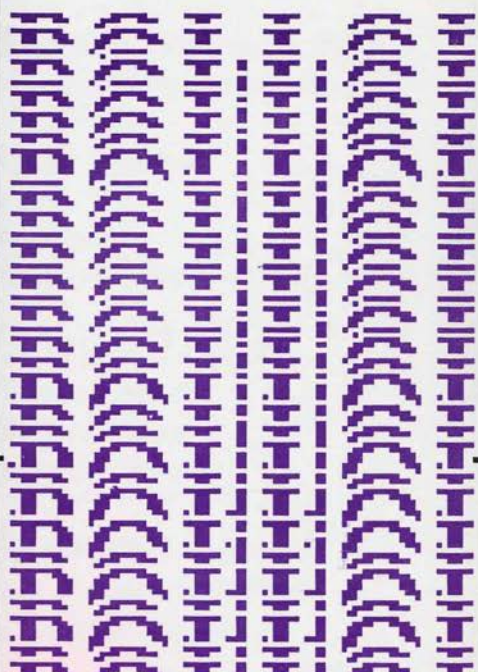
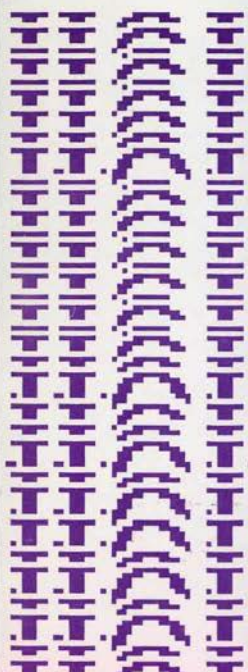


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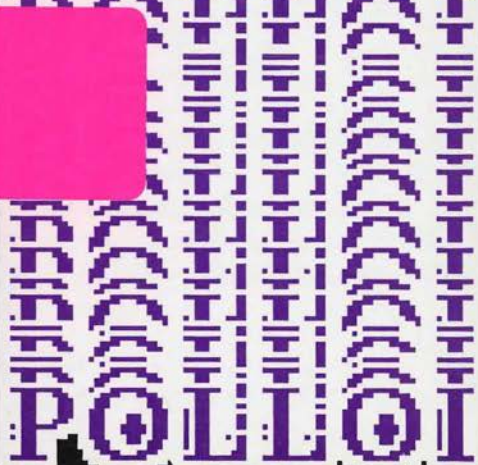
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An Anthology of Essays

*hoi polloi**

Volume 1 Number 2 February 1990

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Faculty Advisor

Thomas J. Sauret

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Sheila Casper

Robert Norris

Racheal Forrester

Faculty Editorial Board

Dr. William Bradley Strickland

Dr. Thomas Tuggle

Cover Design

Dr. Robert F. Westervoelt

The editors wish to thank Dr. Sallie Duhling and Kim Nichols for their kind assistance.

** HOY-po-LOY: noun. 1. The common masses; the man in the street; the average person; the herd. 2. A literary publication of Gainesville College, comprised of nonfiction essays.*

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hoi polloi

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The essays contained in this magazine were carefully selected by an editorial board comprised of students and faculty of Gainesville College. These essays were chosen because they best reflected some of the myriad personal interests among our students. Two public issue essays, two literary essays, and three personal essays--all written by Gainesville College students--proudly comprise this second edition of *hoi polloi*. Included in this publication are the three winning essays from the 1990 Gainesville College Writing Contest.

It is my hope that many of you will find in this magazine a broad scope of themes, and perhaps one of these themes will captivate your interest and attention. Whether your interest is in music, environmental issues, literature, real-life drama, Southern lifestyles, or women's issues, these topics are all considered in this issue.

I believe this year's *hoi polloi* would best be described as a potpourri--a mixture of different backgrounds, opinions, and beliefs that are present here on our campus--all meshed in one magazine.

I would also like to thank Dr. Richard F. Patteson, director of the Graduate English program at Mississippi State University, for judging this year's essay contest.

--Emily Duncan

North Georgia's population is growing rapidly; people are moving here from all over the state, region, country, and from foreign countries. Racheal Forrester, a Hall County native considers what the changes, both good and bad, have meant to her once isolated community.

Wahoo: The Evolution of a North Georgia Community

Racheal Forrester

Plenty of changes have happened in this world since I was born eighteen years ago. The world population has increased. Billions of dollars have been spent on millions of nuclear weapons. A Hollywood actor has been voted President—twice. And the Wahoo Community continues to change and develop in ways never dreamt of in that area.

When I was growing up in Wahoo, the community was so closely knit that someone could see a dog and know to which family it belonged. Old Henry Saine was probably the quasi-official "canine-controller" of the community. Old Henry would sit in his white iron swing in his front yard. His overalls were faded, sometimes torn; his shirt would be a simple Oxford. On top of Old Henry's head could be found a red plaid derby hat, cocked a little over his left ear. Old Henry's sole purpose seemed to be to keep track of the wanderings of people's dogs. He would always call the neighbors to report the whereabouts of a stray.

About fifteen families, counting the Saines, made up the Wahoo Community almost two decades ago. Each of these families generally consisted of two people over the age of fifty, living in houses over the age of two hundred, or so it seemed to me. In the entire neighborhood, only four other kids existed, and this fact made growing up as an only child very lonely. The old houses were not large plantation houses; they were better described as rural home places—old weather-beaten, cozy, and just a little run down. The houses all needed a new coat of paint and a rebuilt porch.

Dirt roads connected the half-mile to mile distance between

houses. Always dusty in summer, frozen hard in the winter, the roads were a major source of complaint by the neighbors. Sara James, my next door neighbor, led the complaints against the roads. Sara had an obsessive fear of dying with lung cancer, and she was simply convinced the dust from the road had caused her problem. With only a seventh grade education, Sara could not comprehend the medical reasons for the disease. People rarely ever saw Sara; she spent her days inside the house with the windows closed against the dust that swirled outside after each passing pickup.

Large forests covered the areas between the home places. Pines and hardwoods created thick, blanketing shadows over the ground. It was here, in the woods, that the few children would play in the hot summer. Joseph Smith was one of my favorite playmates during the summers of my youth. Under the shadows of the trees, Joseph asked me to be his "steady." I can still remember that day. Joseph and I were playing firehouse. And in our eight-year-old minds, our assignment was to rescue a young child (a log really) from a burning inferno (a mound of brush and trees). After completing our heroic task, Joseph, clad in faded Levis and worn brogans, asked the question, "Will you be my girlfriend?" I said no. At the time I wasn't interested. My refusal did not end our friendship. I still went to Joseph's house to play, or Joseph visited me.

The community was so closely knit that someone could see a dog and know to which family it belonged.

In the areas where the trees thinned, usually near the home places, large chicken houses stretched across the land. The smell that escaped from these houses created a kind of country air. Cow pastures and hog parlors were located around the community as well. Needless to say, these farms allowed their own aromas to enter the atmosphere. I cannot pass by a farm to this day without having a flashback to my childhood.

The Wahoo Community has changed in the last five years. About forty-five new families have moved into the Wahoo Community. If a dog walked up and bit Old Henry on the nose,

he wouldn't have a clue as to which neighbor to sue. Young couples have moved into the neighborhood, bringing an abundance of children with them. Of course, today, parents don't trust society enough to allow the children to play at the neighbors'.

