

The second policy of the Nazi movement was an "assault upon the Jews' bodies" (137). The verbal brutality inflicted upon the Jews was intently matched by the physical abuse. "The regime perpetrated, encouraged, or tolerated violence against Jews, which in the 1940's became part of the Jews' everyday existence….It took the form sometimes of impromptu physical attacks and ritualistic degradation by local officials, and sometimes of centrally organized campaigns of violence, terror, and incarceration in concentration camps" (137).

The third policy within the movement was the social separation from the Germans so that the Jews had no interaction or affect within German society. "The progress of the gradual, systematic exclusion of Jews from all spheres of society—the political, social, economic, and cultural—was as grinding as the hardship that it created for Jews was punishing" (137). These three national policies completely devastated Jewish life. The Jews were nonentities, walking ghosts,

and indeed subhuman in the eyes of their suppressors.

The policies had been written. The rhetoric had been repeated. The abuse continued and intensified. "No, self-control is no longer possible. Valises are brutally jerked out of the people's hands, overcoats torn off" (Borowski 2782). The Jews have been dehumanized and demonized. Now we must understand why the leaders were able to oversee such devastation to the human spirit. Sadism is not necessarily the answer. "There is a limit to the number of people you can kill out of hatred or lust for slaughter, but there is no limit to the number you can kill in the cool, systematic manner of the military categorical imperative," says Sayss-Inquart, a top Nazi leader (qtd. in Askenasy 36). Although there is no excusing the slaughter of millions, there has been much study on the efficiency of the Nazi killing machine. It almost seems logical why such an atrocity could develop. The object of aggression, through broad systematic verbal and physical assault, is demonized and dehumanized. They are sent to camps where they are starved, beaten, and murdered all for the love of nationalism.

In Borowski's story a little girl is thrown on the back of a truck like a rabid dog. "Others carry a little girl who has only one leg, they hold her by the arms and that leg. Tears stream down her cheeks, and she whimpers pitifully: 'Gentlemen, it hurts, it hurts…' They throw her on the truck with the corpses. She will be cremated alive with them" (2784). Shocking as this image is, it coincides exactly with the mentality of the guards. In Tzvetan Todorov's book *Facing the Extreme*, dehumanization seems a logical reason why this was possible. "It was a two-stage operation: one first induced 'animal-like' behavior; one could then, with a clear conscience, treat these people like animals" (160). Todorov quotes Eugenia Ginzberg's reference to Rudolf Hoss: "He derived no satisfaction from our sufferings. He was simply oblivious to them because in the most sincere way imaginable, he did not regard us as human. Wastage among the convict work force was to him no more than a routine malfunction" (159).

Franz Stangl was a commandant during the Holocaust and was interviewed by Gitta Sereny while he was in prison. Once again confirming the separation of emotion and duty, Stangl states, "The only way I could live was by compartmentalizing my thinking. There were hundreds of ways to take one's mind off it [the liquidations]. I used them all…I made myself concentrate on work, work, and again work" (146). Stangl truly believed he was not accountable for his actions when he told his wife, "I see it, but I don't *do* anything to anybody" (146). The mental separation of guard work in the camps and private life is profound and shocking. "*Lagerfuhrer* Schwarzhuber, too, showed great fatherly concern, fastening a name tag around the neck of his six-year-old child so that the little boy would not be thrown in the gas chamber by mistake as he wandered the grounds of Birkenau" (144).

It can be acknowledged by some that it is easier to kill masses of people as opposed to individuals. "One death is a cause for sorrow; a million deaths is a news item" (161). Stangl views it this way: "I rarely saw them as individuals. It was always just a huge mass" (161). This could be attributed to the camp workers in Borowski's story as well. "Efficient, business-like people will rummage in their intestines, pull gold from under the tongue, diamonds from the placenta and rectum. They will pull out their gold teeth and send them in tightly nailed up cases to Berlin" (Borowski 2786). The guards are not the ones doing this horrible work…the prisoners are. The dead are masses of flesh and bone, not mothers, daughters, fathers, and sons. "It is easier to dispense inhumane treatment to 'enemies of the people' to 'kulaks' than to Ivan or Masha; to Jews or Poles than to Mordechai or Tadeusz" (Todorov 161).

Many readers are shocked at the writing style of "This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen." There is no remorse shown, no shame, and no guilt throughout the majority of the story. The narrator does come to a crossroad of morality, although it is quickly extinguished by passivism as summed up in the last sentence: "We move out of their way" (Borowski 2786). Overwhelmingly, life within the camp lacked humanity. Prisoners, through sweeping ideological oppression, became animal-like through animalistic treatment until the very end. Borowski's story is a parallel to the atrocities and mindset that flourished in Auschwitz. His style does not emit empathy or emotion. A story cannot be

filled with emotion and empathy when none was felt by those *within* the story. The perpetrators of the Holocaust believed in what they did. Adolf Eichmann said on trial, "My guilt lies in my obedience, in my respect for discipline, for my military obligations in wartime, for my oath of loyalty….Obedience belongs among the virtues" (Todorov 173). Six million died. The young girl in Borowski's story who was thrown on the back of the truck to be burned alive was only one of them.

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Evaluation: *The research used in this paper is impressive in its depth and variety, at least in terms of historical research. The writer seems to have genuinely thought through the implications of the Holocaust and to have arrived at his own view—a view he presents and argues for persuasively.*

Grocery Stores Reflect Our Lives

Kiyoko Shindo
Course: ESL 074 (Writing V)
Instructor: Ilona Sala

Assignment:
Students were each to write a comparison/contrast essay on any topic of their choice.

I am a woman, but I don't like shopping. I am disgusted with shopping malls, not attracted by outlet malls, and have never gone to after-Thanksgiving sales. Walking in stores looking for better goods is stressful to me. I make almost all my purchases thorough the Internet. However, there is one kind of store that I like to go to: grocery stores. Buying groceries is just a household chore. There is no fascinating element in it. But grocery stores are interesting places to me because they have character. Each store has different character, depending mostly on the location. Even in the U.S., grocery stores differ, so the difference gets bigger between different countries. I see many differences between grocery stores in America and in Japan.

In the U.S., grocery stores sell loose vegetables and fruits. You can buy only one tomato or apple if you want. Also, you can grab and smell them to pick out the best one from a pile. In Japanese grocery stores, those products sell in packages or bags; each package or bag contains two or more. You have to buy at least one bag, even though you need only one apple. Since the products are in bags, of course you can't grab or smell them. You must judge if they are good or bad only by the appearance. These differences come from the stores' priorities. American grocery stores give priority to customers' convenience. So, they allow customers to shop according to their needs. In Japan, grocery stores attach importance to keep their products fresh and hygienic. So, they don't want customers to touch products freely because it spoils the products. Also, customers have a negative feeling for unpackaged products. The idea that many strangers might touch the product makes them uncomfortable.

American grocery stores have a wide range of foods. Usually they have ethnic food corners and deal in products from all over the world. You can find Mexican food, Chinese food, Indian food, and more. Besides those international foods, American food has diversity, too. Tons of different flavors of cereals or dressings are on shelves. The variety is not only in flavors. There are low or non-fat products, low-carb products, sodium- or sugar-free products, and organic products. The choice is unlimited. Also, American grocery stores consider religions; kosher food is common, and seafood is on sale during Lent. The U.S. is a multiethnic country. Each American has a different background and different taste. Grocery stores offer various kinds of products to satisfy everyone's needs. Compared with American, Japanese grocery stores have few varieties. Since Japan consists of nearly a single race and seldom has had migrations, all Japanese have the same sense of taste. Food companies make new products at all times, but in most cases, they disappear from the market in a short period, except for the ones that suit Japanese taste. So, grocery stores only have regular, everyone's favorite items.

I also see differences among shoppers between the two countries. In both countries, the main purpose of going to a grocery store is, of course, shopping. However, in American grocery stores, people exchange information besides buying groceries. Grocery stores have bulletin boards with lots of bills and free magazines. Shoppers often stop there and get information about garage sales, job opportunities, and various kinds of community news, or post bills by themselves. In addition to those materials, American people get information from other shoppers. They often ask about

products from other shoppers who are strangers to them: how the product tastes, how to cook it, or if it is worth purchasing. These scenes are never seen in Japanese grocery stores. Japanese people seldom ask about products, and if they have questions, they ask only salesclerks, not other shoppers. Also, Japanese grocery stores don't have bulletin boards that are allowed for use by shoppers. Japanese grocery stores are places just for shopping.

Grocery stores sell the necessities of life. Their products differ depending on the needs of the people who regularly shop there. Also, grocery stores garnish our lives. You see the changing of seasons in the fresh produce corner, even though you don't go to orchards or farms, or you notice that an annual event is coming, by the store's decorations. Grocery stores are like mirrors that reflect customers' lives. If you carefully look around in a grocery store, you will see the daily lives of people there.

Evaluation: *Kiyoko's essay is informative in an interesting way. She has a wonderful ease with words, taking an everyday chore like shopping and making it a cultural endeavor.*

Nanny's Suocco

Cara Spagnolo
Course: Speech 101
(Fundamentals of Speech Communication)
Instructor: Louise Perry

Assignment:
Write a eulogy in which you praise a subject, animal, object, concept, or institution.

It was the reason I went to bed on Saturday nights, and it was the reason I looked forward to getting up every Sunday morning. I waited for this day all week, and so did everyone else in my family. We knew she would be up early, before all of us, preparing, cutting, thinking and singing. It was her favorite day of the week. She looked forward to giving us one of her many special gifts because she knew how much we all craved it, loved it, and honored it. So what was this great treat we received? It was nothing more than a smell. A smell that was engraved and enriched in love, personality, tradition and honor. It was the smell of home with the warmth of her, every Sunday morning. It was her smell and she owned it. It was hers then and always will be, for no one has yet to match it.

Although this smell had been in my life through most of my young teen years, it was as a child that I remember it most. Like clockwork, I would be awakened from my dreams to this unique rich smell that only I would think would smell good at 8:00 in the morning. While most people would be thinking of pancakes, French toast with bacon or sausage, I would be thinking of the fresh smell of garlic and basil that had been cut and boiling in a pot of tomatoes. As I would slowly, but not fast enough, get out of bed and run into the kitchen, I would see her standing there holding a big wooden spoon, having to almost stand tiptoed, stirring what I could only describe as a pot of her love that was almost as big but not nearly as big as her heart, with a big smile on her face because she knew what I was running in there for. "Cara mia beda," she would say. "Are you up already?" I would respond by saying "Yeah, are the meatballs ready yet?" "After church," she would say, "after church." Now you have to realize that my mom loved these mornings because it was the fastest I ever got ready.

While nibbling on my breakfast, I would watch her put in all the ingredients that made this so special. I was mesmerized by her. I was no longer paying attention to the food that was now falling out of my mouth. My mind and my eyes were focused on her, not the breakfast. After making my mess, my mom would tell me to go get ready, and I would dance out of the kitchen, taking in a big smell and telling Nanny I would be right back to help. As I scrambled to get dressed for church, all in a frenzy, worrying that she would be done completely within the next fifteen minutes but really knowing that it took at least three hours to complete, I would come running out with my dress half on, not zippered, my tights still down below my knees, falling and tripping as I tried frantically to pull them up, one shoe on, one off and my hair done to what I thought looked absolutely fabulous, I would appear only to get a laugh of joy that a grandma gets seeing her grandchild ready to help. I would grab the kitchen chair to stand on as she would be wrapping me up in a towel, so I wouldn't get any of the red tomato stains on my dress. As I would now stir with the same wooden spoon, standing tiptoed on the chair, looking at her creation in the big pot that looked as red and as warm as her heart, she would finish getting me dressed, pulling up my tights, and putting my shoes on. By this time more ingredients were ready to be put in, and this is where I came to help.

I would call my grandma Nanny because when I was a baby I couldn't say Nana, which most people may be accustomed to hearing. Nanny made her spaghetti sauce or what we call suocco all from touch, feeling, and love. And it tasted the same every time. Why it's hers and why no one can truly duplicate it was because she never wrote the recipe out and no measurements every existed. When I would help her, she would measure what she wanted in the palm of her hand and then she would put it in mine to drop in. I would ask her, "How much do we put in Nanny?" She would respond with a shrug in her shoulders and say, "um, a pinch!" Growing up in Sicily and being the oldest of nine, she had no time to take the time to measure, but this is why it was one of a kind.

While walking home from church, I would be anticipating the aroma that would be coming from the house. I would run in and change to help Nanny put the meatballs and sausage in as the last kick of flavor and then wait patiently, playing around her feet, taking a glance up at her every now and then making sure she still knew I was there while she stood tiptoed, stirring all the flavor as she smiled at her creation and then down at me as I asked, "is it ready yet Nanny?" As I waited patiently to finally hear the words "yes Cara, go sit down," I would run to the table; of course, being the first one there, I would sit with my legs dangling and kicking anxiously as I watched her transfer the suocco to the pasta. I would be the first one served and half way done with my plate before everyone even sat down. As I ate my favorite food, I realized later in life that the taste was a comfort to me and something I would always have as a memory of my Nanny. When she would finally sit down, she would ask me, "Come Cara?" "How is it Cara?" I would respond, "Delicious Nanny, grazie!!" There would be a look of such joy in her eyes and a warmth in her smile as I said those words to her because she knew all her hard work and love paid off. What brought joy more than anything else to her was watching her family, especially her grandchildren, eat. As many people know, Italians love to eat; it literally brings them joy and happiness, and those Sunday mornings were filled with that joy.

My Nanny passed away this past June and although she hadn't been able to cook her famous suocco for several years, she guided my mom in making it. It still has a great taste, a little different, but it's not hers. And although it's made now with a mom's love, there is still nothing like a grandma's love. I still sometimes wake up to the smell of garlic and basil, but I know it's not my Nanny, but if I think hard enough I can still smell her and her warmth, and the memory of her will always be there because of the memories she made for me by getting up early every Sunday morning. I'm honored that she loved me so much, and I thank her.

Evaluation: *What makes this piece stand out is the effective use of expressive and descriptive language. Literary devices were interwoven well to give the audience a sense of love, personality, and tradition—qualities making Nanny a "special" person.*

Hedda's Suicide Note

Monika Staszel
Course: Literature 207 (World Literature Since 1800)
Instructor: Richard Middleton-Kaplan

Assignment:
Ibsen's Hedda Gabler might be charged with selfishness. Write a defense for her, arguing against the charge of selfishness. If you so wish to take a creative leap, you may write the paper from Hedda's point of view in the first person.

You are all sitting in the living room trying to put together a book out of guilt, and you know it can never be put back together. Why can't you just give up and do something actually worthwhile? Do you even know that I am sitting in the piano room about to end my life? No. You have no idea. You all think I am selfish, egotistical, and sadistic. You really have no idea that I only put off that image to hide my hurt inside. No one knows the real Hedda and no one cares to find her. My life has been a series of disappointments. To fulfill my own needs I have, I suppose, demeaned others. But it was not my intent. I am the daughter of General Gabler. Do you know how much pressure is on me to uphold that sacred position? People expect me to be the most cultured, most sophisticated person they know. I was brought up by a General; can it be any other way? I am tortured and tormented every day by this thought. I just want to let loose and be happy. I want to entertain guests and be free hearted. That is all I want. I want my hair to flow in the wind as freely as birds fly. I want an untortured spirit.

Every day I wake up and tell myself this will be the first day of my new life, but then the reality sets in that I am in too deep now. But I try. I really do try to be a good, cultured, civilized person, but all these years of suppressing those intents and acting if I was better than anyone has, I guess, started to make my mind believe it.

I thought that by marrying Tesman my life would get better. I wouldn't be daddy's little girl anymore. I could make my new life as Tesman's wife. But that fool dwelled so much on my past. He didn't fall in love with Hedda, but General Gabler's daughter. I tried and tried on our honeymoon to make him see I am a separate person, I am my own person, but all he wanted to do is look through old archives. It was supposed to be romantic. We were supposed to start our lives together. We were supposed to go sightseeing and eat candlelight dinners, but none of that happened! I sat alone on our honeymoon! You hurt me Tesman! You took away my one chance at starting over, my chance to be your loving wife . . . not just General Gabler's daughter who is married to you! Oh Tesman!

Why couldn't my life be as free as it was when Eilert and I were together? He told me the most glorious

things! Such great freedoms in love, experimentations with sexuality, just fulfilling desires . . . but alas he too began to see me through a windowpane, unable to take upon the responsibility to court "The General's Daughter." What is wrong with everybody? Can't you see past the clothes and title? So what if I like nice clothes and big houses? Do you not see I'm trying to fill a void in my empty life with material things? Why oh why can't life just be free? Why can't I just start over? Oh it's too late. Eilert had the right idea. He too was a tortured soul. He finally did something courageous and beautiful by ending his life.

I just want to be free for once. I want to be myself. That's not selfish. What is selfish is how all of you expect me to be. I have to be proper. I have to sit in this house bored out of my mind like a dog tied to a leash. Just put me in the backyard. For heaven's sake, I have a maid who doesn't know her right from her left, and she won't even try to do things correctly.

To top it all off, you all expect me to be civilized with "dear Auntie Juju." Don't you all see she despises me? She doesn't think Tesman should have married me. She parades around, pretending to do her best to like me, just to make me look like a debauchee. I've given up trying to deal with her. It pains my soul to be hated and resented by someone who is my new family. I can't do it anymore. Why does she think she has to wear refined clothes to be accepted by me? If anything, it's the complete opposite. She hasn't ever even tried to talk to me woman-to-woman, family member to family member. Yes, I may have gone about it wrong when I criticized her hat, but I just wanted to let her see that new things will not win me over, plus it really was a dreadful hat. Why couldn't she just come over for a cup of tea with me, and we could have gossiped and became close.

And Judge Brack! Doesn't anyone but me see he is trying to cause a scandal? Doesn't anyone else see how he looks at me? He wants to make me his mistress and it scares me! He seems like the type of man who would do anything to get me too! Even though Tesman and I are not on the best of terms right now, I would never cheat on my husband! People would talk and we would be bad mouthed. A terrible, terrible scandal.

I can't take any more of this. It's too much to handle. My life has been a downward spiral of never-ending torture. Life is supposed to be grand. Love is supposed to be sacred. Friends stay true. But everyone is so deceitful. I'm also to blame. I'm not saying I'm a saint. I have done my fair share. Actually, I have done more than anyone I know. There is no redemption for me. If I can't even be myself, how can I bring a child up properly? There would be no one to help me because everyone is so involved in their own matters. This child would not know love from both parents. It would see bitterness and hatred. That's no way for a child to see life.

I just wanted to be loved; I wanted affection from those who are meaningful to me. I only got attention. Attention is no substitute. It's not heartfelt. It's not honest. Was it too much to ask for? Does it make me a selfish person to want to love and be loved? I wanted my life to mean something. I never intended to hurt anyone—if anything I wanted to help set free their own souls. I am not sorry for what I am about to do. I guess people do, do such things. I can finally be free.

Evaluation: *Monika creatively defends Hedda in a way consistent with her character. Without going beyond what Hedda might actually think, this paper provides the kind of defense Hedda might, at the same time revealing her annoyance and other less flattering traits.*

Hyde in the Shadows

Brianna Stoll
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Richard Middleton-Kaplan

Assignment:
Write a 7- to 10-page literary research paper using at least seven secondary sources.

In Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* the reader is faced with the duality of man. More extensively, this duality must be seen within the historical context in which this piece is set. This duality is clearly expressed by the major characters of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; however, I believe that this duality is also reflected within the secondary characters. The major secondary characters consist of Mr. Utterson, Richard Enfield, and Dr. Hastie Lanyon. These characters represent a kind of shadow of each other: Utterson with Enfield, and Jekyll with Lanyon. These "shadows" embody the Victorian Era in which these characters and Stevenson himself lived.

Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland and lived from 1850 to 1894 (Clarke and Clarke 1374). Before and after the writing of Jekyll and Hyde, he wrote many poems and children's stories, but his most recognizable story is that of Jekyll and Hyde. The Victorian era and all of its ideals highly influenced Stevenson and the writing of his tale. Queen Victoria, who reigned from 1839 to 1901, became its namesake because of the high morals with which she ruled. This time period brought swift changes from "advances in medical, scientific and technological knowledge to changes in population growth and location" (Shephard). Some of these medical and scientific advances rocked the religiously charged times. With the burgeoning middle class, many lower-class people were forced into overpopulated slums. Hyde dwelled in these slums and acted out many of his indecencies there. These Victorian changes divided the people by class and morals. Stevenson established this divide with the character of Dr. Hastie Lanyon, who claimed that Dr. Jekyll participated in "unscientific balderdash" (Stevenson 1379). Lanyon was fearful of these advances because Jekyll, interested in chemicals and mysticism and not practical science, seemed to be playing God. Enfield even claims he [Hyde] was "sneering…like Satan" (1376). This comparison of Hyde as Satan leads to the parallel of Jekyll playing God. Lanyon believes that Jekyll's experiments interfere with God's power to create man. With Jekyll now in essence creating a man, Hyde, Lanyon begins to question his religious beliefs. In this context, Jekyll has now taken over the power of God.

Victorians were also plagued with strict ideals of class structure and beliefs. "Had the Victorian ideal been less hypocritically ideal or had Dr. Jekyll been content with a less perfect public reputation his tragedy would not have occurred" (Oates 301). The men of this tale knew that to remain on top, they either presented themselves publicly as the 'ideal' citizen, or lost their respectability as such. Their public persona is fragile; therefore, the ultimate fear is a stained reputation. This status went hand in hand with honor and respect. As Jekyll claims, he was "fond of the respect of the wise and good among [his] fellow-men, and thus, as might have been supposed, with every guarantee of an honourable and distinguished future" (1403-04). As one may notice, Jekyll was "fond" of the respectability and his standing in society. For Jekyll, a reputable Victorian man, to give into his shadow-self would have a disastrous effect on his social status. Within this context, one may see more clearly the duality Victorian men were faced with. This duality meant many had a "face" they wore in society and one they hid. For example, people tend to behave more professionally at work, while acting differently in the privacy of their home. This hidden persona is called the subconscious. It is believed to contain thoughts one may veil within the recesses of the mind, yet would not normally act out in reality. For instance, Hyde is presented to us as all that Dr. Jekyll cannot publicly be. Jekyll had aspirations and desires which he called "concealed…pleasures" (1404); he could not otherwise act out, for if he did, not only would he lose social respectability, but he'd also be imprisoned. His subconscious was brought forth with the transformation into Hyde. Here, Jekyll could entertain all of the immoral and socially unacceptable acts he wanted without staining his reputation. Now, the persona of Hyde could take the blame.

Jekyll and Hyde themselves are clearly shadows or opposites of one another, but are extreme depictions. Hyde may be seen as the evil side, while Jekyll "believes" himself to be the good. However, what if the self is not seen in such extremes as good or evil? There is no doubt that Hyde is an extreme evil, yet Jekyll is not thoroughly good. He himself admits to concealing his sordid pleasures. A good, decent man would surely have none. In fact, Jekyll says of his faults, "Many a man would have even blazoned such irregularities as I was guilty of; but from the high views that I had set before me, I regarded and hid them with an almost morbid sense of shame" (1404). Here we see Jekyll views himself in an egotistical way. Certainly, a good, charitable man would not be as self-centered as this. What if the shadow of a person is not evil and the public self is not good? Rather it is more like the flipping of a coin. On one side we claim it as "heads" and on the other "tails." There is still one singular coin, yet there are two sides. Therefore, the shadow that one projects is not thoroughly good or evil, but just another side of the same coin.

Stevenson riddles his tale with this theme of shadows. We first see this within Utterson's description, where "he never marked a shade of change in his demeanor" (1375). In this case, Utterson's behaviors or true feelings would not be seen on his face, hence there would be no change in his demeanor. Utterson would decidedly reflect a "rugged countenance" to the outside world (1375). Another example of this shadowing can be seen in a description of Jekyll. Stevenson writes that Dr. Jekyll has "something of a slyish cast perhaps" (1383). Here we see a glimmer of Hyde lurking within the shadow of Dr. Jekyll's person. Another instance occurs when Mr. Guest is asked by Utterson to compare the signatures of Hyde and Jekyll side by side. Mr. Guest notes, "there's rather a singular resemblance; the two hands are in many points identical; only differently sloped" (1389). In turn, Jekyll casts his shadow (Hyde), and the 'slope' or behaviors of Hyde are different than Jekyll's. One final archetypal shadow is cast at the "incident at the window" (1391). This occurs when Utterson and Enfield are reflected below from Jekyll and Hyde's larger than life persona from above (Hannah 333).

With this knowledge, let us take a closer look at the "shadows" or opposites seen within the characters' personalities. First, there are Mr. Utterson and Richard Enfield. It has been said of them, "it was a nut to crack for many" as to what these two could have in common with one another (Stevenson 1375). Utterson is not a man of emotion, rather, he is "dreary" and "undemon-

strable" (1375), as well as silent. Utterson is a lawyer, an older man of questions and rational judgment. Enfield is more demonstrable and younger. In Enfield's story, he describes to Utterson how Hyde trampled a little girl, yet Enfield claims not to pose judgments on man. Rather, Enfield says, "I feel very strongly about putting questions; it partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment" (1377). However, directly after this statement, we see Enfield making judgments and using his emotions to guide his speech when describing the doctor, or "Sawbones" as, "the usual cut-and-dry apothecary" (1376), then later he calls Hyde a "really damnable man" (1377). Utterson, on the other hand, after hearing of this vicious trampling, merely calls Hyde a "man," trying to remain the calm and impartial lawyer. Utterson withholds judgment for others based on human weakness, whereas, "for himself, he has chosen; and he must make his life on that choice" (Saposnik 335). Here it is suggested that Utterson holds himself up to a higher standard, and at the same time he excuses others around him when they fall to weakness: "I let my brother go to the devil in his own way" (Stevenson 1375).

To move further into an investigation of Enfield, there is very little to work with. We do know that he was a "well-known man about town" and is a distant cousin of Utterson (1375). It is also very curious to note that Enfield was walking around in a bad part of town at three in the morning, "from some place at the end of the world" (1376). Nothing further is ever mentioned about where Enfield was coming from. One can only speculate about his late night activities, yet one can see this is something a "dreary" Utterson would never be caught doing. So the division between Utterson and Enfield begins to take place. Enfield is younger and prone to judgment, while Utterson is the dank, rational lawyer who tries to remain calm, reasonable, and fair.

If these two are such opposites, then why would they find any interest in the other? Stevenson describes the Sunday walks between Utterson and Enfield as "the chief jewel of each week" (1375), so it may be that each man finds something in the other that he himself wants to possess. Utterson may enjoy his professional career, but it also comes with the cost of being the man others respect. The problem, which many Victorian men were confronted with, was "being simultaneously in an honorable public life and a joyful private one" (Miyoshi 326). Utterson could not fully enjoy his private indulgences, attending theatre or drinking vintages, while maintaining a respectful public life. Enfield, on the other hand, is a "well-known man about town" who appears to have no fear of what might be thought of him as he strolls through Soho at three in the morning. Stevenson did not leave us with clues as to what being a well-known man entails, yet unlike Utterson, Enfield seems to have less respectability and social standing to lose. "Stevenson, with his extraordinary knowledge of the dual nature of man, has described here two friends, each of whom finds the opposite half of himself in the other in an unsurpassable way" (Hannah 333). Utterson may enjoy being around Enfield because he has this social freedom that Utterson does not.

The next pair is Dr. Hastie Lanyon and Jekyll himself. Lanyon is a by-the-book doctor, unlike Jekyll, who toys with the more "mystic and transcendental" (1404), or as Utterson puts it, more "chemical than anatomical" (1387). This moral divide between the two was at issue, so after being boyhood friends, they split and stayed such for ten years (1379). Lanyon was a jovial man, but once again a man of science and deep Victorian ideals. "Yet he [Lanyon] too is shielded from life by an imposing respectability" (Miyoshi 325). As such, his profession was important to him, which is why Jekyll's change into Hyde affected Lanyon so greatly. The shadow pair here may be seen not only through the professional divide, but the moral divide as well.

"For Lanyon man's social character is synonymous with man's essential self, hence he views Dr. Jekyll's excursion into…metaphysics as a sign of moral perversion" (Fraustino 288). Fraustino suggests this ignorance of man's duplicity is what drives Lanyon to death and to have his "life shaken to its roots" (Stevenson 1403). Lanyon is unaware of his subconscious, whereas Jekyll is fully aware and acts out this side through Hyde. Lanyon cannot describe Jekyll's change into Hyde without breaking down all of the practical scientific and Victorian ideals he believes to be the only truth, and this shocks him to his core. For Lanyon to die of shock

seems an extreme measure. Yet, now understanding a little more about Lanyon's total rejection of his second half or dual nature, one may envision Lanyon's death as a death of all he knew to be the truth. For Lanyon, his whole world revolved around rationalization and concrete truths. Witnessing Jekyll's transformation into Hyde would be for Lanyon like seeing Satan himself, because it cannot be explained by any book. For a by-the-book doctor such as Lanyon, this type of science would fly in the face of God and religion. Lanyon exclaims, "'O God!' Again and again; for there before my eyes- …like a man restored from death-there stood Henry Jekyll!" (1403). Who else besides God can restore a man from death? Therefore, Lanyon begins to question all of his ideals when science and religion begin to clash. In this terrible sight, he has witnessed the depravity of man.

It seems what Stevenson did in his novella was to not only show the divide or shadow between the two main characters of Jekyll and Hyde, but also that of the secondary characters. "What is interesting is not that Victorian man was divided, but that he was so passionately divided against himself" (Twitchell 289). As I have suggested throughout, each man has a side of himself that is repressed whether by societal constraints of his own doing, or fearing a tarnished reputation. Within Stevenson's tale, we see each side of a coin presented to us from Utterson to Enfield and Lanyon to Jekyll, where neither are complete and total extremes of each other, but where they are shadows of the other. Stevenson filled his tale representing each side of the coin with a study of men and their shadows.

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Evaluation: *This paper was a pleasant read. It is a first-rate paper in every respect. Among its many outstanding qualities are the fact that the writer presents a thesis that looks at the less-than-obvious, and she defends that thesis convincingly. The prose is precise and eloquent, animated by active verbs and careful word choice. The writer also attends to details from the text, drawing conclusions from a significant word or phrase. Also, the critical commentary and quotations are carefully woven into the paper. A command of history is also demonstrated in this paper.*

A Determined Paper

Dan Thomas
Course: Philosophy 120
(Social and Political Philosophy)
Instructor: Barbara Solheim

Assignment:
All of the students in Social and Political Philosophy participate in a debate of their choosing. This essay represents the written portion of the assignment.

Of all the subjects studied in the realm of academia, few are as old and indeed have progressed as little as that of the study of philosophy. Language barriers aside, if one were to travel back in time to give the renaissance-era equivalent of a surgeon the procedure to perform a triple bypass, the mechanics of that operation would be as alien to the surgeon as the mysterious time-traveling courier. Or, could the famous second century astronomer Ptolemy take part in the modern day discussions of pulsars, quasars, and black holes? In contrast, the questions that face philosophy currently are similar, if not the same as those that have been facing humanity since the dawn of our civilization. Indeed, with little effort could Plato or Boethius be able to understand the ethical dilemmas brought up by the relatively recent revolutions related to technologies such as those of nuclear war and genetic research. As it is, this paper will not be focused upon any great new way of destroying civilization in a matter of hours, nor will it concern itself with the ethical implications of any other great leap in the sciences. Instead, it will focus itself on a question that certainly has been pondered by some of the greatest human minds to roam the Earth: the question of free will.