I will credit the expansion of Gainesville as the main cause of the community's change. Most of the young couples have either moved out of the city to be closer the country or moved out of the mountains to be closer to the city. Those moving from the city have brought a fear of today's society with them. The increase in population has resulted in a loss of the close-knit atmosphere of Wahoo. Strangers are regarded as drunks or "rednecks." The community has a bona fide drug dealer. But then again, I guess most communities have at least one dealer in their closets.

Old Henry Saine is Older Henry Saine. He still sits on his swing with his derby hat cocked a little to the left, although today, Henry doesn't really care about dogs. Henry worries about his young grandson, who is into the drug scene. Henry worries about his daughter, who seems to care nothing for her children and cares too much about her next drink. Sara James died about three years ago, ironically of lung cancer. The cancer, though, was not a result of the dusty roads; the cancer was a result of her husband's chain smoking. Sara knew nothing of the idea of passive smoking, but nevertheless her horror was realized.

Very few of the old home places, chicken houses, and hog parlors have the same appearance they did in the past. Only a few of the old houses remain in their original state. Some have been remodeled, repainted, redecorated, or just given up on and torn down. A few houses have burned and stand in charred memories. Only a couple of active chicken houses and hog parlors remain today. The technology of the latter part of the twentieth century moved too quickly for the poultry industry of Wahoo to keep pace. Electric feeders, automatic waterers, air conditioning, and more rigid sanitary requirements were the downfall of the chicken farms. So the chicken houses and the hog parlors stand as memories to the farming days.

Today in the midst of man-made clearings, stand new homes in cedar, vinyl siding, and brick. New designs and bigger homes using modern technology add the twentieth century's touch to

housing in Wahoo. Mobile homes are also fairly popular around the neighborhood.

Inevitably with the increase of housing, the natural aspect of a community will suffer. Wahoo is no different. Many of the trees have been cut to make way for the all-powerful human. Paved roads crisscross through the neighborhood. Dirt roads are becoming extinct. At least people cannot complain about the dusty roads, although today, the neighbors can complain about the speeding drivers or the resurfacing crews that appear about every two years to "smell up" the community. Overall, the air doesn't really have that country aroma anymore, yet city smells have not permeated the air either. I guess one could say that the community is in a transitional phase.

Even with all the change that has occurred in the past two decades, certain things have remained constant. When other families have moved in or out of the community, my family has remained. We all still live in the Wahoo area where no more than a mile separates all the families.

Strangers are regarded as drunks or "rednecks."

The personality of the community has always been caring. The people cling to traditional country values and ideas. The community may not be as close, as rural, as it once was, but the people will still help each other in times of need. (Well, maybe I shouldn't include the drug dealer.) A farming community in the past, Wahoo has evolved into a community with most of the same inner characteristics but with a different outer look.

A little country church stands atop a hill surrounded by a graveyard that is over a hundred years old. The red brick building is adorned with an elegant white steeple rising above the tall oaks that surrounded the church. The Wahoo Baptist Church is the one thing that has not really changed from the way it was when I was a child. The same congregation, same type of country preachers, and the same beliefs can be found at this church today.

And what ever happened between me and Joseph? Well, even though Joseph and I are neighbors, we are not in touch with each other any longer. Joseph is a high-school dropout who never achieved an eighth grade education. He tinkers with old junk

cars and putters around on an ancient motorcycle, accomplishing very little with his days. Living at home still, Joseph seems to have come to a standstill in his life. Sure, we casually wave to each other when we meet on the road, but we have not spoken to each other in years. When I talk to him again, maybe I'll ask him if he remembers playing firehouse under the shade of the big trees, just to see how much Joseph has changed. I'm sure, though, he would recall that memory along with many others.

Plenty of changes have happened since I was born eighteen years ago. The town of Gainesville has grown as has the population of all North Georgia communities. Technology has resulted in a lot of changes in these communities. The Wahoo Community is no different. Yet certain things have remained the same. I guess that these things--Community and family love--were not destined for change.

Unfortunately, too often we must face death to truly understand the value of life. Mr. Pickelsimer, a Forsyth County Marshall, recalls an 3:00 a.m. New Year's Eve emergency call that would change forever the way that he would look at life.

Death by Accident

John Pickelsimer

It happened on a typical Southern night in January, 1982. This New Year's Eve had been relatively quiet compared to the holidays of the three previous years.

The clouds had begun to gather around eleven o'clock. A slow, steady rain had started falling at 12:10 A. M., New Year's Day.

As I pulled into my driveway, I was reflecting on the usual diverse types of calls that are commonplace in the law enforcement field. Some were routine, some as menial as a family dispute, others as major as an armed robbery.

Upon exiting the car, I glanced at my watch. I could tell it was an unusually dark night because the luminous dial stood out like a spotlight. Noticing it was almost two A. M., I felt a slight shiver up my spine. It seemed as though the late hour made it seem ten degrees colder than the twenty-eight degrees the radio had announced earlier.

I entered my residence where my two-year-old son was sleeping peacefully in his bed. It was a blissfully secure and serene feeling to stand in the doorway, soaking in the quiet details of the moment. The Fisher stove cheerfully, yet softly, popped and cracked with aged oak wood burning inside. The antique seven-day clock was sitting on the mantle above the stove ticking its strong rhythmic beat, interrupted only by the chimes that rang out, denoting that it was now two A. M.

Coming into the bedroom, I could see the fireplace casting warm gold and red shadows on the wall. As my wife and I talked, I mentioned that it was such a relief to be home at an early time for a holiday. Since I was on call until eight A. M.,

however, there was no guarantee of how much sleep I would get.

Less than an hour after I had fallen asleep, the phone rang. Upon answering it I realized it was the dispatcher explaining that I was needed at an accident. Trying desperately to wipe the last hour of sleep from my eyes and to comprehend what was being said, I asked him to repeat the directions. After doing so, almost as a parting note, he said, "John, I think it's a fatality." Then he rang off.

I noticed that the heat had been so intense that the license plate had been partially melted, the seats were only springs connected to the floor.

Getting out of my warm bed and into the clothes that seemed so warm earlier, I was almost resentful that someone, probably drunk from some party, had not used any common sense and had gotten himself killed driving in that condition. Worse yet, the resentment was for him jerking me out into the below freezing temperatures of a cold January Georgia night.

After approximately a ten minute drive, I arrived on the scene. Emergency personnel and fire apparatus were already there. The actions of the emergency personnel were the first things that hit me as odd. They would normally be frantically trying to revive someone until the victim was transported to the hospital. But now, they were just standing around looking helpless and lost.

The scene was cluttered with vehicles, both fire and ambulance. To one side, a volunteer fireman was vomiting what appeared to be everything he had eaten in the last twenty-four hours. Walking up to the wreck, I overheard a fireman discussing his last fishing trip to the lake and planning another with two more fire fighters. As I went past, he called to me to join them on the trip. I nodded agreement and continued on. A group of onlookers were standing around saying things like, "They should have tried to remove her before they put the water on the fire."

By this time I had arrived at the side of the blackened, smoldering piece of metal that was once a car. I noticed that the heat had been so intense that the license plate had been partially melted, and the seats were only springs connected to the floor. It

took a few seconds to find the body inside, but upon closer inspection, I could make out a form of some sort, a form that few hours earlier, as I discovered later, was a very pretty twenty-two year old female, now reduced to a seared piece of meat, so burned to the springs of the seat that a wrecking bar had to be used to free her body from the metal of the seat.

Unidentifiable at this point, she was loaded into a body bag and placed into the ambulance to be taken to the morgue for identification. About this time, because the adrenaline had ceased to pump as fast, I began to notice things I had not noticed as I arrived. Perhaps it was just realizing the small joys and privileges of being alive.