It is obvious from this title that arguments will be presented that are opposed to the notion humans are free to choose what they will. But before I tear down the notion of free will, I will first state what free will is believed to be. Like many other terms, there are various wordings for the definition of free will; however, they all contain words along the lines of "absence of coercion" and/or "freedom to." Skinner makes the example of coercion as being a prisoner bound with physical restraints like handcuffs and iron bars (Skinner, *Walden Two,* 243). In my words, the definition of free will is the ability to do whatever one chooses without coercion. More specifically, free will is the ability to do something based upon a choice. The flaws I see in this idea are the questions of: What makes one choose what they wish to choose? and: Would one be free to choose if foreknowledge of that choice exists? Both of these questions will be answered, the latter of which shall go first.

Religious Notions of Free Will

One of the classic dogmas of Christianity holds God to be omniscient, omnipotent, and omnibenevolent. Granted, there can be inherent paradoxes found in the application of just these characteristics, though if one were to dismiss all but one and then recall that Christianity also believes that God decrees humanity free will; then a contradiction can be seen that is relevant to the subject matter discussed here. Those of the Christian faith and of all other faiths that believe that God is both omniscient (all knowing) and grants them the ability to choose what they wish, generally unknowingly, believe in a contradiction. Conveniently enough, the great British author George Orwell came up with just such a term to describe this action, doublethink; "*Doublethink* means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously and accepting both of them" (Orwell 190). The contradiction is obvious because how can an individual be free to choose what they wish if God knows everything which includes the future and in particular the next action in which the individual is about to partake? How could I have been free to begin this sentence with the word "how" if God has known for all His eternal existence that I was going to do so? Since it is impossible to know anything that is false, then if God knows what everyone is ever going to do, then how could anyone possibly be free to do anything else?

Many philosophers and theologians have realized this same problem and have thought of arguments to counter it, ways that would allow God to retain His omniscience while still allowing His creations to act as they would freely choose to act. The Protestant John Calvin came up with this idea:

> When we attribute foreknowledge to God, we mean that all things have ever been, and perpetually remain, before His eyes so that to His knowledge nothing is future or past, but all things are present; and present in such a manner, that He does not merely conceive of them from ideas formed in His mind, as things remembered by us appear present to our minds, but really beholds and sees them as if actually placed before Him. And this foreknowledge extends to the whole world and to all the creatures. (Schick 93)

Translated to a more modern way of saying things, Calvin is stating that God exists outside of time and all events are the present to Him, just as we experience the present. It is really like laying out an entire film strip to a movie. Technically, you do not exist in the same events as does the film; you exist outside it. At a glance, you could tell how the movie ends or what happens on frame seventy-two thousand four hundred and eighty-five. The movie is not something that flashes past your eyes frame by frame; it all exists, to you, in the present, and without those in the film necessarily knowing that you exist. This means that a God existing outside of time would not have *fore*knowledge. A perpetual present precludes foreknowledge because nothing can come before an infinite instant. Looking from the past, the future would have to be foreknown. But God isn't looking from the past; to Him looking at our future is no different from us observing other parts of our current setting.

Although, if it is the case that God exists outside of time, then there is no doubt that other controversies can be brought up. Fortunately, those disputes have nothing to do with the notion of free will or determinism and as such have no relevance to the purposes here. To conclude, should John Calvin's (among others') view that it is possible for free will and an omniscient God to co-exist because of the notions just laid out be correct, then it is also true that this paper was not determined to be written.

Causal Determinism

A more empirical approach to crushing the belief that a human has the power to choose what he/she wishes is known as "causal determinism." To the author of this essay, the discovery of this notion came from a question already presented: What makes one choose what they wish to choose? In the quest to figure out psychological laws and how they would apply to the histories and genetics of those featured in the anecdotes I was trying to use in order to answer this question, I realized something more fundamental, something I had known about all along, probably having read it many other times without the idea sinking in and/or simply just not applying it to the bigger question I'm trying to answer. In

order simply to know whether or not free will exists, one does not need to know the particular determining factors that go into each individual choice. All one needs to know is that the determining factors *do* exist.

A basic understanding of the world states that every event that occurs is the result of a cause and effect chain that was begun at the moment of creation. It also states that certain causes denote certain effects; take, for example, a rock falling to the Earth. Gravity and the aerodynamics of that rock, in addition to the current state of the atmosphere that it is in, will together be the causes of it falling a certain way. The specific way in which the rock contacts the ground will be the effect of those factors. If every event that occurs in nature has cause, then why shouldn't other events, like human choices, have causes?

Obviously, human choice can't be an exception to the rules, despite our species' near universal feeling of superiority over the rest of nature. Every event that ever occurred in someone's life, (assuming of course that person wasn't completely inert to it), coupled with biological drives, will determine the next action taken by that individual. People merely believe they have free will because of this complexity that is human behavior. This example, as taken from B.F. Skinner's novel *Walden Two* illustrates the point nicely:

> "He [Castle] picked up a book of matches. "I'm free to hold or drop these matches." "You will, of course, do one or the other," said Frazier. "Linguistically or logically there seem to be two possibilities, but I submit that there's only one in fact. The determining forces may be subtle but they are inexorable. I suggest that as an orderly person you will probably hold-ah! you drop them! Well, you see, that's all part of your behavior with respect to me. You couldn't resist the temptation to prove me wrong. It was all lawful. You had no choice. The deciding factor entered rather late, and naturally you couldn't foresee the result when you first held them up. There was no strong likelihood that you would act in either direction, and so you said you were free." (242)

The history of the two characters in this passage is one of disagreement with one another and therefore a desire to prove the other wrong; that history went into Castle's dropping the matches as Frazier correctly pointed out. Frazier also pointed out that Castle, at the time he picked the matches up, probably wasn't inclined very much in one way or the other, but it was Frazier's comment about claiming to predict what Castle would do that was the final causal factor in the choice of whether or not to drop the matches. I'd venture to guess that given time to contemplate the situation (if he hadn't already done so) before it had been played out, Frazier would have predicted that, taking their histories into account, Castle would have done contrary to whatever he had predicted Castle to do. Now, does that mean that if the history and the biological drives of the individual were taken into account the next action of that person can be predicted?

The answer is yes; the current chair of the Philosophy Department at King's College in Pennsylvania, Gregory Bassham, wrote: "If causal determinism is true, then a sufficiently powerful Intelligence who knew all the relevant facts and laws of nature, could have predicted a hundred years ago that you would be reading this sentence right now" (215). I'm guessing this assumes that the intelligence is in some way completely insulated against whomever they are predicting, be it by distance or something really elaborate that works on the same principle as a one-way mirror. This needs to be the case because prior to making the prediction, the intelligence would obviously not know what prediction they would make and would then not know the effects of making that prediction on those it is predicting.

Now, an objection to my line of argument that comes to mind is the idea of chaos theory. Chaos theory states that the smallest and seemingly most insignificant events can have large impact on the world. This objection is quickly shot down, because to take Bassham's quote at its most literal means that the higher intelligence does indeed take into account the events that chaos theory points out. However, Bassham's quote brings up an interesting question: Is it possible to know everything in a particular system?

Contemporary physics says that it isn't possible to know every piece of data in a particular system. Quantum mechanics is essentially the branch of physics that deals with what goes at the level of the very small, the level of individual atoms and subatomic particles. One of the fundamentals of quantum mechanics is what is known as the uncertainty principle. As taken from the glossary of Stephen Hawking's *The Illustrated A Brief History of Time*, the definition for the uncertainty principle is: "The principle, formulated by Heisenberg, that one can never be exactly sure of both the position and the velocity of a particle; the more accurately one knows the one, the less accurately one can know the other" (243). And so, if quantum mechanics is correct, then even an infinitely advanced civilization, that is to say, a civilization whose power and knowledge is only limited by the laws of physics, cannot predict the future to a one-hundred-percent degree of accuracy. Since there is a bit of absolute unknown somewhere in the universe, can the uncertainty principle provide a ray of hope for those in fear of a determined world?

Unfortunately, it does not, because all these happenings occur at the smallest level in the universe, and an unaided individual can have absolutely no control at such levels. Even relative to the size at which the most minute forms of life can operate, the direct effects of this principle are only seen at this small magnitude. To bring chaos back into the discussion, these effects that occur at the very small can potentially have great effects on the world of the large. However, despite the missing variable, mankind has managed to predict, (or perhaps approximate would be the better term), enough of the laws of physics to do some relatively remarkable things; we know enough about the laws of physics to land our kind safely on the moon and return them home. We can find almost uncountable ways to hold back death, from taking vitamins everyday to heart transplants. We know the laws of physics to enough of a degree to do these things, so it logically follows that an intelligence far exceeding our own can come even closer to the limits set by uncertainty.

The Gross Despotic Effect

Now that it has been established that there are causes that go into every human action, it should be given a proper term, and a fitting term would be The Gross Despotic Effect: "gross," meaning to encompass all, "despotic" meaning to have total control and "effect" pertaining to how individuals react to it. Another way of looking at causal determinism is seeing that there is total control existing over a human being.

To put it into different words than before, this control comes from two places, both of which encompass the uncertainty principle. Because genetic factors do comprise part of the causes of behavior and the nature of the individual, the first place this control comes from is a person's parents. An example of this could be the psychiatric patient whose known chemical imbalance causes that person to act in a certain way, or it could be as simple as the tall person ducking a bit so as not to hit his or her head on a low door frame. Pain avoidance is, after all, an unlearned reaction.

The second place control comes from is the environment—how that individual has been nurtured. As stated above, everything that ever happens to an individual, assuming that person is not completely indifferent to the events, will have some impact upon the person's behaviors. This means that everything that happens to a person will have some degree of control over that person. You may not care for a product advertised on television, but that is only because, perhaps, you have learned through past experiences not to have any reaction to the product, possibly because you are a female with no use for a product specifically geared towards males, or you may not care for the jingle that goes along with it. Still though, that advert causes you to perform a behavior, even if it is forgetting all about the product in the next moment. The environment doesn't just encompass what is received on the television. Everything people do, from going to church to going to a town meeting, and even not doing these things, has some effect on that person's next behavior. The charlatan does realize that he has some degree of control over those listening but can easily not realize that he is indeed being controlled by those same people.

Even the most insignificant event can cause a behavior in him. The person who sneezed from the back row had some control because he caused the preacher's eyes to glance that way if only for the most minute portion of time. And in every other situation imaginable, people are being controlled by other people or being controlled directly by the environment. A rainy day will cause someone who has an umbrella to use it, unless of course they don't just prove me wrong, in which case it was my preaching that caused them to not use the umbrella.

Needless to say, the nature and nurture of the individual can intersect, when forces of nurture cause someone to in some way alter their nature. A bit of an extreme but very simple and common example of this is when peer pressure causes an adolelent to use some type of drug that has severe impact upon that person's behaviors. So, whether from nature, nurture or a combination of both, there is a total amount of control that goes into people's actions, the Gross Despotic Effect.

Although The Gross Despotic effect sounds grim, its best applications may not be. Again, I look to George Orwell and B.F. Skinner, both of whom realized the concept of the GDE and wrote about societies taking its principles into account, at least those from the nurture perspective. In *1984*, Orwell wrote about a society in which government clearly exercises total control over each of its underlings. In *Walden 2,* Skinner wrote about a society in which the government exercises control over each of the underlings. The difference? The purpose of the government in *1984*, Big Brother, was to keep itself in power, and it was willing to do anything it could to stay there. Everything it did was a strategic decision to ensure that it would hold its power. Big Brother exerted total control over the media and used it to manipulate every form of input that could go into the behaviors of those under it. Orwell even went so far as to invent a whole new language, based on English, that Big Brother was implementing so as to control the very thoughts of the people. After all, can someone think about leading a revolt, if there is no word for "revolution?" This leads to a society in which people were miserable but were too governed by fear and ignorance to do anything about. In *Walden 2,* the government exercises its control for the betterment of the society; the purpose of the government is to ensure universal happiness for all of its inhabitants. T.E. Frazier, the society's fictitious founder, believed that people are just blank slates and used this knowledge to control the causal factors in order to make all happy. In Frazier's mind, all the aspects of humans that cause pain and suffering in the world are caused. If these causal factors are eliminated, then the negative aspects are eliminated. For example, if people see that they can be no better off having more than anyone else, then greed can be eliminated, and so will all the misery it causes. While neither society was entirely plausible, Skinner and Orwell were both aware of the basic principles of the Gross Despotic Effect, and used those principles. For Skinner it was hope for a utopian society, and for Orwell it was a warning against a dystopian society.

Conclusion

Do human beings have free will? The answer is an unequivocal no. Even if one should disregard the religious ideas on the subject, the basic logic of cause and effect cannot be thrown out as well. So does this mean that people are not responsible for their actions, for example, a murderer is not responsible for taking a life since it was the inevitable result of the Gross Despotic Effect on that person? Or should this author not receive any praise or criticism for a paper that was determined to be written, another link in a causal chain that began at the moment of creation? While it is true that no one is truly responsible for an action they take, it is better that they are held responsible in hope that any punishment or reward given to that person will cause future behavior that is more desirable. In the conclusion to an essay Hawking once wrote on this same subject, he said: "Is everything determined? The answer is yes, it is. But it might as well not be, because we can never know what is determined." (*Black Holes,* 139).

Despite everything I've mentioned, I still believe that it is better that a human feel free, because that feeling will cause more desirable results than whatever the reality of knowing we are really nothing more than robots, controlled by our nature and our nurture, could cause. Another man who firmly embraces the concepts

of determinism, Skinner agreed when he wrote: "It is said that even though behavior is completely determined, it is better that a man 'feel free' or 'believe that he is free.' If this means that it is better to be controlled in ways against which no one revolts, it fails to take account of the possibility of deferred aversive consequences" (*Beyond Freedom*, 39). After all, doesn't it cause a better feeling that some of the marvelous things to occur in life aren't just the end result of what has gone before?

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Evaluation: *Though this essay was offered in partial fulfillment of course requirements in Social and Political Philosophy, it represents much more than that. Most of the works Dan cites are things he has read <u>independently</u> (including Steven Hawking, whom Dan first read as a junior high student). Dan considers the question of free will v. determinism, a question of interest to him literally for years (even though he is just 20). He provides an original argument for his position, in which he examines a religious defense of free will and goes on, in the tradition of the best philosphers, to take very seriously findings of science and social science. He then links his findings to ideas of utopia and dystopia in Orwell and Skinner. This essay goes far above and beyond the requirements for the course, and represents an honest and unflinching intellectual inquiry by a truly gifted student.*

Does Platonic Love Support the Ideal Love of Today?

Matthew Thomas
Course: Humanities 105
(Honors Program: Great Ideas of World Civilizations)
Instructor: Teresa Chung

Assignment:
Write a research paper in which you take an informed position in an ongoing conversation about an issue or author we have discussed in class.

The notion of "platonic love" is thrown around so often these days without any real examination or knowledge of where its origins reside. We often use this term to refer to relationships that are purely nonsexual and founded on a mutual interest in anything but sexual attraction. Really, not many people truly grasp an understanding of this idea and some even hold it as a noble type of love; however, noble it is not. Platonic love is in direct opposition to the ideal we hold as love today. To understand this assertion, first, Plato's definition of love must be explained; and second, Platonic love must be shown to be acquisitive, impersonal, and egocentric. These three characteristics most would not attribute to an ideal version of love today, whether it is Christian love, romantic love, parental love or even love of one's neighbor. To clarify any objections, Platonic love is not just another type of love, like the ones stated above; rather, it is an explanation of the true nature of all these, and any other, types of love.

To understand the theory of Platonic love, one ought to refer to one of Plato's most celebrated works, *The Symposium*. In this dialogue, he starts by giving the accounts of five different "praises" of love, all leading to the climax: Socrates' speech on love. Since it is often argued that when Socrates speaks in Plato's works he is speaking the beliefs of Plato, one can infer that Socrates' speech on love is in fact Plato's theory of love. The prior five speeches to Socrates' speech serve as a foil to what he has to say, illustrating what love is not. He even states "you will hear the truth about Love," implying that what was previously said was not the truth (Plato 199b). Socrates educates his listeners on love using a building block method, starting with one simple principle and building upon each consecutive principle from the previous. He starts by claiming that love is the love of something, rather than love in and of itself (Plato 200a). He then states that love wants or desires something, which it does not have, or something it is in need of (Plato 200b). From this, he goes on to assert that "In one word, then, love is wanting to possess the good forever" and desiring immortality along with the good (Plato 206a, 207a). From this, one might gather that love is wanting to possess what it does not have and wanting to possess what is ultimately good. One could also add that once the lover acquires what it desires, he or she will hold onto this possession as long as possible. The next part of Socrates' definition of love is more of a stairway of how one acquires the ultimate good or a doctrine on how one should direct his or her love. He states that first one must start while he's young or just beginning his journey by loving one beautiful body; then, he must realize that the beauty he has found in one body is present in many other bodies as well and that it should be obvious that the beauty of all bodies is identical; upon this realization, one must become "a lover of all beautiful bodies, and he must think that this wild gaping after just one body is a small thing and despise it"(Plato 210b). The next step is to value the beauty of a person's soul rather than the body and then ponder the beauty of activities and laws. After this, he

will then become interested in various types of knowledge and finally, "the lover is turned to the great sea of beauty, and gazing upon this, he gives birth to many glorious ideas and theories, in unstinting love of wisdom"(Plato 210d). This stairway of love, or the progression of love, relies heavily on the rung of each ladder, each one, like the beginning of the definition, dependent upon the previous. From this definition of love arises the many criticisms or contradictions to the way many perceive an ideal love to be.

The first critique of Plato's theory of love is that it is acquisitive or eager to possess. Plato describes love as the desire for continual possession of good things (Nehamas and Woodruff 367). One could turn to the text to clearly see this: "[The lover desires] that they become his own" (Plato 204d) and "I want the things I have now to be mine in the future as well" (Plato 200d). To combat this argument, one could turn to an example in which a mother gives up her child for adoption because she knows that she will be unable to provide for him. Is this not letting go of possession for the sake of love? Thomas Gould describes Platonic love as "the most efficient possible pursuit of what is most worth having" (37-8). In other words, love is a means of obtaining the best possible possession, whether it is a person, knowledge, or beauty. Another philosopher that concentrated much of his efforts on Platonic love was Singer, who suggests that "desire is always acquisitive and its objects a mere commodity designed to satisfy" (qtd. in Mooney 319). It's doubtful that a wife would like to hear that she is a "mere commodity" of her husband or that a child hear that he or she is "designed to satisfy" his or her parent. Some might argue, on the other hand, that acquisition of certain things, like wisdom or other good qualities, is not necessarily a negative desire; however, when it is used to refer to individuals as the object of desire, it is in fact a negative desire. From the text and the arguments presented, it is clear that Platonic love is in fact acquisitive.

The next charge against Platonic love is that it is impersonal, and perhaps this is the most troubling implication of his theory of love. To say that it is impersonal is to say that Platonic love, one, focuses less on the individual and focuses more on a bigger picture in which the individual is a minor stepping stone; and two, there is no place for one to love an individual for any unique reason, one finds the same beauty in all. To comprehend this claim, one must first look at the text. Plato says of the progression of love, "starting out from beautiful things and using them like rising stairs: from one body to two and from two to all beautiful bodies" (Plato 211c). From this, Gould argues that anyone can, and ought, to fall out of love with the person they are currently in love with, or just someone they hold dear, and pursue a greater love than him or her (17). Once again, not many people would like to endure the thought that his or her loved ones might at any moment stop loving him or her in pursuit of a greater being. It seems that Plato leaves no room to possibly love the individual and knowledge or "the good." Even T. Brian Mooney brings up the point that "the intuition that somehow the person loved is irreplaceable and unique and loved as such is deemed to be missing from the Platonic theory" (320). Plato also argues "one body of beauty is brother to the beauty of any other […] he'd be very foolish not to think that the beauty of all bodies is one and the same" (Plato 210b). The implications here are very impersonal. This is to say that what one finds beautiful and unique in the one he or she loves, he or she can very well find in another, thus making that person in fact not unique. The ideal love of today holds that one finds beauty in all he or she loves, but a distinctive beauty in each individual, never crossing the same exact beauty. So Platonic love is not the love of the individual, but rather the love of the beauty found in any individual, a beauty exclusive to none. One critique of this argument could be that impersonal love is not such a bad thing; after all, Christian love tells us that we should love thy neighbor just as we love God and ourselves. To answer this, the ideal love of today suggests that there are different, exclusive types of love for each individual in our life. For instance, the love one has for his or her child encompasses many aspects that one's love for his or her spouse does not, like the overwhelming sense of nurture a mother gets from carrying her child in her womb for nine months. Yes, this type of exclusive love may imply exclusion of some benefits that come with the different types of love but exclusion just by that individual, not

from everyone. For instance, most people are born with a mother and receive that nurturing love from their mother, and even if they don't have a mother, often times a step-parent or adopted parent steps in to take on that role of a mother to that person; but once that role is filled the individual does not usually search out another mother. In fact, in families where there is a biological mother and a stepmother, the child is usually resistant to any attempt made by the stepparent to take the role of his or her biological mother, further proving that today's ideal love is exclusive, unique, and very personal.

The final complaint of Platonic love is that it's egocentric with intentions of only serving itself. Plato even states that "[love] desires something of which it is in need; otherwise, if it were not in need, it would not desire it" (Plato 200b). Stated any other way, it would say that unless the object of love is of use to him or her, he or she would not love it. Mooney expresses that the basis of this objection to Platonic love is that the motivation and actions of Platonic love are completely focused on self (320). Gould adds to this by stating that "[if you] pour your love on the excellent and you are a good man, on the unworthy and you are bad"(17). Gould also argues that according to Platonic theory, it is impossible for love to be in contradiction or opposition to that which would promote our most well being (38). Surely there are many examples in everyday life that would contradict this theory. For instance, would a mother not sacrifice her own food to save her child, and would a lover not give up his or her life in order to save his beloved? Now, it might come up that striving for personal gain is not always looked down upon, but in the guise of love, many would agree that it is substandard. Most would like to believe that love is based on mutuality and not on "what can I get from you?" Also, Plato does not take into account for the individual being loved and how he or she might feel. If the one being loved were higher up on Plato's staircase of love, what would he or she have to gain from the lover? Would it be merely a pursuit of the superior individual? If this were the case, it would obviously not be a mutual relationship, which is the type of relationship we put so much emphasis on today. Platonic love is clearly egocentric, and this is not what most would like to characterize love as.

The idea of love invokes many sentiments, images, thoughts, and memories in each and every one of us. To merely describe it in a logical manner of utility is to devalue the significance that it has upon the nature of our lives. Many argue that love is all you need and others would say that love is worth dying for. Plato would definitely agree with these arguments, but his motivation would probably not be in correlation to what our ideal of love is. Most would not like to describe love as acquisitive, impersonal or egocentric; rather most would like to describe it as not possessive, personal on the deepest level, and completely and utterly selfless. This is why Platonic love is not what most would consider an ideal theory of love. So next time you hear the phrase "a purely platonic relationship," really think about the implications of that statement.

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Evaluation: *Matt's analysis helps us better understand Plato's* Symposium *and asks us to reflect upon the ways we define and value romantic and non-romantic love.*

Life Is Not Always a Walk in the Park

John Tiesch
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Anne Davidovicz

Assignment:
Write a comparative analysis of two stories by one author, without use of research.

When I was a little boy one of my favorite games to play was "pretend." My best friend and I would go to the park by his house. We would ride the slides, run through the bridges, and climb the monkey bars pretending to be a superhero, like Superman or Batman, chasing an imaginary villain through "the city." Imagining we were characters that we were not allowed us to take on forms in our minds and possess awesome strengths we knew we did not possess in real life. It was a fun way to pass the time from breakfast to lunch.

In two of Flannery O'Connor's stories, "Revelation" and "Good Country People," the main characters, Mrs. Turpin and Joy Hopewell, are each pretending to be someone they are not. Imaging they are Jesus Christ or someone close in power to God allows each character to believe they can wield the abilities God has given them in more than just a human way; both characters seek immortality. After a confrontation with a character as equally vile as themselves, however, they realize how vulnerable and imperfect they really are.

In order to compare the two characters, a brief synopsis of each story is in order. In "Revelation," Mrs. Turpin, a deeply religious farm and landowner, takes her husband to see a doctor for an injury. There she is attacked by Mary Grace, the daughter of a polite, respectable woman that Mrs. Turpin has been talking with. Mrs. Turpin is so troubled over why anyone would attack her that she questions God for not saving her from such a malicious person. Then it dawns on Mrs. Turpin that she has suffered the scorn of Mary Grace physically just as the people around her, mostly the lower class black and white people, have endured her scorn mentally and socially. In the story "Good Country People," Joy (Hulga) Hopewell is the daughter of a divorced mother, Mrs. Hopewell, who also owns farmland. Joy is highly educated, highly scornful of everyone, and has a wooden leg because of a hunting accident when she was a small child. When a Bible salesman, Manley Pointer, makes a house visit in order to make a sale, Joy arranges a meeting with him for the next day. She intends to seduce him, thereby proving to herself that her powers of seduction are more powerful than God's powers of influence over the young man,

only to find out he has no intention to sleep with her when he steals her wooden leg and escapes.

Although the stories are laced with many similarities between the main characters, their antagonists, and the conflicts that arise between them, the reader can begin to collect the most superficial clues within the first few pages. First, the names of the four characters are symbolic of their despicable personalities. Turpin is derived from turpitude, which means moral ugliness. Although Mrs. Turpin is very polite on the surface, she is constantly judging the people around her. "Without appearing to, Mrs. Turpin always noticed people's feet" (O'Connor 370). Mary Grace is an ironic name for Turpin's enemy, because it is easy to see that Mary Grace has no grace. She can barely contain her rage up until the point when she lashes out at Mrs. Turpin like an animal. Joy (Hulga) Hopewell is a name both ironic and symbolic. It is ironic because Joy has no joy in her life at all. She is a young woman "whose constant outrage had obliterated every expression from her face" (O'Connor 171). The name she has given herself, Hulga, is derived from a Swedish word meaning "the holy one." And until the encounter that she and the Bible salesman have in the barn, Joy believes there is no wrong she can do and no one better than her. Manley Pointer is a very appropriate name for the Bible salesman because he is a powerful "tool" in the "rape" of Joy's innocence. After their encounter, Joy is relieved of her foolish naiveté and realizes she is not as invulnerable as she once believed.

Another characteristic shared by Mrs. Turpin and Joy is that both women are overweight. This is significant because both women have an insatiable hunger for something, Mrs. Turpin for wealth and Joy for knowledge. Joy, for example, puts all her faith in science. At one point Mrs. Hopewell picks up one of Joy's books and reads, "…science wishes to know nothing of nothing. Such is after all the strictly scientific approach to Nothing. We know it by wishing to know nothing of Nothing" (O'Connor 176). The Nothing which the book is referring to is God and faith, because it is inexplainable by science. To put faith in God would force Joy to accept her own imperfection and vulnerability. But, in order to escape these feelings of vulnerability, Joy has denounced God, as she does several times in the story, and put all of her passion into education. "As a child she had sometimes been subject to feelings of shame but education had removed the last traces of that as a good surgeon scrapes for cancer" (O'Connor 192). The two women are so insecure with themselves that they must conjure up some reason for being better than everyone else. The two characters become so deluded by a sense of grandeur that they believe they are as powerful as God. While Mrs. Turpin is waiting in the doctor's office, she sings "And wona these days I know I'll we-eara crown" (O'Connor 340). She is under the belief that, because she is so "gracious" to all of the trash around her, a place has been reserved in heaven for her. Joy, although she does not believe in God, believes she is among the few who are saved because she accepts that there is no afterlife but only the life that we have now. She says, "we are all damned but some of us have taken off our blindfolds and see that there is nothing to see. It's a kind of salvation" (O'Connor 191).

The delusions these women suffer from are the basis for their prejudices. Mrs. Turpin is obsessed with class distinction. "Sometimes Mrs. Turpin occupied herself at night naming the classes of people" (O'Connor 341). According to Mrs. Turpin, there are slaves, and then white trash, then landowners, then land and farm owners like her and her husband Claud, and the only people better than her are the people who possess more than she does. She believes salvation comes through what we have and that we can buy our way to heaven through our deeds. Joy's prejudices do not have as many levels as class distinction. She simply believes she is better than all the "good country people" around her because her education and science has taught her that there is nothing to believe in. She wishes to be "far from these red hills and good country people. She would be in a university lecturing to people who knew what she was talking about" (O'Connor 175). To Joy, there are only two classes, the uneducated fools who waste their time believing in something greater than themselves and the enlightened who realize all there is to believe in is themselves.

The attitudes of the two women set the scene for the encounter with the antagonist. In "Revelation," Mary Grace tries to choke Mrs. Turpin and is sedated by a doctor. But before she passes out she whispers prophetically, "Go back to hell where you came from, you old wart hog" (O'Connor 347). This confrontation forces Mrs. Turpin to realize for the first time that she is not as virtuous as she had originally believed. This leads to a second major scene in which Mrs. Turpin is rinsing out her pigpen, talking with God. Outraged that God could send a message through Mary Grace she cries, "What do you send me a message like that for…How am I saved and from hell to?" Turpin realizes that her actions have brought her down the road to damnation and is represented in a vision she has. In the vision, Turpin sees a long procession led by slaves and white trash advancing towards heaven. At the back of the pack, however, are the decent folks like herself and Claud. She sees "by their shocked and altered faces that even their virtues were being burned away" (O'Connor 352). This is Turpin's point of redemption because, for the first time, she realizes that she is not infallible. Immediately, a change in behavior is reconizable by the way she quietly and slowly makes her way back to the house. She is no longer the booming pillar of strength she was before. She is weak and vulnerable, and the only thing left to believe in is God.

Joy's confrontation with Pointer, though physically different, renders a similar result. The two make their way to the barn, where Joy intends to seduce Pointer. Pointer convinces Joy to take off her leg. This is important because he has separated her from her faith in science, and for the first time she feels dependent upon someone else. Instead of giving it back to her, he steals it. Right before he leaves, she sees the leg "for an instant slanted forlornly across the inside of the suitcase with a Bible at either side of its opposite ends" (O'Connor 195). Joy's artificial faith in science is surrounded and consumed by power of something greater, just as the Bibles surround the leg. The last thing Pointer says is "I been believing in nothing ever since I was born" (O'Connor 195). For the first time, Joy realizes her belief system is not so wise. Here is a vile, contemptuous person very similar to herself, who only intended to steal from her because he "knows" that there is nothing to live for after life. She is face to face with a person as foul as she is and realizes that all of her education has provided her with nothing. Although the reader never learns what Joy's response to this revelation is, it is profound that she realizes there must be something greater than herself.

The realization Mrs. Turpin and Joy have of their weakness makes possible their redemption. O'Connor wants us to understand that, when we accept our fate is ultimately controlled by God, we can be saved. Like children playing pretend in the park, Turpin and Joy tried to believe they were someone they were not. But eventually they accepted that, like children, they are under the care of a greater force. And they make their way home, to God.

Evaluation: *This finely crafted literary analysis is an organizational masterpiece. Tiesch engages us with some personal memories that lead directly into his thesis about two Flannery O'Connor characters. Each paragraph, thereafter, clearly advances his point. Finally, he concludes with a more universal response to the detail of his opening paragraph. His writing reminds us that analytical writing need not ignore creative crafting.*

The United Nations and the World

Kyle Tobin
Course: Political Science 270 (Global Politics)
Instructor: Bobby Summers

Assignment:
Each student was to write a reflective paper on the United Nations.

Since the establishment of civilization, the human species, in every revolution won, every religion reformed, and every culture altered, has had to undergo the unpleasantness of the institution of change. This is understandable, especially in respect to governments, because it is often that a state of change is accompanied by a change in state. Whether it is a state of economics, state sovereignty, dictatorial power, or governmental authority, it is assured that some person, or group of persons, and likely the group in power, is destined to lose something. Then why do the people allow a state of change to prevail? The answer simply is that change is necessary. In an ever-adapting world, a state of perpetual change or adjustment is the mechanism by which society and people survive. The United Nations provides as accurate an example as possible in regard to this trend. Its inception, evolution, and what would seem to be its current state of aged helplessness all demonstrate not only the occurrence, but also the necessity for a state of change in the modern world.