I glanced into the dark, cloudy sky to alleviate some the stress of the scene before me. I could see the charred leaves in the trees above the burned car. The tree that she struck also had a small skinned place where the initial impact had been. The place seemed unusually small for the damage done to the vehicle.

There was a constant hum of the pumper on the fire truck, the bright flashing of the red and blue revolving lights of the emergency vehicles, and one particular item that seemed out of place at the scene, a rooster was beginning to crow from a nearby farmhouse, advising everyone of a new day arriving, the reawakening of human life. All except for one poor soul who would never see, feel, or hear the things that a new day brings. It was all because of a dumb fight with her boyfriend after drinking at a party. Then she tried to set land speed records through a twenty-five mph set of "s" curves. Then it occurred to me that I had resented her only a few hours earlier for getting me out on a night like this, a night when I could return to my bed, warm and secure, something lost to her. I felt a pang of guilt as I tried to clear my mind of the past incidents. Upon the departure of all the personnel, vehicles, and debris, it seemed strange that the only things left to mark the end of her life were some charred leaves in the tree she had struck, a skinned place on the bark, and a rooster crowing.

Often times the activities that we involve ourselves in say something about the kind of persons we are. Some people are sporting types and express themselves on a playing field or court; others become involved with needlework or model railroading. Lisa Roberts explains how music not only fits into her life, but how it has also become one of the most important aspects of her personality.

The Music of My Song

Lisa Roberts

Nothing like this had ever happened to me before. I slammed my car door with such force the windows rattled. The wind was blowing so hard the neighbor's garbage scattered across our yard. My cat, Alex, jumped up and scurried under the porch. "Stupid cat," I thought. My armful of schoolbooks felt as though I was carrying three hundred pounds of dead weight, and I longed for a steaming hot bubble bath that would last for a few hours. My key wouldn't unlock the front door, so I threw down my load of books and screamed a loud, bellowing scream that would send chills down the spine of a madman. When I finally made it into the house I ran to the piano and banged my heart out. My version of "Amazing Grace" sounded more like "Metal Health" by Quiet Riot. After thirty minutes I rose from the piano stool, a new person with a new outlook on life. I walked outside to retrieve my papers, only to find that the wind had scattered them all over the yard. It was then that I promised myself that I would not fail my next math class.

Since I was eight years old, my family and friends have been able to tell what kind of mood I am in by simply listening to me play the piano. Whether I choose Beethoven's "Sonatine in G Major," Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," or Don Henley's "Hotel California," those close to me can tell my emotional state simply by listening to me play. Playing the piano is a

form of expression, a way to meet new people, and a method through which I receive an emotional high. I cannot imagine my world without the piano, as I myself would be a different person with different ideas had I not devoted years of my life learning how to play.

Jennifer, my best friend since seventh grade, recalls the first time she heard me play. I was sixteen and heartbroken. My boyfriend of two years had just informed me that our relationship was over. How dare he do this to me! I scrambled through my collection of songbooks, flinging across the room the titles that contained the word "love." At the bottom of the pile I found an old Elvis tune entitled "Hound Dog." Jennifer sat in silence as I beat the piano half to death and sang at the top of my lungs, "You ain't never caught a rabbit and you ain't no friend of mine." Then there was the night my grandmother died. My perfect world seemed to crumble all around me at the devastating news. I would never again sit down at her table on a cold winter night to a meal of cornbread, beans, potatoes, and sweet milk. Never again would I run crying to her and receive a big bear hug and a plate of piping hot chocolate chip cookies to help ease the pain. Never again would I look into her deep blue eyes and know that no matter where I might go, what I might say, or what I might do, there would always be someone in this world who loved me unconditionally. My world was lost. Late that night, while the moon glistened over the treetops, while the crickets chirped in the green, grassy field below my house, I sat and played "Precious Memories" ever so softly, and sang to myself in almost a whisper, "Precious Memories, how they linger, how they ever flood my soul. In the stillness, of the midnight, precious sacred scenes unfold."

Imagine this. You're at a dull party and wish the gathering and the gathered would pick up and start rocking. What better way to get the party on its feet than through the power of music? Imagine all that attention focused on the person capable of putting all those keys together and having the end result be anything from Guns and Roses' "Sweet Child O' Mine" to Aerosmith's "Angel." The possibilities are endless. The pianist can attend a party with fifty strangers and leave with fifty new friends. Last year I attended my cousin's stuffy Christmas party for her colleagues from work. The party was getting nowhere

fast. In fact, to call it a party was a gross overexaggeration. It was more like "Return of the Living Dead." Two middle-aged men sitting on the couch were watching the news. One lady had her nose stuck between the pages of *The Wall Street Journal*. My cousin was in the kitchen bent over the counter, tears flowing down her face. I had to do something. I had to liven up the place before the morticians arrived to carry everyone away. I played through a few verses of "Jingle Bells" that cranked up the crowd, and by the time we got to "Last Christmas" by WHAM! the stuffy business acquaintances had loosened up and actually begun to enjoy themselves. A few were even dancing. The smell of cedar trees and Christmas candy filled the air, and the sweet music of "Away in a Manger" could be heard through the high-rise apartment building. Christmas came to a group of drab yuppies that night, and they all left the party in their Mercedes and BMWs with a sense of inner peace and joy.

My version of "Amazing Grace" sounded more like "Mental Health" by Quiet Riot.

All times cannot turn out as great as that one. Just last week I woke up feeling relaxed and refreshed. As I got out of bed to do my morning stretches, I glanced over at the clock. It couldn't be 8:30! I fell over the bed as I lunged for the closet. I stared at a sea of clothing and suddenly realized I didn't have anything to wear. I decided on a wool sweater and jeans. My makeup refused to go on smoothly that morning, and I arrived at school fifteen minutes late. The heating unit had gone crazy during the night, and the room felt like an oven. When I finally got a chance to escape to the restroom to take a look at myself, my makeup was nonexistent and my hair was stuck to my head. I felt like the first prize winner in an ugly ducking contest. When I finally arrived home that afternoon, I was almost in tears. "I might as well drop out of school," I thought to myself; "Education is only for the rich, the popular, and the beautiful." I noticed my piano sitting along the wall of our dining room, and I plopped down on the stool, exhausted from my depressing day. I didn't have a song in mind. I didn't have a songbook to play from. I sat down and played my own little tune, one that I made up as I went along. Suddenly I had a feeling of joy spreading over me. If I am capable of writing

my own song, then I am capable of writing my English paper, of fixing my hair, of even composing the rest of my life! If I quit now, I can blame no one but myself. I felt so much better about everything, and I received an emotional high that was far more uplifting and precious than any I had ever felt before.

Music controls my entire being. My life is a song and I am the composer. The piano is the outlet on which I express my deepest emotions and desires; the piano has helped me meet new friends and has lifted me spiritually. Without this magnificent musical instrument my life and my being would be lost, searching for a form of expression that might never be found. My music also provides others with an escape from reality. Just last month Jennifer arrived at my door in tears. She had just been fired from her first job. I sat her down on the stool next to me and played my own rendition of "Already Gone" by the Eagles. She swears that is what helped her through what she calls "The worst thing that has ever happened to me!" I will continue to play for my own sake, and for others if I have the opportunity. The piano provides the music, I provide the song.

Everyone by this time has heard that we human beings are destroying the very planet that gives us life. Yet, it is difficult when we look out the window and see the sky, the fields, and the rain to believe the facts as scientists explain them. What is global warming and what should we care? So what if the rain forest is being depleted; it doesn't make a bit of difference to those of us in the United States. And what of acid rain? Let the Canadians and New Englanders sort that out; the problem doesn't affect Georgians. Racheal Forrester in her prize-winning essay explores a problem that may seem remote to us in North Georgia at first glance, but on deeper consideration involves us all.