The beginning of the 21st century has marked the culmination of much change within the human society, and for the first time in history, the impact of one nation's decision has an absolute and immediate effect on all nations of the world. The governments of old pale in comparison to the scope and scale of the military, economic, and manpower that is wielded by the superpowers of today; the universal empires of the past have become mere microcosms within the texts of history books. Much of this change is thanks to globalization, and globalization has occurred predominantly thanks to two separate factors. Both the beginning of the telecommunications age, as well as the creation of current dominance of the global economy by multinational corporations, have served to inexorably bind the world together in a "globalized" or interconnected state.

However, the advent of globalization has been accompanied by more than a few problems, the most significant of which has been the regulation of international affairs. Following the Second World War, the victorious countries founded the United Nations. The U.N. would be a regulatory agency for international affairs as well as being an independent governmental entity which might give sanction to supranational military action. For America, it hailed the end of isolationism, and for war-torn Europe, the beginning of progressive democracy. Since its creation, it has accomplished an enormous amount of humanitarian good. The United Nations spends the majority of its time and budget on battling major global illnesses such as SARS or HIV, feeding approximately seventy million starving people annually, and in numerous other charitable and developmental programs. In fact, the United Nations does more towards abating human suffering than most countries of the world put together.

It does, however, have its share of faults, and these faults become abundantly clear when the United Nations makes attempts to confront issues in which a forceful or authoritative stance is necessary. Take for example the situation in Iraq. Over the years, Saddam Hussein's regime violated the international human rights standard time and time again. On top of that, at

the end of the first gulf war, one of the terms of Iraq's surrender was that it must comply with U.N. weapons inspectors and remain completely transparent in the reporting of weapons development. However, since precedent has shown that the only repercussion for violating a U.N. resolution is an easily circumvented set of sanctions, Saddam Hussein was all too happy to flip the U.N. and the rest of the world the proverbial bird. Less than ten years later, this failure of U.N. enforcement or more accurately the failure of the U.N. to properly resolve the Iraq issue has led to a war hawk U.S. president taking American troops where they need not be. America has no place enforcing the rules of the world; this is the U.N.'s role. In fact, it is the major reason why the U.N. was brought into existence, and while the mistake of the 2003 Iraq war will always fall primarily on the Bush adminstration, the U.N. must be willing to accept a sizeable portion of the blame.

Change within the international governing structure is not simply a wanton idea, but rather it is an empirical necessity. If the United States were to have a voluntary tax structure as well as an ineffective army, they would be helpless to stop even the Mounties from invading. To expect an organizaiton to effectively operate on a global scale with the same is lunacy to say the least. If the people of the world desire a change for the better, they must give before they get. Armies and programs do not move without money, and governments cannot act without authority; to ask the United Nations to do either is not simply illogical; rather, it is impossible.

Evaluation: *Kyle demonstrates a clear understanding of the establishment, role, and future challenges for the U.N. He presents this information in a clear and concise manner.*

Fighting with Words

Gloria Ufheil
Course: Literature 115 (Fiction)
Instructor: Nancy L.Davis

Assignment:
Select a book from the syllabus that interests you. Find a focus and research that focus to develop a 7- to 8-page research paper.

In 1865, the American Civil War ended, and the thirteenth amendment abolished slavery in the United States. The phrase "all men are created equal" is the foundation upon which our nation was built. Yet it was not until 1954, almost one hundred years after the Civil War, that the United States outlawed racial segregation. Richard Wright, an African-American writer born in 1908, helped bring to light the suffering of Black America at the hands of the American White majority. His life was an amazing triumph over the injustices inflicted upon his race. In his novel, *Native Son*, Richard Wright's own life experiences create the central theme of the story as well as the main character of Bigger Thomas.

One can draw many parallels between the character of Bigger Thomas and Richard Wright. Bigger grew up without his father. He tells Mary and Jan, "He got killed in a riot when I was a kid–in the South" (Wright, *Native* 74). When Wright is five years old, his father abandons the family to live with another woman (Clark 5). Bigger's mother worries about relief being cut off if Bigger does not take the job with the Daltons. From the age of twelve, Wright juggles work and school in order to help feed his family. He struggles with hunger from lack of food during his entire childhood. "Once again I knew hunger, biting hunger … I learned a method of drinking water that made me feel full temporarily…" (Wright, *Black* 114). Bigger's family of four live in a one-room apartment. Wright's family also live for a time in a tenement with just one room and a kitchen shared by four people. Bigger lives in the South until he is fifteen years old. Then he moves with his family to Chicago. Wright also grows up in the South and moves to Chicago when he is nineteen years old. Bigger talks to his friend Gus about dreams of flying. He says of the plane, "Looks like a little bird" (Wright, *Native* 16). After the end of World War I, Wright sees a plane for the first time and thinks it is a bird. "I looked up too and saw what seemed to be a tiny bird wheeling and sailing" (Wright, *Black* 86). Wright's wonder at man flying turns into Bigger's dream of flying.

Religion is another area that Bigger has in common with Wright. In *Native Son*, Bigger tells Max that he does not believe in religion: "I didn't like it. There was nothing in it" (355). While in prison, Bigger throws away the cross given to him by a black preacher. To please his mother, Bigger tells her that he will pray "knowing that it would never be, knowing that his heart did not believe" (300). Wright also does not believe in religion. In his autobiography, *Black Boy*, Wright's grandmother is a member of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. He tells us, "I was compelled to make a pretense of worshiping her God, which was her exaction for my keep" (113). The family prays several times a day, there is no talking allowed during meals, and working on Saturdays is forbidden. His Grandmother insinuates that his mother's poor health is a result of Wright's sinfulness. As a young teen, Wright accepts being baptized into the church in order to avoid embarrassing his mother, commenting "If I refused, it meant that I did not love my mother" (170). Both Bigger and Wright are agnostics.

Wright uses the image of fire extensively in *Native Son*, so it is not surprising that fire has a place in his life

as well. In *Black Boy*, Wright recounts these experiences. At four years of age, a bored Wright lights his Grandmother's house on fire while trying to see what the curtains will look like illuminated by fire. Afterwards, he almost dies from the beating he receives at the hands of his mother (13). At nine years old, Wright overhears his Aunt Maggie's boyfriend tell of lighting a fire to hide a crime: "I took the money. I had hit her. She was unconscious. If they found her, she'd tell. I'd be lost. So I set the fire" (77). Likewise, Bigger chooses to hide the accidental killing of Mary through the use of fire. Bigger thinks "He could put her in the furnace. He would burn her!" (Wright, *Native* 91). Wright uses the fire throughout the novel to symbolize Bigger's rage and loss of control.

Both Wright and Bigger have very little control over their lives. Bigger goes to school only through eighth grade, and Wright has five years of schooling and graduates from ninth grade. They both stop their schooling because of a lack of money. Bigger is tied to living in the Black-Belt area of Chicago. His family is on relief, which will be cut off if he does not get a job. Similarly, Wright's entire childhood is a struggle. He grows up feeling hunger and is often beaten by his family for asking questions. Wright reflects,

> Was I really as bad as my uncles and aunts and Granny repeatedly said? Why was it considered wrong to ask questions? Was I right when I resisted punishment? It was inconceivable to me that one should surrender to what seemed wrong … how could one live in a world in which one's mind and perceptions meant nothing and authority and tradition meant everything? There were no answers. (Wright, *Black* 182)

The nature of Wright's relations with his own family traps him. He wants to live near his mother, who is convalescing in his Grandmother's house. To do so, he must live by rules that make no sense to him. His relatives tell him that he is sinful and that his life will amount to nothing. Bigger also lives with the nagging of his family: "Bigger, sometimes I wonder why I birthed you … you'll regret how you living some day" (Wright, *Native* 9). Bigger does not feel control over his life until after he kills Mary.

Both Wright and Bigger have problems understanding their relationships with whites. Bigger has little experience dealing with whites prior to his meeting with Mr. Dalton. He is self conscious and uncomfortable in the Dalton home. "He had not expected anything like this; he had not thought that this world would be so utterly different from his own that it would intimidate him" (Wright, *Native* 45). He would like to look around and examine the furniture and paintings, but he dare not. He makes sure to address Mr. Dalton as "sir." He thinks of his Mother's advice about not looking at the floor when speaking to white folks. Bigger acts in a manner he thinks will please the whites; "He stood with his knees slightly bent, his lips partly open, his shoulders stooped; and his eyes held a look that went only to the surface of things. There was an organic conviction in him that this was the way the white folks wanted him to be in their presence" (Wright, *Native* 48). Upon meeting Mary, Bigger immediately dislikes her. She talks of unions and Bigger feels as though she may get him fired. Mary's and Jan's actions also confuse him. Jan shakes his hand and does not want Bigger to call him "sir." Mary tells him that she is on his side, but he does not understand what she means. "It was a shadowy region, a No Man's Land, the ground that separated the white world from the black that he stood upon. He felt naked, transparent; he felt that this white man, having helped to put him down, having helped to deform him, held him up now to look at him and be amused" (Wright, *Native* 67). Wright also has problems dealing with white society. In *Black Boy*, he tells of being a young boy who listens to many stories of whites abusing and even murdering blacks. "A dread of white people now came to live permanently in my feelings and imagination" (83). As a teenager, Wright has many jobs working for whites and struggles to get along in their world. "I was reminding myself that I must be polite, must think before I spoke, must think before I acted, must say 'yes sir, no sir,' that I must conduct myself that white people would not think that I was as good as they" (205). Wright worried about saying the wrong thing to a white person and suffering the consequences. Once, after forgetting to say "sir" to a white person, he has a whiskey bottle smashed into his face

(200). He explains, " I had begun coping with the white world too late. I could not make subservience an automatic part of my behavior…while standing before a white man I had to figure out how to perform each act and how to say each word" (215). Bigger and Wright both struggle to understand the white world.

Wright's theme in *Native Son* is to wake up American society to the realization that the environment in which blacks grow up is not adequate to nourish human beings. Wright, having grown up in the South, knows firsthand what that environment is like. Wright grows up with a hunger, both physical and mental. In *Black Boy* he talks of never having enough food and weighing less than one hundred pounds at age 16 (178). At a young age, he is enthralled to hear the story of Bluebeard and his Seven Wives (47). He has very little formal schooling until he enters fifth grade and is quickly promoted to sixth grade. While in eighth grade, he writes a story called "The Voodoo of Hell's Half–Acre," which is published in a local Negro newspaper (182). In the ninth grade, the class is often turned over to his supervision, and he graduates as valedictorian of his class. Wright often asks questions, and he gets into trouble because of his questions or is told to "keep quiet" (187). He dreams of writing novels, and these dreams are stifled by society because of his race. "In me was shaping a yearning for a kind of consciousness, a mode of being that the way of life about me had said could not be, must not be, and upon which the penalty of death had been placed" (187). Wright educates himself through reading. He borrows books from a library under the pretense that they are for a white person. He reads books by Mencken, Dreiser, Dostoevski, Tolstoy, and Twain as well as many other famous works (272). About this, he explains, "I had once tried to write, had once reveled in feeling, had let my crude imagination roam, but the impulse to dream had been slowly beaten out of me by experience. Now it surged up again and I hungered for books" (272).

Wright draws from his own experiences in his novels. In *Native Son*, the only two white people who show any sympathy for Bigger Thomas are Jan and Max. Both are Communists, as is Wright for several years prior to writing the novel (Clark 7). Max explores Wright's theme in his defense of Bigger. He says to the judge, "Remember that men can starve from a lack of self-realization as much as they can from a lack of bread. And they can murder for it too!" (Wright, *Native* 399). In *Native Son,* Max warns of what the effects may be from the oppression inflicted by whites on blacks. He also tries to show who is creating the problem. "His entire existence was one long craving for satisfaction, with the objects of satisfaction denied: and we regulated every part of the world he touched" (402). Wright grows up subject to this oppressive environment and fights it with words, just as Max fights for Bigger through the use of words. And in 1945, Wright predicts, "There'll be trouble after the war and I'm afraid it won't be grappled with honestly enough to stop it. I believe the country is on the verge of facing, for the next 25 years, the magnitude of the Negro problem as it never has before" (qtd. in Kinnamon and Fabre 58). Wright's life experiences dictate his views. He says, "In Bigger Thomas I was not trying to show a type of Negro, but even more than that—a human being reacting under pressure, reacting the only way he could because of his environment" (Kinnamon and Fabre 84).

Wright also has ideas of how society must change in order to nurture the oppressed. In *Native Son*, Max acknowledges the philanthropy of the Daltons, but says that it is not enough. He says to Mr. Dalton, "You rent houses to Negroes in the Black Belt and you refuse to rent to them elsewhere…you kept the man who murdered your daughter a stranger to her and you kept your daughter a stranger to him" (393). Wright wants America to change for the sake of the whole country. He says, "I don't think it should be put on a narrow moral plane of a good white person helping a poor Negro" (qtd. in Kinnamon and Fabre 65). He does not want public charity to help change race relations. He wants it to be a matter of what is right, and what should be law. He says, "What we need is a conscious process of acceleration in the progress of Negroes—a process which will eliminate, for example, such a practice as the State of Mississippi's allowing $40 a year for the education of each white child and $5 for each Negro child" (qtd. in Kinnamon and Fabre 58). "Every child in America, white or black, ought to have the right to an

education without somebody passing around the begging cup" (qtd. in Kinnamon and Fabre 75). Wright feels that the solution to the race problem is to have a nation without any residential segregation, no laws against intermarriage, no separation of blacks in the armed forces, and no Negro institutions whatsoever. Wright says, "We would simply be Americans, and the nation would be better for it" (74). In *Native Son*, Max describes the Negro nation: "Taken collectively, they are not simply twelve million people; in reality they constitute a separate nation, stunted, stripped, and held captive within this nation, devoid of political, social, economic, and property rights" (397).

In *Native Son*, as well as in Wright's life, oppression is often created through the use of fear. Bigger often carries a gun, not because he is planning to use it, but because he feels safer among white people when he has it (43). Bigger reacts with fear to his situation of being a Negro alone with a white girl in her bedroom. After he hears the door open, " He turned and a hysterical terror seized him, as though he were falling from a great height in a dream" (85). Bigger knows that he is in a situation that could end up in his own lynching. He acts out of fear and accidentally kills Mary. In *Black Boy*, Wright's life of fear living in a white society starts at a young age. While living in Arkansas at age seven, his aunt's husband is murdered by whites who want his successful liquor business. Wright's Uncle Hoskins is a black man who carries a gun with him and sleeps with it near his pillow. On the day of his murder, he did not take his gun with him (63). When Wright is sixteen years old, he hears of a friend who has been shot and killed because he was with a white prostitute. Wright says, "What I had heard altered the look of the world, induced in me a temporary paralysis of will and impulse. The penalty of death awaited me if I made a false move and I wondered if it was worth-while to make any move at all" (190). At one of Wright's jobs as a teen, he is forced to quit because of threats made by two white employees. "The whole of my being felt violated, and I knew that my own fear had helped violate it" (212). At another job, the white customers regularly degrade the black employees, but they accept the treatment on the surface because they know their jobs depend on it. Wright states, "Each of us hated and feared the whites, yet had a white man put in a sudden appearance we would have assumed silent obedient smiles" (250). Wright grows up in fear of white society. He grows up with anger, and he lies and steals from whites to survive. He says, "And perhaps it was a mere accident that I had never killed" (283). After becoming a successful author, Wright openly discusses it. He says, "the underlying influence in all interracial relations in America is fear … until the fear element is removed, normal race relations are impossible" (qtd. in Kinnamon and Fabre 53). The element of fear must disappear, or society will produce more men like Bigger Thomas.

Richard Wright grew up during a difficult time in our country's history. He endured hardships in his childhood that are hard to imagine. He lived and fought against the oppression that was so prevalent in American society. In *Native Son*, he showed courage in creating a black character that committed horrific crimes. He created Bigger Thomas to show the world the end result of an oppressive environment. Wright knew Bigger Thomas because he had lived in that same environment. Let us never forget the reasons and the way in which Richard Wright used his words to fight and better our society.

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Evaluation: *Gloria has written a terrific paper combining biographical and literary research.*

On the Buses:
The Merry Pranksters and the Family

Laurel Waller
Courses: Literature 217 (Crime Fiction)
Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment:
Compare and contrast Charles Manson's family with Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters.

"You're either on the bus . . . or off the bus," declared Ken Kesey in Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (83). Kesey and Charles Manson used this idea, either you are with or against them, to make their followers become committed to their respective groups. Kesey was the organizer and leader of the Merry Pranksters described in Wolfe's book. Vincent Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter* and Ed Sanders's *The Family* examine Manson and his Family. The Pranksters and the Family were two very different groups. Kesey supported the Pranksters with the royalties he received from his books, such as *One Flew Over A Cuckoo's Nest,* while Manson provided for his Family by stealing, manipulating, and scavenging. Kesey took a nonviolent approach to life, even speaking at a Vietnam Anti-War rally, telling the people to turn their backs on the war. Manson taught his followers how to use and love their weapons. Kesey was for the women's liberation movement; Manson had the dogs at the ranch eat before the women. Kesey supported civil rights while Manson schemed "Helter Skelter," the ultimate race war. Even though there are strong differences between Kesey's Merry Pranksters and Manson's Family, the similarities are more interesting and disturbing.

In a similar way, the two groups lived communally. Kesey and the Pranksters lived together at La Honda, on the bus, in Mexico, and finally at the Warehouse. La Honda was called the Nest. Wolfe describes, "Everything is totally out front in the Nest—no secrets, no guilt, no jealousies, no putting anyone down for anything…Bacchanalia, unashamed swapping, communal living…everything" (138). Similarly, Manson and his Family lived together at different ranches: Myer, Spahn, and Barker. Sanders tells how the Family, "…usually ate communally in a large circle with communal bowls passed around counterclockwise" (71). Both groups ate, traveled, tripped, and slept together.

When I say the two groups slept together, they really slept together. The sexual revolution was reflected in both groups. The two groups believed in free love or polygamy. Wolfe says the Pranksters had, "…a plural marriage—a group theogamy…Therefore whatever took place—or was about to take place…was not public but private" (138). Similarly, the Family had open sexual relations. Bugliosi tells how, "Watkins also described the orgies that took place at the Gresham Street house and at Spahn. For a while there was one about every week" (317). Paul Watkins added, "Before Helter Skelter came along, all Charlie cared about was orgies" (Bugliosi 328). It was Manson's rule to sleep with the new girls first. The leaders both encouraged and took part in the free love movement.

During the 1960s, the sexual revolution changed the face of the streets of Haight-Ashbury. Both groups were in San Francisco around the same time. When Kesey came back from Mexico (from running from the law), he rented a warehouse on Harriet Street. This was where he held The Graduation (Halloween 1966). Likewise, when Manson was released from jail (March

21, 1967) he headed straight to the University of California at Berkeley. Sanders says, "For a while in the spring and summer of 1967, Manson and the girls lived at 636 Cole in Haight-Ashbury" (13). Kesey and Manson were just a few months and a few miles shy of bumping into one another. Or maybe they did.

While in Haight-Ashbury, Kesey and Manson recruited many of the minors who fled there during that time period. In 1964, Kesey's house in La Honda was raided. He was charged with "impairing the morals of minors (Mountain Girl and the Hermit)" (Wolfe 152). Likewise, Manson was notorious for taking in strays and runaways such as Clem, Ouish, Watkins, Brenda McCann, and more; they were all under age. When Sanders visited the ranch in 1970, he saw, "By the doorway nearest the creek bed (for quick escape), sat several runaway girls around ten to twelve years of age" (342). At the time, lost and confused runaways were easy to find and commit to a group that "loved" and took care of them. It was like the family they never really had.

The two groups were able to connect with the youth through the music of the times. The Pranksters had a minor connection to The Beatles, but were closely tied to The Grateful Dead. Whereas, the Family listened to The Grateful Dead, but they felt they had a bond with The Beatles. The Pranksters listened to and attended a Beatles concert at the Cow Palace. It is a possibility that The Beatles ripped off the Pranksters and stole their idea of Furthur, the bus the Pranksters traveled and lived in, by making the *Magical Mystery Tour*. The main band the Pranksters listened to and associated with, however, was The Grateful Dead. The Pranksters discovered The Grateful Dead and had the band play at their acid tests. Through Kesey, The Dead were introduced to Stanely Owsley who bought equipment for the band and helped them financially. As a result, the Pranksters were responsible for the great continuing success of The Grateful Dead. On the other hand, the Family had only a minor link to The Dead. Manson attended one of their concerts in 1967 at the Avalon Ballroom. For the most part, the Family mainly listened to The Beatles. Manson believed they were speaking to him through the White Album. Sanders explains, "'Charlie, Charlie, send us a telegram' was what he [Manson] thought lay beneath the noise plexus of the composition 'Revolution 9'" (106). Furthermore, during the trial, Bugliosi proved The Beatles' song "Helter Skelter" was behind the motive for the Tate-LaBianca murders. Obviously, The Grateful Dead and The Beatles affected the Pranksters' and Family's lives.

Each group listened to these bands while driving in their legendary buses, which were used not only for traveling, but also for living. The Pranksters bought a 1939 International Harvestor school bus for $1500. The bus was named "Furthur" and on the back read "Caution: weird load." They decorated the bus in bright Day-Glo colors and rigged a complex system of tapes and microphones to broadcast from inside the bus. The Pranksters were not the only ones with a bus. The Family had a black school bus from which the girls removed the seats to create a living area. As Sanders describes, "Gradually the walls became painted with Early Acid-American Day-Glo whirlings of color. God's eyes, peacock feathers and musical instruments gave the dopemobile cheer" (19). It is interesting that there is no detailed description of the inside of Furthur, but there is a great deal of description of the outside. The Family's bus was decorated greatly on the inside but was black on the exterior.

In addition, the two groups were associated with biker gangs who were also "on the bus." Kesey met the Hell's Angels through Hunter S. Thompson. The Pranksters and the Hell's Angels understood each other well because "The Angels' trip was the motorcycle and the Pranksters' was LSD" (Wolfe 170). Being two separate groups, the Pranksters and bikers, they were able to connect with each other through the sharing of their passions. Wolfe states, "He [Kesey] and the boys took a few tokes on a joint and the Hell's Angels were on the bus" (169). One of the Hell's Angels that was well-known to the Pranksters was Freewheeling Frank. Similarly, Manson "began to encourage members of various motorcycle clubs to hang out with the Family…He wanted the bikers to join in his group to supply a needed military wing" (Sanders 107). The

Family was associated with three biker gangs: Satan's Slaves, Straight Satans, and the Jokers Out of Hell. Sanders points out that, "In many ways the Manson Family became like an outlaw bike club: the incredible male chauvinism, the outlaw attitude, the 'death-trip,' the Satanism, the rituals. The new girls of the Family even wore ownership ankle chains like some bike club mamas" (107). Danny DeCarlo was a Straight Satan and a "gun-freak" who lived with the Family. He protected the guns that were used by the Family in various murders. While Kesey hung out with bikers for fun, Manson hung out with bikers for protection.

While mingling with interesting (and dangerous) characters, the Pranksters and the Family also liked to role-play. When the Pranksters were on the bus, Furthur, they considered themselves superheroes. "They were all now characters in their own movies or the Big Movie. They took on new names and used them," says Wolfe (77). As a superhero, Kesey was known as the Swashbuckler. Kesey had the Pranksters stay in costume all the time to maintain their new identities. Similarly, while living at Spahn Ranch, a western movie set, the Family would play make-believe games. Sanders says, "They played, believe it or not, Cowboys and Indians, Mexican knife fighters, flatlanders versus the hill people, Charlie Manson as Mexican badass raping the stockbroker's daughter from San Diego" (71). Sanders continues, "They were carried out like encounter-group games designed to liberate the psyche….Whatever role the person 'got stuck in' in his various game-roles, that was his real archetypal personality" (71). When the Pranksters pretended they were superheroes, everyone was equal. Superheroes are always thought of as good; they protect the weak from the evil. It makes sense that the Pranksters chose superheroes because they thought they were bringing good and justice back to society. In contrast, when the Family played games, there was always a good guy against a bad guy. There was always a conqueror and a victim. Maybe this helped to program the Family to make it easier for them to kill.

LSD helped the Pranksters and the Family develop a group identity. Bugliosi says, "LSD is a mind-altering drug which tends to make the person ingesting it a little more vulnerable and susceptible to the influence of third parties" (318). Kesey first tried the drug when he volunteered at the Veterans Hospital for an experiment with "psychomimetic" drugs (Wolfe 40). This was the beginning of a new drug culture, thanks to drug gurus like Kesey and Timothy Leary. Kesey took a lot of LSD and gave unknown doses to anyone who came to his house or to his parties. Therefore, Kesey had control over his followers while on acid. Early in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test,* one of Kesey's group complains, "We used to be equals. Now it's Kesey's trip. We go to his place. We take his acid. We do what he wants" (Wolfe 61). In Arizona on the bus trip, Kesey decided Babbs, Paula, and he were going to take acid while the others filmed what happened. One of the Pranksters, Sandy, felt that, "there is going to be Authorized Acid only. And like…they are going to be separated into performers and workers, stars and backstage" (Wolfe 75). This incident separated Kesey from the Pranksters, and gave Kesey the upper hand in certain situations. Likewise, Manson used the drug to his advantage to program his followers. Bugiliosi says that, "Charlie always took a smaller dose of LSD than the others, so he would remain in command" (626). Paul Watkins told about Manson and LSD: "Manson used LSD 'trips' to instill his philosophies, exploit weaknesses and fears, and extract promises and agreements from his followers" (Bugliosi 318). Perhaps Kesey was using acid to control his followers like Manson, or maybe he just liked to have control over the situation. However, both leaders did control acid use in one way or another.

It was LSD that led to the concept of the Now used by both leaders. Wolfe explains, "The whole *other* world that LSD opened your mind to existed only in the moment itself—Now—and any attempt to plan, compose, orchestrate, write a script, only locked you out of the moment, back in the world of conditioning and training where the brain was a reducing valve…" (59). Kesey conducted a seminar entitled "A Trip with Ken Kesey" at the Esalen Institute. The main theoretician at the institute was Fritz Perls, the "father of the Now Trip." When one of the Pranksters, Sandy, began to

have a bad acid trip, "Kesey [took] Sandy up on top of the bus for a Now Trip" (Wolfe 121). This was done to help calm Sandy down. Similarly, Manson taught his followers the same concept of the Now to prepare them for whatever they had to do for him—even kill. In almost every letter by Sandy, Squeaky, Gypsy, or Brenda they wrote, "Always think of the Now...No time to look back...No time to say how" (Bugliosi 294). Watkins told Bugliosi about Manson's philosophy, "The more fear you have, the more awareness, hence the more love. When you're really afraid, you come to 'Now.' And when you are at Now, you are totally conscious" (Bugliosi 319). Kesey taught and interpreted this concept to help the Pranksters live in the moment and get the most out of the present instead of worrying or wondering about the past or future. For Kesey, the concept was more like a personal choice. In contrast, Manson interpreted and instilled this concept into the Family as fear.

The Now was just one of the concepts in the new religions Kesey and Manson were starting. Wolfe quotes from Joachim Wach's paradigm of the way religions are founded:

> Following a profound new experience, providing a new illumination of the world, the founder, a highly charismatic person, begins enlisting disciples. These followers become an informally but closely knit association, bound together by the new experience, whose nature the founder has revealed and interpreted. The association might be called a circle, indicating that it is oriented toward a central figure with whom each of the followers is in intimate contact. The followers may be regarded as the founder's companions, bound to him by personal devotion, friendship and loyalty. (128)

This accurately describes both groups. The new experience for the Pranksters was acid; for the Family, it was death. The founders, Kesey and Manson, were both "highly charismatic" people. The Pranksters were Kesey's disciples, and the Family was Manson's. Family member Ruth Ann Moorehouse demonstrated this, "Just before we got busted in the desert there was twelve of us apostles and Charlie" (Bugliosi 341). Kesey and Manson "revealed and interpreted" the "new experience" for their members; they were guides. Kesey showed the Pranksters how to use and function on acid. Manson prepared his Family for Armageddon or Helter Skelter. In Wach's paradigm of religion, the group's followers were "bound to him by personal devotion, friendship, and loyalty." The Pranksters stood by Kesey's side up until the final acid Graduation. Even in 1996, a recreation of the bus "Furthur" was put on tour again in remembrance of Kesey and Jerry Garcia. Likewise, most of the Family stuck with Manson through his trials. Even today, Sandy and Squeaky are still avid Manson followers.

These two new religions were based around two central prophets. According to Wolfe, Max Weber told about two different kinds of prophets: exemplary and ethical. Wolfe says, "An 'exemplary' prophet, like Buddha: for him, God is impersonal, a force, an energy, a unifying flow, an All-in-one. The exemplary prophet does not present rules of conduct. He presents his own life as an example for his followers…" (128). Kesey was an exemplary prophet. Kesey would not give rules of conduct. At the beginning of the bus trip he stated, "All of us are beginning to do our thing, and we're going to keep doing it, right out front, and none of us are going to deny what other people are doing" (Wolfe 73). Kesey also "presents his own life as an example" and allowed his followers to come and live with him and do the same. Wolfe compares Kesey's teachings to Zen Buddhism. Wolfe continues, "An 'ethical' prophet, like Jesus or Moses, [is one] who outlines rules of conduct for his followers and describes God as a super-person who passes judgment on how they live up to the rules" (128). Manson was an ethical prophet. One of Manson's nicknames was Jesus Christ. Manson set up strict "rules of conduct" for his followers, and if they did not obey by them, they would be severely punished (physically or mentally) or thrown out of the group. Such rules included no glasses, no books (except The Bible and *Stranger In A Strange Land*), no condoms or any type of birth control, no drinking and more. He would "pass judgment" on his followers and make sure they were mirror images of him. The Family was not allowed to question his authority. One of Manson's followers, Linda

Kasabian, remembered, "Manson had stressed, 'Never ask why'" (Bugliosi 344).

Kesey and Manson met Weber's criteria of a prophet. Wolfe continues explaining Weber's idea of religion:

> In all these religious circles, the groups became tighter and tighter by developing their own symbols, terminology, life styles, and gradually, simple cultic practices, rites, often involving music and art, all of which grew out of the new experience and seemed weird or incomprehensible to those who have never had it. At that point they would also… "develop a strong urge to extend the message to all people." (129)

The groups developed a following with a strong belief system and strived to preach their beliefs to more followers. With these two very influential prophets, these groups were able to thrive, grow, and maintain their religion for a period of time. What would have happened if these two religions continued? What if the Pranksters had been more successful? What if the Family members had been released from jail? For these two groups, as with many religions, the world was defined by who was on or off the bus.

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Evaluation: *Laurel does an excellent job dissecting these two notorious counter-cultural groups, and her findings are both fascinating and disturbing.*

Drummer & Thumbs

Pete Whyte
Course: Speech 101
(Fundamentals of Speech Communication)
Instructor: Louise Perry

Assignment:
The assignment was to write a eulogy, a speech of praise, for an individual, a place, or a time.

It was a small, crowded store, crowded with a certain kind of people, crowded with a certain kind of book. These were books that had already been read once, twice, maybe even more. The store was managed by either a son and his mother or a mother and her son, depending on who was doing the talking. The name on the front door was in remembrance of two dogs, or possibly a dog and a cat. When you entered this small, crowded place, you were looking for something, a little something to curl up with, maybe with a cup of hot tea or cocoa. There was plenty of time to browse in this place, or at least it seemed like there was time.