**Why Georgians Should Be Concerned
With The United States'
Contribution to Canada's Growing Acid
Deposition Problem**
Racheal Forrester

"In many parts of the world, the rain is no longer gentle and snow no longer white" (Hendrey 58).

Quiet brooks, gently rolling rivers, and peaceful lakes conjure pictures of serenity and peace. In many parts of the world, however, these pictures could be deceiving. One might inquire as to the cause of this contradiction. The answer would be acid deposition, otherwise known as acid rain. "Acid rain" is a fairly new term to the English language. Because of this relative newness, many questions concerning acid rain remain unan-

swered. Scientists, though, do agree that sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions result in acid precipitation. The pollutants can be distributed over a wide range by wind and weather, and after a period of time, they form acidic precipitation. This harmful rain often strays across national boundaries, resulting in ill feelings between the countries involved. Canada, a long-time ally of the United States, is also a long-time victim of the United States' industrial pollution. The heavily industrialized areas of the northeastern United States contribute great amounts of pollutants to the Canadian atmosphere, damaging the Canadian environment as well as the political bond between the two countries. Georgians should be concerned.

In all, Canada produces only half of the acid rain that falls in that country. The remaining half drifts in from the United States (McCormick 30). Some 342,000 tons of sulfur dioxide emissions are of American origin (Schmidt). The United States' contribution to Canada's increasing acid rain problem not only damages Canadian wildlife and natural resources, but damages diplomatic relations as well. New Democratic Party member of Parliament Bill Blaike summed up the Canadian citizens' feelings toward American pollution when he remarked, "The question has become for a great many Canadians: Do you continue to be friends with [the] people who dump garbage over your fence?" (Denton).

One might ask what proof biologists and other natural scientists have that huge emissions from the United States are harmful to Canada. In the past few decades several studies have been conducted in order to answer that question as well as some others: What causes the rain? What is the effect on nature? Where does the rain come from? To date, thousands of papers and many government reports have been published dealing with acid rain and the problems caused by this form of pollution (Begley 53). With such a large sum of reports as proof, it is unlikely that anyone would doubt that emissions from industry are creating a killing rain that is destroying wildlife. Yet, to prove that the United States' emissions have been harmful to Canadian natural resources, scientists had to demonstrate how acid precipitation can travel great distances. Researchers from Canada and Sweden during the fifties and sixties demonstrated how acid precipitation can travel hundreds of miles to affect land (McCormick

30). A study released in June, 1983, by the National Academy of Sciences stated that pollutants from the Ohio Valley have a thousand mile mixing radius. This radius would encompass the Northeastern United States and Eastern Canada (*Canada: Stopping Acid Rain*). Weather charts and weather patterns reveal that pollution produced in the Midwestern United States is swept east by prevailing winds. Over the high altitudes of Eastern Canada and Northeastern United States, precipitation is formed that washes the harmful pollutants out of the atmosphere and into the earth (Begley 53). In 1988, the Province of New Brunswick, Canada, started an eighteen station monitoring system from the Midwestern United States designed to prove that toxic emissions were affecting the Northeastern Vermont and the New Brunswick area. The data this system received were indisputable as to the travelling power of the pollutants (Bookchin).

During his 1980 campaign, Reagan indicated pollution actually originated from trees and other vegetation

Canada is very susceptible to the effects of acid rain because of the Canadian Shield. The Shield, underlying the eastern half of Canada, is a granite bedrock with a thin covering of topsoil. This is not fertile soil and is unable to withstand the acid precipitation and counteract the effects. With this drawback, Canada experiences some drastic damages from the pollution (*The Acid Rain Story*).

Most of the rain that falls in Canada has a pH of 4.6 or lower (*Canada: Stopping Acid Rain*). The pH scale is used to determine the acidity of a body. Clean rain only slightly lower than 5.6 is considered acid rain. A reading below 4.5 will not support fish populations (*Canada: The Acid Rain Story*). Due to the average 4.6 acidity of Canadian rain, some 14,000 lakes are labelled acidic and will not support fish populations. Over half of the remaining lakes and rivers show signs of acid contamination (*Canada: Stopping Acid Rain*).

The Canadian water bodies are not alone in their contamination. Almost 84 percent of Canada's productive agricultural land receives over the acceptable level of acid rain. Over

fifty percent of the forests are acidified, and so nearly eighty percent of the Canadian population lives in highly acidic areas (*Canada: Stopping Acid Rain*).

As the rain is endangering the environment, Canada's economy suffers. A total of eight percent of Canada's gross national product is from natural resources (*Canada: Stopping Acid Rain*). This seemingly small figure plays a large role in the national income and employment rate. The occupations of farming, the fish industry, and harvesting the vast forest land employ many Canadians. These jobs are directly dependent on salvaging natural resources and also directly dependent on controlling acid rain.

With acid pollution having this great of an effect on resources, environmentally and economically, the national governments are starting to take notice of the problem. Before acid rain became a major concern to the public, very little governmental research was funded. In the past decade, though, both the United States and Canada have created many laws, studies, and restrictions. Even so the new laws are not very strict. One of the main reasons for the delay of strict legislation is skepticism among pollution control opponents. "Opponents of mandatory emission control seized on several unanswered questions. . . where does the rain come from?" (Begley 53). As scientists and the public increase their knowledge of acid rain, maybe the opponents will open their eyes and discover the seriousness of the problem and how great the need of strict controls really is in today's world. One might think the main opponents would be industry and large corporations interested in the high cost of controls. Not so; in the past few years one of the main opponents to pollution control legislation has been the Reagan Administration.

President Reagan refused to acknowledge the fact that acid rain is a result of man-made pollutants. During his 1980 campaign, Reagan indicated pollution actually originated from trees and other vegetation (Denton). Reagan's attitude has always prevented accomplishments of pollution control between Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, and himself. Previous summits between the two leaders have resulted in many rejected Canadian pleas for the United States to control the pollution flowing out of the country. On March 17, 1988, the

"Shamrock Summit" was held between Mulroney and Reagan. During this summit, Reagan changed his tune (DeMott 27). "Acid rain," he said, "is a serious problem affecting both of our countries" (DeMott 27). The Shamrock Summit, which was held in Quebec City, resulted in a new United States-Canadian acid rain accord. These actions and many of the recent restrictions that have been placed on acid rain are being regarded as, primarily, political gestures ("Shamrock and Acid Rain" 21). This feeling can be attributed to the increasing pressures the leaders were experiencing at the time prior to the summit. Even so, the summit should be regarded as a success and a step in the right direction for both countries.

With all the Canadian push for the United States to enforce acid rain control, Canada has only recently enacted its own acid rain controls. Canada has lagged behind the United States for several years in pollution controls. Brian Mulroney finally encouraged Provincial and Federal governments to enforce acid rain control in 1987 (Denton). The only justification Canada can use for lack of controls is the fact that it is not as highly industrialized as the United States.

The steps taken by both the Canadian and American governments are just a slight beginning in the control of acid rain. The citizens of the two countries must do their part as well in controlling the acid precipitation problem. By maintaining automobile emissions requirements, demonstrating political interest in acid rain control, and by contacting legislators, a citizen can help in the control of acid rain. Georgians should be concerned.

Why should Georgians be concerned? The first answer, which will not be accepted, will be because Canadians are human. Why not do a kindness, show a brotherhood to the Canadians and help save the damaged countryside? The United States has helped the Contra Rebels kill in order to stop communism. The United States has overseen many large expenditures to help foreign countries in time of disaster. So why not help Canada? Why should Georgians be concerned? Georgians should be concerned because human beings are involved. The fact is, unfortunately, that in general people will not help others unless some form of reward will be given for their services. For Georgians, the reward for helping Canadians save their country today will be saving Georgia in the future.

Like Canada, Georgia has an abundance of natural resources. Beautiful forests that cover the rolling mountains, rivers that tumble toward the coastline, and lakes that collect cool waters all signify the natural resources available in Georgia. As of today, these resources show no signs of acid contamination, but the danger is present. "Rainfall in the Peach State is ten times more acidic than unpolluted rain" (Craig). What does this statement mean for Georgians? Acid contamination is not too far in the future. The annual pH of Georgia's rainfall is 4.5 (Craig). Pure rain water has a pH of 5.6. Only a decade ago Canada was in a similar situation. Maybe by helping put a stop to Canada's problem, Georgians can deter a duplication of the same problem in the future.

Closer to the Gainesville people, a study reports that thirty-one Georgia lakes may be victims of acid rain. One of these lakes is Lake Lanier (Seabrook). Not to say that Lake Lanier is damaged at the present time, but the study revealed some chilling facts about the future. The acid neutralizing capacity, or ANC, of Lake Lanier is 180. An ANC below 200 indicates a lake that is very "sensitive to further acid inputs" (Seabrook). A pond in Lumpkin County, a neighbor to Hall, has an ANC level of 80.7 (Seabrook). With information bearing such horrifying facts, how can Georgians, *Gainesvillians*, not be concerned?

A study reports that thirty-one Georgia lakes may be victims of acid rain. One of these lakes is Lake Lanier.

"Rain isn't right anymore. And where it falls it creates a mess environmentally and politically" (West 76). This rain, acid rain, has strange effects. Scientists are not completely sure what all the sources are, nor are scientists sure what all the effects are. The pollution can create things that are beautiful and deadly. "A lake damaged by acid pollution looks oddly beautiful" (McCormick 16). Mosses that can survive in highly acidic waters trap sediment at the bottom of the water body, causing the water to become crystal clear (McCormick 16). The rain can reshape objects as well. The objects can become shockingly deformed. Balding trees, entire fish populations floating dead on top of a lake, and humans dying of respiratory problems are a few examples. In the past few decades, even as the damage has

increased, so has the awareness of the problem. Can this be a new beginning? It will be only if humans will work for the ultimate cause of saving the world's environment. Are Georgians concerned?

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Have you ever considered what the ramifications of the miniskirt have been on our society? Lynne Banister, miniskirt expert, outlines her experiences with wearing short skirts and all of the problems associated with them.

The Effects of Short Skirts on Today's Women

Lynne Banister

For years I have raised my skirts whenever fashion dictated that I should. Although I am "thirty something," as long as my legs look "twenty something" I shall continue to wear short skirts whenever I feel like it. Because I occasionally wear shorter skirts, then I must contend with several problems.

Leg maintenance is the number one priority, as legs must be shaved carefully and often. If I were living in Europe, I would not have to contend with this problem; European women do not have the fanatical urge to depilate themselves as American women do. In America, where silkiness is next to Godliness, that concept is hard to understand. American women would rather shave, wax, or depilatorize themselves to death than be seen with hairy legs. Personally, I have a problem with remembering to shave above the knee and back of the leg.

A simple thing like sitting can also become a problem. Think about it. Am I supposed to cross my legs or place the legs diagonally in front with the knees pressed tightly together, a la Mary Hart? Standing is an even bigger dilemma. Should I slide discreetly to the side of the chair, standing in a slow, smooth motion? Maybe I should jerk my legs to one side and rapidly stand up. Both methods require practice and a touch of finesse. Be aware that I also have to keep both hands free when I am standing up, so that I can tug both sides of the skirt while I do all these contortions. And the shorter the skirt, the harder the tug must be.

There is also the problem of retrieving dropped objects.

This can be the most interesting obstacle of all, especially for the people standing directly in front or directly in back of me. I first must decide whether the object is really worth the trouble of retrieving in the first place. For instance, if I dropped my pocketbook, I would probably feel the need to pick it up. After making this decision, I have to choose a strategy. Depending on the amount of traffic in the area, I can either do the side bend or the straddle squat. Both work nicely and can be done in medium to low traffic areas. The side bend works best when the heavier traffic is in front of me. The straddle squat obviously can only be done with rear traffic. In very high traffic areas, however, I usually try to kick my pocketbook around a corner. Then I can usually resort to one of the other two maneuvers.

I have actually had to take running leaps into my truck because my skirts were just too tight ...

I also have what I call the Step Factor. This term means that any step I climb must be in direct proportion to the fullness of my skirt. For example, when I am driving my four wheel drive truck, I have to wear skirts in accordance to the height of that first step. Forgetting about this can be a disaster. I have actually had to take running leaps into my truck because my skirts were just too tight to make that first step. And jumping opens a whole new can of worms. When I bang my head on the door while jumping into the truck, I have to be concerned about the emergency room beds. They are also too high for me to climb onto gracefully. I know the nurses wish I would buy some sensible clothes. It was while sitting on the emergency room bed that I came up with a wonderful solution to my problem. I am having a set of portable steps made to carry around when I shop. I can now try out my skirts before I actually buy them.

Thousands of years from now we may see evolutionary changes in a woman that makes the wearing of short skirts easier. One day she may have an extra joint in her legs that will make it easier for her to bend over and stand up. She may also evolve into a woman with hydraulic lifts for legs to make step climbing easier. However, the solution for sitting and standing is probably several million years into the future. As you can see, the effects of short skirts on my life are large in comparison to the amount of fabric required to make the skirt in the first place.

What is a curmudgeon? It's a grouch, a gadfly, a critic, and a complainer. However, a true curmudgeon, critical though he might be, has the redeeming touch of humor in his remarks. In this essay, John E. McKay analyzes the claim of America's most famous writer to be a curmudgeon. Here, then, is a slightly different view of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as Mark Twain.

Mark Twain As Curmudgeon

John E. McKay

Mark Twain was best known for his light-hearted stories of the adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn and his humorous writings of jumping frogs and the like. All his life, however, he kept concealed a deep and overpowering hatred of all things crass and commercial, religiously puritan, and racially intolerant. Towards the end of his life, after the death of his wife and his favorite daughter, Twain seemed to sink even deeper into misery and despair, and his writings reflect his anguish. His friends and the audiences he lectured to had long considered him a "wag" and a satirist, so the title of "curmudgeon" fits rather nicely, but his true feelings ran much deeper than those of a mere social critic. His sharpest barbs were reserved for three select topics: patriotism, politics, and religion. Most of what he wrote on each of those topics, religion in particular, was either not printed in his lifetime or had a very limited distribution. Twain's wife, Livy, restrained him and kept him from publishing his most bitter denunciations during her lifetime. After Livy's death, his daughter Clara kept most of the remaining essays out of print until recently.

In all of his "outrageous" essays runs a consistent thread of fairness, of love for humanity, of a moral outrage aroused by greed and false patriotism, of a soul tormented by the agony that the lies of religion have caused him. Twain was a man of great character and spirit who could never understand why others

could not see the simple truth about cherished establishments, like religion and politics, that he could.