This was a place to linger, to loiter, to wander around. How could you wander if the space was so small? I don't know, but people did it all the time. I saw acquaintances from the neighborhood and the city. I saw a friend of a friend, the one with the wacky spouse, from down the street. I nodded at oddly familiar people, being careful not to intrude. This isn't Cheers, where everybody knows your name. Of course, people did talk, just quietly, in hushed tones, all the while looking, poking, searching for something they haven't seen before, something they didn't even know they were looking for. You could tell when they found it, because they would slowly unwind like a great spring. Oblivious to their surroundings, a stillness would come over them. A treasure found, perhaps?

Nothing bad ever happened in these kind of places. They were like sanctuaries, places of safety and security. There is a connection between the people here. You sell your books to the store, knowing that someone else would be looking for those very same books. The book you're holding belonged to another person. This was recycling before recycling was popular. The familiar smell of old books, the peacefulness and quiet, the sense of connection, it all added up to a feeling I didn't experience anywhere else. I never met my grandparents, but I imagine they would have felt like that.

My girlfriend would call me over to try to reach a book on metaphysics. She was looking for older, out-of-print books, the ones you can't find at the big chain stores. Volumes were crammed and stacked and piled every which way, and the one she wanted was at the very top. All the really good ones were at the very top, or behind the encyclopedias, or underneath the table with the calendars. I'm not sure why metaphysics was next to history, just down a little ways from the craft section, around the corner from gardening.

The small places are different and unique, and they are disappearing fast. The big chain stores are moving in everywhere. More and more there are people on cell phones, drinking capuccino lattes, hurrying up and down the aisles as if they're still sitting in their SUV's. Blockbusters and Starbucks outlets are popping up faster than the dandelions in the front lawn. Since these stores all look the same, you can't tell if you're in Chicago, New York, or even in the U.S. anymore. Unique, uncommon, unusual—these used to be sought after and treasured. In *4800 Wisecracks, Witty Remarks, and Epigrams For All Occasions,* Anatole France said "I would define a book as a work of magic whence escape all kinds of images to trouble the souls and change the hearts of men." Is that why different is so scary? Is the sameness of the big chains somehow comforting?

We assumed that this little used book store would be around a long time, that the landlord problems would be worked out. There were warnings, of course, but who pays attention to those? One day a sign went up in the window, "Going Out of Business." All of us were concerned, and asked if it were true. "Oh, just a little trouble with the landlord, things should work out soon!" we were told. But the relief was temporary. The problems had not been worked out, the appeals had not succeeded, other solutions had not been found. Every week we would swing by to see if they were still there. It was depressing, but finally it happened. The son and mother had closed this small, crowded, wonderful place.

I see people walking in the area now, a little lost. We smile and nod at each other as we pass, slowing a little to look in the window at the empty space. We remember the connection between us. We remember this place every time we look at the books, at those well-read volumes. In *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations,* Martin Tupper said, "A good book is the best of friends, the same today and forever." The used book store had been our friend, same as the books. Did I mention that the store was named after two pets—Drummer & Thumbs? I never found out if there were two dogs, or a dog and a cat. I was busy looking for a little something to curl up with, maybe with a cup of hot tea or cocoa.

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Evaluation: *This is a vivid, descriptive image of a "sanctuary" where one can become lost, mesmerized in time. The speaker uses vivid, sensual images of a place to browse his memories.*

Trade Organizations and Agreements: Globalization?

Kaylyne Wiser
Course: Political Science 270 (Global Politics)
Instructor: Bobby Summers

Assignment:
Each student was to write a reflective paper on international trade organizations.

Countries all over the world are starting to familiarize themselves with trade organizations as well as trade agreements. The binding trade agreement for the United States and its neighbors, Canada and Mexico, is called the North American Free-Trade Agreement (NAFTA). After 10 years, this agreement is still met with hostilities from all three countries involved. The World Trade Organization (WTO), involving many countries globally, is not yet received with open arms, either; even the main proponent, the U.S., is less than fully enamored with the organization. In Europe, the EU or European Union is also met with unsure feelings despite many trade benefits it offers, such as in the case of Poland. The reasons vary for these hesitations, doubts, and suspicions: agreements promising more than they can deliver, issues over the loss of total sovereignty and national interests, or perhaps special interest groups concerned with ramifications on other aspects of the world. This essay looks at these grievances and discusses whether they have any legitimate basis and if so, what can be done to fix them.

Happy Anniversary

On January 1st of this year, the NAFTA agreement celebrated its anniversary, although many didn't show up to the party. *The Economist* explored whether or not this 10-year-old contract between the North American neighbors is truly benefiting all, like it proposed to do a decade ago. They reached two conclusions: yes and no. "The yes, it worked" view deals with the economic aspects of this trade deal:

> So far as its economic effects are concerned, the right question to ask of NAFTA is simply whether it indeed succeeded in stimulating trade and investment. The answer is clear: it did. (113)

Mexico, the United States and Canada have felt the rewards of this agreement through ever-growing trade ratios and numbers. So why is there still disdain for this agreement in these countries?

It is not that NAFTA failed; rather, it was expected to achieve much more than it could ever possibly be able to do. NAFTA was not expected to bring around much change for the vast economy of the United States, but it was, however, expected to significantly change the Mexican economy, as well as other aspects of life. These expectations were not met. "NAFTA alone has not been enough to modernise the country or guarantee prosperity" says *The Economist* and then adds, "It was never reasonable to suppose that it would be—though that did not stop many of [NAFTA's] advocates saying so" (115). Perhaps these three countries were under the wrong impression when entering into the agreement, but is NAFTA responsible for these overzealous hopes? The inclination is to say it is not, but then where does that leave the ever-hopeful Mexican government? It leaves them a better trade policy with its neighbors, but that is it. This is definitely a case where a trade agreement tried to set policy outside its jurisdiction and failed. Perhaps this is the first of many clear examples to come on how trade agreements cannot expect to successfully set social and political policies. The science of

economics does not take these types of things into consideration very easily, and sometimes it cannot do it at all. Hopefully other countries can learn from Mexico's let down when it comes to the supposed saving grace of trade pacts before they make the same assumptions.

The U.S. Advocates and Wrangles with the WTO?

As seen in NAFTA, trade policies are not the only things being addressed in these agreements and organizations. A main concern with this multifaceted practice is coming from the United States Congress and special interest groups, but they are speaking out on opposite ends of the spectrum.

Special Interest for a Special Organization

Environmentalists are just one of the many voices that can be heard when protestors line the streets against the WTO. This special interest group takes up against the World Trade Organization on the grounds that their policies that favor trade are endorsing practices that lead to environmental atrocities. One such case was the Shrimp-and-Sea-Turtles decision of 1989. The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) ruled against the U.S.'s ban on shrimp that were caught in nets that were not "sea turtle friendly." This ban halted importation from several countries in Southeast Asia. These countries protested, and the courts ruled against the U.S. The DSB demanded that they lessen restrictions, as well as provide technical assistance to such countries in need of friendlier nets (Archer 228). Because the United States' environmental standards were not advantageous to the economics of other countries, they were ruled against. Obviously, the environmentalist groups had a problem with this. A ruling like this could set a precedent that economy is first and the environment must give way.

Congress' Main Attraction: Sovereignty

Congress uses the same example to fight its battle against the WTO: Sea Turtles and Shrimp. It is not the fact turtles are dying; it is that a foreign body is dictating to the U.S. what it can and cannot have as laws. The United States Congress is taking major issue with that policy and argues that the sovereignty of their nation is in jeopardy. This borderline paranoid governing body seems to be caught up on the issue of power. The fact that the United States was not allowed to keep its law because it was displeasing to other nations left a large distate in the Congress' mouth. Yielding such power to a foreign organization seems to prove too much for the Congress to take, thus explaining their anti-WTO stance.

The Spoils of the WTO

Why doesn't the U.S. just leave the WTO? There are definitely many who would like to, but when dealing in terms of trade and economy, the rewards of staying are just too great. As with many countries facing the dotted line of a trade agreement or looking back at one, they must keep in mind the great advantages these things provide. Open markets and free trade are things that are helping build economies while boosting others. New markets are being opened up that are providing new consumers and new products. What about the rotten deal the environmentalists are receiving or how about the sovereignty of nations? Countries must ask themselves if it is worth it.

We're Going Global

These new trade organizations and agreements are successfully bringing the countries of the world closer and providing many new growth opportunities for all: growth that is restricted to trade and economy. That must be kept in mind when thinking about organizations like the WTO and agreements such as NAFTA. With these in place, as a world, we are growing closer, and globalization is naturally happening as a part of all this. So, if these countries decide that these trade pacts are worth it, what options are left for those like the American Congress and environmentalist groups?

The U.S. Congress needs to keep in mind that a loss of sovereignty is inevitable if an open world economy will ever fully be able to materialize. But the rewards from such economic unity will need to constantly outweigh the worth of how much power is given up or lost in order for the U.S. to remain a player.

The environmentalists and other special interests of the world need to realize that their fight is at the wrong door. No matter how much they try and push the WTO into incorporating policies that are beneficial to their causes, they will not get their desired results. Trade

agreements are not places for environmental policies; the World Trade Organization is not a place for enforcing such policies either. Plainly, they deal with trade. They should not and cannot (successfully) implement economics along with the environment; they do not fit.

Globalization is happening through economics. Countries are giving up some power in order to yield it to a governing body on trade. This is only one newly forming branch of globalization. If environmentalists want their policies enforced, then they shouldn't deal with the trade specialists. What they need to do is establish a cooperative, large-scale organization devoted to dealing with and enforcing environmental restrictions.

Conclusion

In the end, trade organizations will only work if they stick to what they do best, help economies. But with the rise of one branch of globalization, there seems to be a call for checks and balances. Currently, the special interests, mainly the environmentalists, are asking the trade groups to try and impose these checks and balances on themselves. This is obviously an impossible task. To ensure that a world government does not start and stay as one that is driven by economics alone, new groups must be formed. The task is not going to be easy. With power being reluctantly squeezed from governments like the United States, they might not be willing to let anymore of it go. Remember, this newly forming world economy has seemingly slipped past most of the globalization skeptics by offering many large economic incentives. Environmental groups, along with others, will not be so lucky.

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Evaluation: *Kaylyne demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the multiple facets of international trade. She presents her understanding in a clear, concise, and unassuming manner.*

The Influence of Religious Imagery Within Mass Media

Shelley Zeiger
Course: English 102 (Composition)
Instructor: Catherine Restovich

Assignment:
Write a 7- to 10-page literary research paper using at least 7 secondary sources.

In the Westernized postmodern society in which we live, there are innumerable distractions knocking at the door of one's mind. Opportunities for constant entertainment and the ability to acquire information abound, probably as never before. Somewhere in the midst of this sea of distractions and instantaneous gratification, the passive intake of imagery through the media has been on the rise. Were it not for educational institutions that funnel the information we are saturated by, most people would happily be locked in a room and spoon-fed with media entertainment while passively taking in occassional spurts of information. We have become a society given over to the graces of media ratings to cultivate our souls. In Raymond Carver's short story "Cathedral," the narrator shifts from being a passive viewer of television to an active viewer. This shift of perspective results in an epiphany that is cultivated, in the story, by the narrator's company, a blind man, and by the use of religious imagery through the mass media.

Throughout "Cathedral," the object of the television is repeated several times. Such repetition given by the author Raymond Carver makes this object worthy of analysis and attention in its correlation to the epiphany of the narrator's experience. The first time Bub, the narrator, mentions the media, he points to its influence on his way of thinking: "My idea of blindness came from the movies. In the movies, the blind moved slowly and never laughed. A blind man in my house was not something I looked forward to" (771-772). Bub's visual experience with encountering a blind man through the movies does not serve as a realistic reflection of the reality of the true blind man who would be arriving at his doorstep.

Carver's choice of blindness as a disability that brought about the epiphany in Bub is also significant. Of all the "imperfections" a person can have, he emphasizes the importance of developing hearing skills in order to evaluate the visual images we "blindly" absorb on a daily basis. Robert's blindness does not serve as a handicap to effective communication. The contrary is true—Robert is portrayed as a more sociable and amiable character than Bub. William F. Fore defines communication in the following way: "…communication is the sharing of something experienced, by

means of commonly understood relationships" (47). According to Fore's definition, effective communication can be evoked by a third party, namely the television as an instrument of visual association. In "Cathedral," the medium of a television portraying images that bear religious association initially forces Bub and Robert to engage in direct conversation about the philosophies that lie behind one man's physical handicap and another's spiritual blindness.

During the initial stages of Robert's visit, the television is mentioned as a mediating element that is necessary to break the ice between topics of awkward conversation and the pauses of silence. Bub's wife poses a question to Robert as to whether he has a TV. This question in itself indicates television to be a primary window to the world, even for the blind man who cannot differentiate between the shades of color on the set. Robert responds to her with the following humorous comment: "My dear, I have two TVs. I have a color set and a black-and-white thing, an old relic" (776). Although Robert lacks visual senses, television serves as a valuable medium for him to remain in touch with the happenings of society as portrayed through the mass media. However, Robert's interaction with what is presented on television differs from that of Bub's in that Robert proactively seeks to evaluate the images that his hearing senses are perceiving. The narrator observes the way Robert "watched" television and describes his mannerisms in the following way: "Now and then he put his fingers into his beard and tugged, like he was thinking about something he was hearing on television" (779). This concept of active spectatorship is new to the narrator. In his book *Television and Religion*, William Fore describes the hidden role of television in the following way: "There is a hidden role of television which transcends all of these surface effects. The primary, but hidden, role of television is to tell what our world is like, how it works, and what it means" (21). Although Bub was accustomed to watching television regularly, the concept of being an active spectator becomes the initial turning point, leading to the epiphany of his attitude. This active form of communication forces him to analyze and reevaluate elements of his worldview.

Raymond Carver could have picked a documentary subject from an array of relevant choices to bring about an epiphany in the protagonist's mindset. Although Carver's biographical sketches do not portray him as a religious man, the connection between his choice of a cathedral as the impacting image chosen for the story bears some religious significance: "…the image of the cathedral suggests the transformative powers that such a structure holds" (*Short Stories* 43). Carver strategically chooses for the narrator of the story to describe a religious icon, grand and beautiful as well as distant and cold, and bring it back to life, in essence, to revive it in a communicative way that was relevent to Robert. In his view "Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Post Modern Times," David Lyon expresses this concept in the following way: "People construct religious meanings from the raw materials provided by the media, repositioning and patterning the elements according to logics both local and global, both innovative and traditional" (57). Lyon's statement expresses the importance of the potential of the media to serve as an agent of positive sociological and cross cultural change, not only by the verbal message a show may offer, but also by the visual images it portrays to its mass audience. Carver's choice of a religious object presented via the media serves as a catalyst of communication between Bub and Robert that leads to an epiphany in Bub's worldview.

A correlation can also be found between Carver's choice of the cathedral as an impacting object and his personal life experience. From the early stages of his career, the common theme attributed to Carver's success was his perseverance through personal hardship. By age twenty, he was the father of two children, and he and his wife worked menial jobs to make ends meet. The next two decades of his life too were categorized by "marital turmoil, bankruptcy, and alcoholism" (Nordgren 2). "Cathedral" was written during the season of his recovery from a toilsome life, and it "marked a dramatic shift in style and tone from his previous work" (Nordgren 2). In an interview with Mona Simpson and Lewis Buzbee, Carver said, "And then the first story I wrote was 'Cathedral,' which I feel is totally different in conception and execution from any stories that have come before. I suppose it reflects a change in my life as much

as it does in my way of writing" (*Short Stories,* 45). The emphasis of having a broadened worldview to the possibilities of there being a God who supercedes our five senses, may be viewed as a reflection of Carver's personal epiphany during the season of his life in which the story was written.

Carver's use of television in his works has been viewed critically in light of antimedia bias in western culture criticism. Critic Stanley Aronowits accounts that post WWII culture is very much media-driven and that the primary socializer of individual lives has become the television. Aronowits specifically criticizes the effects of the media as "replacing church, school, and even family as the shaper of consciousness…some of the effects of that response are feelings of emotional distance from events in one's own life, absence of critical reflection or thinking fostered by television's static immediate, and a general feeling of powerlessness" (qtd. in Mullen 3). Carver's use of the cathedral through the media in order to stimulate a meaningful conversation between Bub and Robert serves to break the stereotype of the media's compulsion of forcing people to disconnect from their present reality in order to escape to a different reality fashioned in fiction.