Mark Twain's barbs about the super-patriot are legendary. His sense of moral outrage at such a fanciful notion as love for a piece of dirt over love for one's fellow man seemed to affect him in a deep way, but he could always discuss the subject with his usual sense of humor:

The newspaper-and-politician manufactured Patriot often gags in private over his dose; but he takes it, and keeps it on his stomach the best he can. Blessed are the meek. (Twain, *Hell* 44)

Twain had a deep love for his country, but it was not of the "love it or leave it" variety; he viewed true patriotism as an honorable virtue, but one that could be easily warped into something disgusting. The entire affair of the Spanish-American War filled him with disgust, and he spent much of his public lectures loudly proclaiming that the U. S. had no right to be in Cuba at all, that we were debasing ourselves in this unjust war (Twain, *Damned* 122-123). For the hero of the Philippine incursion, General Fredrick Funston, Twain reserved his most bitter attacks. Funston, who had embarked on a lecture tour after some dubiously heroic actions against the Filipino rebels, had publicly proclaimed that any American who had doubts about the Spanish-American War (and there were many) was a traitor (Twain, *Damned* 82-83):

If I were in the Phil(ippines) I could be imprisoned for a year for publicly expressing the opinion that we ought to withdraw and give those people their independence---an opinion which I desire to express now. What is treason in one part of our States and stealings is doubtless law everywhere under the flag. If so, I am now committing treason. . . and If I were out there I would hire a hall and do it again. On these terms I would rather be a traitor than an archangel. On these terms I am quite willing to be called a traitor---quite willing to wear that honorable

badge—and not willing to be affronted with the title of Patriot and classified with the Funstons when so help me God I have not done anything to deserve it. (Twain, quoted in Foner 291-292)

A seeming inconsistency in the way Twain felt and wrote about patriotism lies in his different treatments. In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* there is a patriotism not to the country but to the powers that be; in "As Regards Patriotism" there is a "band-wagon" mentality of loyalty to the most popular; and in "War Monuments" patriotism is treated as very simple and honorable (Twain, *Damned* 234-236). What Twain was trying to point out was that true patriotism, true love for one's home and country, comes from a sense of loyal, intellectual honor, rather than simple blind spouting of slogans, as politicians are apt to do.

Twain's sense of moral outrage at such a fanciful notion as love for a piece of dirt over love for one's fellow man seemed to affect him in a deep way.

Twain, like Mencken later, held a very special disregard for the loathsome species called politicians. At best he considered them self-serving vultures, at worst a stain on the fabric of mankind. In his early days, when the annexation of Hawaii was being proposed, he had this to say about it:

We must annex these people. We can afflict them with our wise and beneficent government. We can introduce the novelty of thieves, all the way from streetcar pick-pockets to municipal robbers and Government defaulters and show them how amusing it is to arrest them and try them and then turn them loose—some for cash, and some for "political influence." We can make them ashamed of their simple and primitive justice. . . . We can give them juries composed of the most simple and charming leatherheads. We can give them railway corporations who will

buy their Legislatures like old clothes, and run over their best citizens. We can furnish them some Jay Goulds who will do away with their old-time notions that stealing is not respectable. . . (Twain, *Damned* 70)

Twain may have had a deep patriotism, but he lost no love at all for politics! Few of his essays on the subject of politics alone exist, but caustic comments abound: "Reader, suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself" (Twain, *Damned* 105), "To my mind Judas Iscariot was nothing but a low, mean, premature Congressman" (Twain, *Damned* 105). "It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native criminal class except Congress" (Twain, *Equator*). In Twain's mind, power and profit alone motivate politicians, and any other pretensions to the contrary led to his disgust. One politician in particular who raised his ire was Senator William Andrews Clark of Montana, whose shenanigans about the veterans' pensions caused Twain much personal shame and frustration (Twain, *Damned* 105). After being invited to a dinner that, unbeknownst to him, was in Clark's honor, Twain observed the political beast in its natural setting:

A miracle followed. I have always maintained that no man could make a speech with nothing but a compliment for a text but I now know that a reptile can. Senator Clark twaddled and twaddled along for a full half hour with no text but those praises which had been lavished upon his trifling generosity; and he not only accepted at par all these silly phrases but added to them a pile--praising his own so-called generosity and magnanimities with such intensity and color that he took the pigment all out of those other men's compliments and made them look pallid and shadowy. With forty years' experience of human assfulness and vanity at banquets, I have never seen anything of the sort that could remotely approach the assfulness and complacency of this coarse and vulgar and in-

comparably ignorant peasant's glorification of himself. (Twain, *Damned* 110)

Of course, Twain wrote this critique during a time when American politicians were particularly noted for their pompous ways and shady dealings, but Twain works himself almost to a frenzy in writing about them. He compares, favorably, the daily actions of the mealy mouthed politicians he so despised with the lowest and crassest forms of commercialized, jingoistic "super-patriotism." With this attitude, Twain recalls very strongly the typical post Civil War attitudes of the South; embittered ex-Confederates poured out their hatred of the damned Yankees, "and all their brags and fuss" (Civil War era song "O I'm a Good Old Rebel." Author, publisher, and date all unknown). Bitter and pronounced as his attitudes towards patriotism and politics were, however, Twain's most serious (and mostly hidden) hatred was directed towards the "established" religions.

Terror, death, pain, and suffering caused by his despised Christians meant nothing, for God was on our side!

Twain saved his most pointed and bitter barbs for religion. "Religion consists in a set of things which the average man thinks he believes and wishes he was certain" (Twain, quoted in Winokur, 223). In October of 1909, he wrote a series of thirteen "Letters From the Earth," in which Satan traveled to Earth to observe the human condition, and wrote back to his fellow archangels Michael and Gabriel in astonishment at what he had discovered. Even though he had recorded his strongest beliefs on the subject of religion, Twain still felt compelled to insist his heirs not print the "Letters," in conjunction with the even stronger "Reflections on Religion," until 2406! (These essays were printed in 1987, after the death of the last of Twain's children). Twain used the "Letters" as a vehicle to express his extreme antagonism towards the modern practices of religion, with the thinnest veneer of fiction used to blunt his slashing attack. This veneer was even left out in the latter letters, as his writings became much more acid:

Soon the fiction is largely forgotten, and Mark Twain expresses his mature opinions on the folly of man's worship of God and the hypocrisy of Christianity; the ignorance of the writers of the Bible, with the story of Noah receiving extended treatment; the stupidity of the Bible's teachings; and God as the author of illness. (Emerson 269)

Twain's limited tolerance for "pious asses" was publicly evident on his lecture tours, when he was forced into close company with people he considered to have too much public faith. One tour he undertook with the Southern novelist George W. Cable stood out in particular, with Twain frequently referring to him as the "Christ-besprinkled, psalm singing presbyterian" (Lorch 172). In a letter to his wife Livy, Twain became almost ranting in his dislike for Cable:

Livy, my dear, you cannot imagine anything like this idiotic Sunday-superstition of Cable's. I would throttle a baby that had it. It is the most beggardly disease, the most pitiful, the most contemptible mange that ever a grown creature was afflicted withal. (Wecter 234)

In both "Letters," and "Reflections on Religion," which Twain had originally written in 1906 to be included in his autobiography, he accuses the Christian religion of being the worst evil that the world has ever known. His attacks really begin in earnest in letter VI of "Letters," where he accuses the Christian God of being petty and spiteful:

Jealousy. Do not forget it, keep it in mind. It is the key. With it you will come to partly understand God as we go along; without it nobody can understand him. As I have said, he has openly held up this treasonous key himself, for all to see. He says, naively, outspokenly, and without suggestion of embarrassment: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." You see, it is only another

way of saying, "I the Lord thy God am a small God; a small God and fretful about small things."
(Twain, *Letters* 31)

Even though this passage was written after the much more caustic passages in "Reflections," it was published first, in 1962 and seems to represent more accurately an earlier Twain, one who still has respect left for those whom he disagrees with, and a sense of humor about the whole matter. When he abandoned the use of the veneer of fiction in "Reflections," Twain shows just how deeply his antagonism towards religion, and against Christianity in particular, goes:

There is one notable thing about our Christianity: bad, bloody, merciless, money-grabbing and predatory as it is---in our country particularly, and in all other Christian countries in a somewhat modified degree--- it is still a hundred times better than the Christianity of the Bible with prodigious crime--- the invention of Hell. Measured by our Christianity of the Bible, bad as it is, hypocritical as it is, empty and hollow as it is, neither the Deity nor His Son is a Christian, nor qualified for that moderately high place. Ours is a terrible religion. The fleets of the world could swim in spacious comfort in the innocent blood it has spilt. (Twain, *Outrageous* 36)

In "The War Prayer," another essay Twain wrote in 1906 and subsequently had removed from his autobiography, he makes cutting commentary on the "Christianity" of Christians, having them accuse a messenger of God of insanity because what God saw in their feverish prayers for victory did not meet with their desires for blood-lust. Writing it so soon after the Spanish-American war, Twain was undoubtedly affected by the misery of that "splendid little war," and all of the pain and suffering this country had inflicted upon the innocent people of Spain, Cuba, and the Philippines. Terror, death, pain, and suffering caused by his despised Christians meant nothing, for God was on our side! War deeply affected Twain, as did man's inhumanity towards

man in the name of the Lord, and he expounded his views in a 1906 essay, "Reflections on Being the Delight of God":

And when I'm feeling historical there is nothing that ecstasifies me like hunting the chief love and delight of God around and around just here on this tiny earth and watching him perform. I watch him progressing and progressing--always progressing--always mounting higher and higher, sometimes by means of the inquisition, sometimes by means of the terror, sometimes by eight hundred years of witch burning, sometimes by help of a St. Bartholomew's, sometimes by spreading hell and civilization in China, sometimes by preserving and elevating the same at home by a million soldiers and a thousand battleships; and when he gets down to today I still look at him spread out over a whole page of the morning paper, grabbing in Congress, grabbing in Albany, grabbing in New York and St. Louis and all around, lynching the innocent, slobbering hypocrisies, reeking, dripping, unsavory, but always recognizable as the same old most sublime existence in all the range of non-divine being, the chief love and delight of God. . . (Twain, *Damned* 68)

With all of the bitterness evident in Twain's commentaries, still a thread of humor runs through them all-- the mark of a true curmudgeon. Twain does hate the religious man, the politician, or even the super-patriot, but he finds it necessary to lash out at them on occasion; to keep them on their toes, so to speak. Twain was seriously embittered at the world after the death of Livy, but managed to write the clearest criticisms of his entire writing career at the end of his life; "Reflections on Religion," "Letters from the Earth," and "To the Person Sitting in Darkness" were all composed in his last few years. As a humorist, Twain defined the American style of writing, and as social critic and curmudgeon he became the conscience and soul of the world.

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In this prize-winning essay, Ms. Vickers analyzes English novelist and poet Thomas Hardy's female characters and their central roles in his works. Hardy's attitude toward his female characters, and perhaps all women, is explored in this thorough exploration of the writer's craft.

Hardy and the Women of the Heath

Dondi Vickers

"Very simply, as a writer of novels, Thomas Hardy was endowed with a precious gift: he liked women" (Howe 103).

And true are the words of Irving Howe on the famed novelist and poet, Thomas Hardy. Hardy's use of nature, his recurring conflicts between man and fate, and his careful manipulation of time and place cannot be overlooked, but it is through his characters that the reader may truly come to understand this talented English writer. Hardy had a strong tendency to become deeply involved with his characters, especially his female protagonists. It is a characteristic that continued to follow him throughout his career. Literary critics have often expounded on this feature of Hardy's writing using Tess from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Bathsheba from *Far from the Madding Crowd*, or Sue Bridehead from *Jude the Obscure*. But one who cannot be excluded from the list of Hardy's outstanding women is Eustacia Vye, the most prominent character of his 1878 novel, *The Return of the Native*.

Some have called this novel Hardy's masterpiece, while others have sharply criticized his overly "coincidental" style. In either case, Eustacia, raven hair and all, looms like a dark, dramatic shadow over the other characters in the story. Another minor character in the novel, Thomasin Yeobright, can be described as one who is as much of a typical "Hardy female" as the passionate and untamed Eustacia. Thomasin is the ingenue, the innocent of the novel, and serves as a background against which

Eustacia is free to present her array of theatrics. *The Return of the Native* is a novel of relationships, and through a detailed comparison/contrast of Thomasin and Eustacia's characterization, one can see the complex relationship that developed between the two young dwellers of the heath and their creator, Thomas Hardy.

The environment plays a key role in Hardy's novel. The locale, Egdon Heath, is raised to such a level that it becomes quite a distinct character itself. Hardy uses a great deal of vivid detail to describe the interaction of man, or in this case, woman, and nature. As each character in the novel is different, so the heath comes to mean different things to them as individuals. Thomasin and Eustacia view Egdon Heath from very different perspectives, and to each woman, it means more than just a geographical location on the English countryside; it represents a way of life, the world they live in, and their specific role in it.

Thomasin is a native of Egdon. Raised on the heath with her cousin, Clym, she knows very little of the outside world, nor does she care to know. Unlike Eustacia, she does not dream of far-off Paris or exotic people and places. She is very much a traditionalist, and she is more happy to live out her days on the heath like generations before her. She feels very comfortable in the village of Egdon Heath; it offers her safety and a very defined role, which she plays willingly throughout the novel. This comfort even takes the form of indifference to the environment. Thomasin doesn't really concern herself with the heath and all it represents. The lack of fear or confusion is evident on the night of Eustacia's suicide. Even as the storm rages and confusion fills the air, Thomasin remains calm, and her thoughts are not on the extreme intensity of the environment surrounding her, but on practical things--finding her way across the heath, the possibility of catching a cold, and keeping the rain off her baby. Hardy writes:

Thomasin's imagination being so actively engaged elsewhere, the night and the weather had for her no terror beyond that of their actual discomfort and difficulty... To her there were not, as to Eustacia, demons in the air, and malice in every bush and bough. The drops which

lashed her face were not scorpions, but prosy rain; Egdon in the mass was no monster whatever, but impersonal open ground (Hardy 330-331).

If the heath does, in fact, represent fate, Thomasin does not seem bothered by it. Even after her husband's death, she does not raise her voice to the elements and fate itself to ask, "Why?" She merely slips back into her natural setting, takes on the comfort of Egdon Heath, and later assumes the role of Diggory's wife without question.