According to postmodern philosophies, language is the communicative medium that fails. Once a word is spoken, it no longer bears the meaning initially intended but can be reinterpreted by the hearer in ways different from the initial intent of the speaker. Carver, labeled a minimalist by his contemporaries, allows his characters minimal room for dialogue in the story. This sparing use of words attribute to Carver's allowance for the reader to infer deeper conclusions from what the characters have to say (Delaney 2). Carver allowed Bub to remain unaware of the reflections of his own heart until he verbalized them through minimal use of words in his description of the cathedral. In dialogue with Robert, he expressed his reflections in the following way: "In those olden days, when they built cathedrals, men wanted to be close to God. In those olden days, God was an important part of everyone's life. You could tell this from their cathedral-building…" (780). Robert's response to Bub's description came in the form of a personal question: "…Let me ask you a simple question, yes or no. I'm just curious and there's no offense. You're my host. But let me ask if you are in any way religious? You don't mind my asking?" (780). Robert did not allow Bub's description of the cathedral and ultimately of man's desire to interact with God to remain in the vague, generalized territory of the conversation. Robert used the opportunity provided by the media to cause Bub to grapple with philosophical concepts that were not evident to him, consciously, on a personal level.

In his article, "A Subtle Spectacle: Televisual Culture in the Short Stories of Raymond Carver," critic Bill Mullen suggests "that a bridge may be built between the two prevailing critical views of Carver by concentrating on the ways television may be read as both a subject of and an influence on his stories" (2). In keeping with Mullen's observation, a comparison can be made to Mel Gibson's usage of media to generate religious and philosophical thought through the recent movie *The Passion of the Christ.* Through this movie, Mel Gibson "reconstructed" the story of the crucifixion using the greatest platform of America today—the movie theater. Using the media as a religious platform to awaken hearts and minds to think through the implications of the crucifixion also has been heavily criticized. However, as public controversy gradually sizzles down, this visual production has served to stimulate conversations among religious sects that would normally shy away from confronting the controversial issues that sadly divide them. The March 8th edition of *Newsweek* reported: "But if 'The Passion' turns out to polarize Americans in general, it's pulling together Roman Catholics and Protestant evangelicals, who have a long history of mutual suspicion." In "Cathedral" Carver also uses religious symbolism to stimulate conversation on spiritual issues that Bub might otherwise have shied away from.

If one were asked to verbally describe the way they look, it would not be too difficult. Daily people look at the image of themselves critically, evaluating the image they portray and their overall appearance. The overall "thumbs up" gesture that we give ourselves before rushing out the door is based on a proactive evaluation of what our eyes perceive. However, as we are daily bombarded with visual images of advertisement and

flashing media images, our evaluative senses stand at the threshold of taking the backseat of passivity. William Fore relates to the effects that television bears on society in the following way: "The question of whether television creates values and attitudes, or merely reflects them, is strictly a diversion, since the media, of course, do both" (44). Bub's hesitant response to describe a simple image of a cathedral before his eyes accounts for this observation. He was watching the screen, but describing what he saw required effort he has not anticipated: "I stared hard at the shot of the cathedral on the TV. How could I even begin to describe it? But say my life depended on it. Say my life was being threatened by an insane guy who said I had to do it or else" (779). Bub's lack of confidence in his ability to express what his eyes see raises the following question: Have we become accustomed to passive viewing of television where we just soak in the images without evaluating the elements they portray? Bub's initial hesitant response to Robert shows his hesitancy to take initiative upon his sensory intake and think about what religion means to him and how his actions can illustrate his inner perceptions. Through "Cathedral," Carver shows that media can be a beneficial life-changing instrument, given the willingness of the viewer to be ready to absorb televised images with a thinking mind and open heart.

In his book *Television and Religion,* Fore describes the concept of using technology to "modernize" religious thought in the following way: "Each generation has the task of taking the new technology of its age and rediscovering religious truths and making them meaningful in the light of cultural changes" (47). The art of reviving religious symbols in ways that are meaningful in light of cultural change fulfills one of the primary educational roles that the media can potentially play.

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Evaluation: *Shelley analyzes "Cathedral" in a refreshing way; her emphasis on religious imagery within mass media is advanced and relative.*

Afterword: Harry Potter and the Yard Sale Spell

Kris Piepenburg

[Note: In the past few months, I have begun to question the efficiency and utility of writing and reading as a communications medium. I have been wondering if people are reading less, or if people who write are actually reaching their audiences, or if people who write feel skeptical about the effect of their writing. I am especially suspicious of the value and effectiveness of writing like this afterword, buried as it is in the back pages of a student journal of academic writing. To test these suspicions, I am asking those who actually read this afterword—Harper faculty, students, and others—to e-mail me at kpiepenb@harpercollege.edu, just to let me know that you read it, and to share your comments and responses, if desired.]

Every first weekend of August since about 1990, in Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama, folks have been putting on the "world's longest yard sale." The event lasts four days and covers hundreds of miles, mostly on U.S. Route 127. Because I enjoy odd bits of pop culture refuse—pop bottles, weird statuettes, old signs, etc—mostly anything with a sincere, interesting, and idiosyncratic look—this sale seemed like it would be the perfect place for me to spend a couple of enjoyable days, with two daughters who have inherited some of my tastes.

Though I had a good time on August 4th and 5th, 2005, at this sale, I can report a few observations: 1) America is full of crap. Some of it is good crap, but most of it is bad. 2) Americans spend a lot of time taking crap seriously, sorting through it for treasures. 3) Americans spend a lot of time gathering crap to sell it to people who are spending their time and money on crap. 4) Americans probably need to balance their love for crap with interests in more significant things.

We drove north from Chattanooga, Tennessee, on the first day of the sale, with the intention of shopping for a couple of days before heading home. On the outskirts of the city, a few porchfuls of old clothes and Tupperware wasted our time, along with an open trailer full of 20 pieces of chain saw "yard art" (from the lowly swine on up through Jesus) but from there, as we drove up through Signal Hill, the density of crap (OK, some good stuff, too) increased to black-hole (crap-hole?) strength, and we became part of a throbbing, line of RVs, vans, trucks, and yes, tour buses, all full of drivers swerving to the shoulder as another cluster of flea-market tables and tents appeared within range. The town of Signal Hill had it all: vintage clothing, tools, glassware, dishes, records, paintings on velvet, old crates, bottles, signs, furniture, Georgia peaches, snow-cones, socket sets, socks, marbles, wrought-iron plant stands, all things Coca-Cola, toys, farm and garden antiques, etc—everything one would expect at a good yard sale or flea market. Despite the heat and the traffic, it was a good time.

However: Imagine this flea market or yard sale lasting for hundreds of miles, with the same kinds of things repeating, over and over again, front yard after front yard. At every stop, we could count on seeing, if it was a small one-family sale, at least one large blanket or box full of McDonald's Happy Meal toys and other fast food premiums. At multi-vendor stops, where the gas-guzzling RVs of the encamped antique dealers filled up grassy lots behind the fields of tents and tables, we could count on multiple blanket- and boxfuls of these Ronalds, Barbies, and Beanie Babies. Over the 20-mile stretch we covered, a crazed tapestry of the following became apparent:

New and cheap American flags, mostly Confederate
Mason and Ball jars of all kinds
Hand-crafted birdfeeders, birdhouses, and wishing wells
Stuffed animals--in boxes, in bags, on blankets, and hung from clotheslines
Coke! Coke! Coke! Bottles, signs, coolers, napkin dispensers, old and new
Coffee cups—World's Best Grandpa!
I'm a Real Bear Until I've Had My Coffee!
Kitchen utensils, dishes, and glassware
Avon bottles and whiskey decanters
Life magazines
Boxes, tables, clotheslines, and racks full of old clothes
Old bottles, tins, signs, gas cans, and license plates
Eight-track tapes and CDs
Flood-damaged and otherwise worthless record albums
Romance novels in bulk
Youth fiction—Baby-Sitters Club, especially
Lamps, lampshades, and glass lamp chimneys
Board games
All kinds of furniture

So, stretching for these hundreds of miles, it is no overestimate to say that there were thousands of each of these items, and for some categories, perhaps tens of thousands or even 100, 000 or more.

Faced with the enormity of this grotesque abundance, I became amazed, then dismayed, and then I began to create bizarre solutions. I imagine that someone with a truck, stopping at every sale and relieving it of every blanketful of fast food toys, could easily haul home over

1 million of these lumps of molded plastic. I began to imagine if I were this person, what service I would be providing the American community, by just relieving people of these useless objects at $5 or $10 a blanketful, and hauling them away to some remote site for disposal or recycling. The romance novels could go the same route, along with 99% of the record album tonnage and 99.5% of the stuffed animals. Or, what if someone could buy all of the romance novels, stuffed animals, and plastic tokens right after they are produced, but never distribute them, to maintain this important part of the economy but to cleanse the landscape in advance of the world's longest yard sale?

This savior fantasy floated in and out of my slowly paralyzing 100-degree and humid consciousness for about the and last mile we spent on U.S. 127. Overall, we covered about 20 miles in a day and a half, enough to get a sense of the true volume and pattern of repetition described above, but also long enough to wonder about the hundreds of thousands of people spending millions of moments and thousands of dollars along this route over four days, looking for bargains and making deals. I like a good yard sale a little more than the average person, and I am not prone to making snobbish statements about the simple habits and interests of the average American public, but even I could not help but wonder what might happen, if for these four days, these thousands of people spent 32 hours (four 8-hour days) sharply focused on something else, like an objective study of one of these topics, and then acted significantly in some way:

The past 75 years of Middle Eastern history
The plans for the World Trade Center site
The Federal Reserve System—what it is and what it accomplishes
The interactions of raw materials, real estate, people, and motives that cause new cars, clothes, and other consumer goods to cost so much in America
How banks make money
The role of credit card companies in American economics
What a popular movie costs to make, what it grosses, and whether the American film industry has a role in public charity
How much (and what kinds of) aid is distributed from the US to other countries in the world, and what the effects are
How condominium projects are financed and why they have replaced the single-family home
What it really costs to run a gas/convenience store, and what the profits are
Why bottled water is special, what it costs, really, and how long we've been drinking it

Looking at the topics on this list, it seems possible that if the thousands who went shopping for four days in Tennessee avoided the sale tables and spent 32 hours in a lecture tent, at a new political and economic Chautauqua, complete with Powerpoint presentations, catered lunches, and truly informed presenters, that a new revolution of educated voters, consumers, and activists would rise up out of U.S. 127 to reshape America, having realized the foolishness of shopping through 98.6% crap and moved on to more important things. It looks simple.

I am afraid this will never happen, though, because really, shopping at yard sales still is easier and more fun than studying and becoming activists. And, probably, a reader from a Tennessee yard sale would say that the list above is just the rambling of a sour academic, massaging bitter thoughts into an intellectual headache, about what is wrong with the world and convinced, in his self-righteousness, that his way of living is, of course, infinitely better than the ways of the common hordes. Thirty-two hours listening to intellectual ideas with over-serious academics, to try to change the world? I don't think so.

At this point, though, I recognize a need for the ugly yard sale to coexist with the development of a greater public consciousness, and if this afterword inspires anyone to balance out time spent shopping with time spent thinking critically and acting, then perhaps there is some value to writing and reading, after all.

As I was writing this, though, I remembered that this trip showed me the value of these things in a significant way, after all. At one point on the way to Tennessee, I heard the soft sounds of my younger daughter's reaction to the end of the latest Harry Potter novel, which features the death of a most beloved character in its final chapters. Even though this was the third time she had read that book, this summer, she was still moved emotionally, to care deeply for this imaginary wizard, Harry's teacher, who had given her so much enjoyment in the past five years. And, believe it or not, as we drove home on the Kentucky turnpike, we discussed a book on Zen, by Alan Watts, which she had purchased for one dollar at one of the sales. As we drove away from our last sale, she was reading it, and an hour or so later, she had finished it. The long discussion, which she began, about letting go of things, not desiring things, and avoiding the ideas and abstractions behind things—and about being in the moment, living life as a child—made the greenness surrounding the empty Kentucky road just glow, as we traveled easily, in a lovely evening, not thinking about moving away or toward anything.

Maybe, there is hope for us, still.

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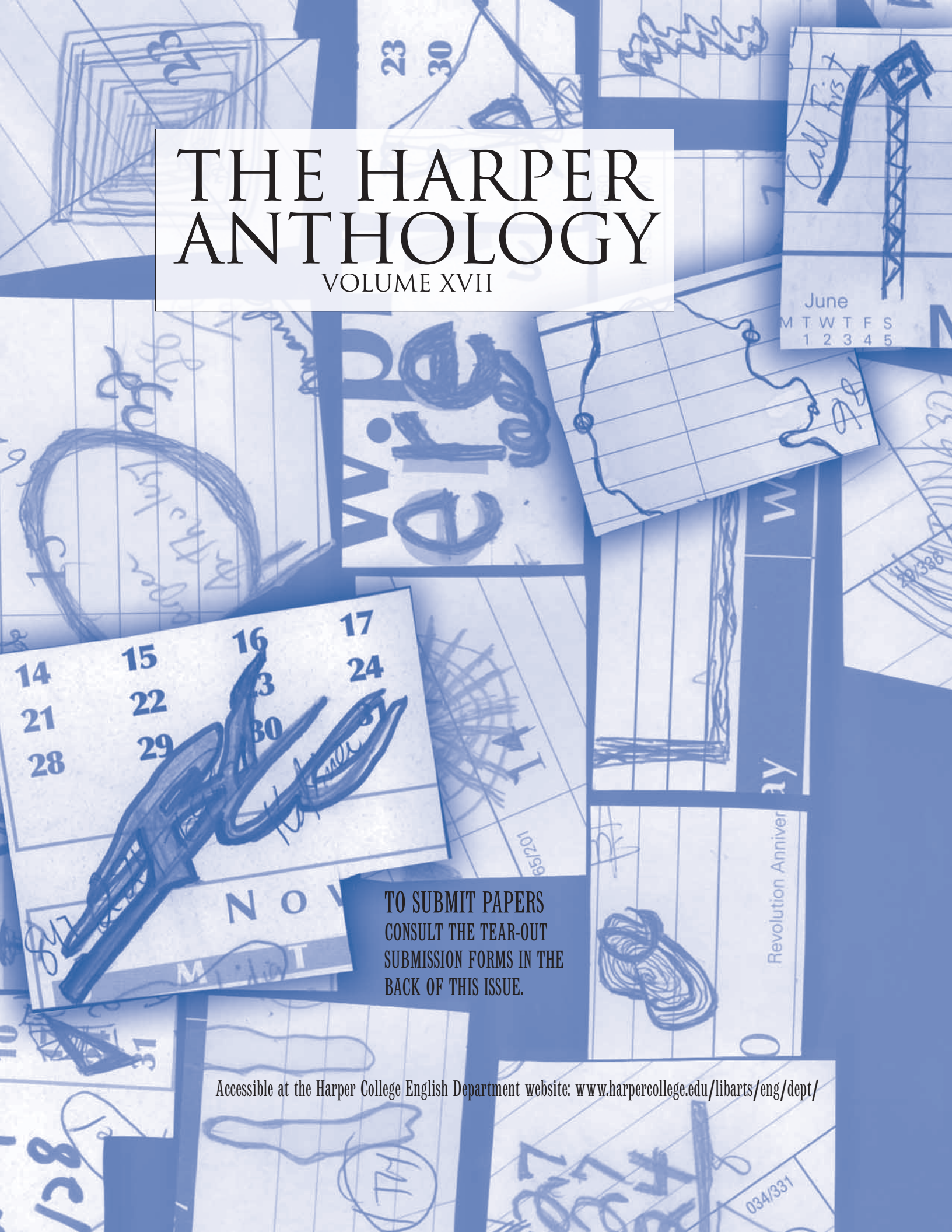

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