Just as the environment of the heath defines Thomasin, so it confines Eustacia and her turbulent spirit. Eustacia is an obvious outsider on the heath and feels hopelessly trapped by Egdon's summits and furze. The restlessness she shares with Wildeva takes form in outright rebellion against the environment. Fantasies and visions of foreign lands only add to her increasing discomfort in and with her surroundings. Unlike Thomasin, Eustacia is acutely aware of the environment around her; it serves as a constant reminder of her isolation and unfulfillment. As much as she is at odds with the environment, it is ironic that Hardy chose Eustacia over his other characters to be the direct reflection of the very environment she hates. The parallels between Eustacia and Egdon Heath are consistent throughout the novel. They mirror each other's changing moods and are mysteriously bonded, though they appear to work against one another. Eustacia fights the environment, in vain, even as it writes her as the central character in a plot she cannot control. In a conversation with Clym, she makes no attempt to disguise her resentment. "The heath is a cruel taskmaster to me" (Hardy 168). And so, like Thomasin, Eustacia is merely a victim of fate, symbolized through Egdon Heath. But in contrast to Thomasin, Eustacia cannot seem to accept that which is dealt to her by the environment she is so closely related to. Consider the same scene previously mentioned, the night of Eustacia's death. In this scene, Hardy illustrates, like no other time in the novel, the strong connection between Eustacia and the environment. He writes, "Never was harmony more perfect than that between the chaos of her mind and the chaos of the world without" (Hardy 322). The physical storm upon Egdon is a duplicate of Eustacia's inner,

emotional turmoil. As both storms reach the height of their intensity, Eustacia's struggle with the environment and all that it represents is relinquished, but only after her death and final cry of resistant anger.

O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all! (Hardy 323)

English lecturer Lance St. John Butler says of this scene, "The last we see of Eustacia alive is in a storm on the heath, in bitter revolt against heaven" (49). And so it is a bitter revolt against heaven that Eustacia gives - against heaven, Egdon, and all the forces that have worked against her throughout life. Even in death, these forces elude her and continue, like the heath, to exist in natural endurance.

In addition to the use of environment, Hardy utilizes images of light and darkness to show striking contrast between Thomasin and Eustacia. Thomasin, whose last name is Yeobright, an obvious symbol, is described in the novel with images of light, brightness, and sunshine. All are apparent references to Thomasin's purity and optimism. Hardy introduces Thomasin with such an image of light.

Though her eyes were closed, one could easily imagine the light necessarily shining in them as the culmination of the luminous workmanship around. (33)

One author related Thomasin's inclination toward light and nature with these words. "The images of light and music which introduce her imply a relationship to the earth that has not yet become discordant. Sunshine is her natural form of light" (Brooks 69).

Just as Thomasin's introduction and description invite vivid images of light, Hardy uses darkness to characterize Eustacia, appropriately named the "Queen of Night" (58). Hardy

devotes an entire chapter to Eustacia's introduction, and within the first fifteen lines, Hardy establishes a pattern of description for her; it is one of carefully chosen allusions, dramatic visual pictures, and brief glimpses into this complex, three-dimensional character. Similar to his depiction of Thomasin, Hardy uses light to describe Eustacia, but it is a very different kind of light that the reader sees through his words. In contrast to the bright "whiteness" that describes Thomasin, Eustacia's light seems to be a fiery aura. Often, Hardy combines this glowing with the darkness for a heightened dramatic effect. He writes:

To see her hair was to fancy that a whole winter did not contain darkness enough to form its shadow: it closed over her forehead like night-fall extinguishing the western glow.... She had Pagan eyes, full of nocturnal mysteries, and their light, as it came and went, and came again, was partially hampered by their oppressive lids and lashes. . . you could fancy the colour of Eustacia's soul to be flame-like. The sparks from it that rose into her dark pupils gave the same impression (58-59).

Just as the light represents Thomasin's purity, so Eustacia is Hardy's nocturnal character, symbolized by darkness. One must also note the fiery glowing images, possibly references to Eustacia's passion or perhaps her "smouldering rebelliousness" (Hardy 60). In either case, one must take into account Hardy's external source, but from her own stormy, internal forces.

Just as Hardy uses a relationship between the environment and the two women from Egdon, in addition to images of light and darkness, the characterizations of Thomasin and Eustacia are expanded with development of their relationships with other characters in the story. No longer dealing with an abstract role like that of the heath, Hardy is now free to use both dialogue and action to show the interrelation between every real and very complex human being. There are several minor characters, each one designed for a specific purpose in the plot, whose relationships with Thomasin and Eustacia provide some insight into

their personalities. Two such characters that interact with each of the women throughout the novel are Clym's mother, Mrs. Yeobright, and Damon Wildeve.

Mrs. Yeobright and Thomasin share a close and meaningful relationship. Mrs. Yeobright acts as the parental figure Thomasin has lost, and Thomasin, her orphaned niece, serves as Mrs. Yeobright's constant companion. They are, for all practical purposes, surrogate mother and daughter and, as Hardy reveals, the best of friends. On the day of Thomasin's wedding, the two carry out the traditional marriage customs of the heath with a sense of sadness. This sadness comes not only from the obvious unfortunate circumstances surrounding Wildeve's previous rejection, but it is also a result of their forthcoming separation. As Thomasin is leaving, Mrs. Yeobright looks "reluctantly" at her and speaks with "forced cheerfulness." Moments later, as they both cry, Hardy writes:

Moved by an uncontrollable feeling as she looked upon Yeobright's worn, wet face, she ran back when her aunt came forward, and they met again. "O-Tamsie," said the elder, weeping. I don't like to let you go." Thomasin began to speak, giving way likewise. But, quelling her grief, she said "Good-bye!" again and went on. (143-144)

And so the two friends part, Thomasin to meet her new husband and Mrs. Yeobright to prepare for Clym's arrival.

Hardy seems to be fascinated with the female and all facets of her-physical, psychological, and emotional.

If the kinship between Thomasin and Mrs. Yeobright is defined by closeness, then the relationship shared by Mrs. Yeobright and her daughter-in-law, Eustacia, is characterized by distance, miscommunication, and even antagonism. Upon Clym's first inquiry about the spirited Eustacia, Mrs. Yeobright describes her as "A proud girl from Budmouth. . .one not much to my liking" (Hardy 147). Despite her protests, Clym and Eustacia marry, but Mrs. Yeobright's criticisms of Eustacia do not cease. She remains

convinced that Clym is making a terrible mistake and shows her disapproval consistently through discussions with Clym over his choice for a spouse.

I hate the thought of any son of mine marrying badly. . . Is it best for you to injure your prospect for such a voluptuous, idle woman as that? Don't you see that by the very fact of your choosing her you prove that you do not know what is best for you? (183-184)

The sentiment Mrs. Yeobright has for Eustacia is not unlike that which the young woman feels for her intrusive mother-in-law. Neither of the two women wants to share Clym's affection, for which they believe themselves to be competing. It is one of many tragic relationships and reaches its catastrophic climax with Eustacia's refusal to admit Clym's mother into her home at Blooms-End and Mrs. Yeobright's death on the heath.

Damon Wildeve, one of three central male characters in the novel, is essential in a thorough comparison/contrast of Thomasin and Eustacia. For it is through him and his relationships with each of these women that the reader may catch important glimpses of their sexuality and, more significantly, their consolidated ideas on romance, passion, love, and marriage. Wildeve is, of course, married to Thomasin, and their relationship is made up primarily of traditional expectations and roles, created out of social conformity rather than love or friendship. Thomasin has not married Wildeve in search of intimacy or romance, but to save her pride, damaged from the earlier jilting. Thomasin does not hate Wildeve, but neither does she love him. And yet, she refuses to fight or at least search for another. Thomasin's path is the way of submission. She submits to Wildeve, just as she does to Mrs. Yeobright, her immediate surroundings, and her unfortunate circumstances. She is clearly aware, after her marriage, that all is not over between Wildeve and Eustacia, but the part she plays is not one of indignation but of gentle forbearance and absorption in the business of her home (Grimsditch 60). This is the Thomasin one sees again and again—mild, good-natured, and very submissive. Wildeve himself describes her as "such a confoundly good little woman" (74). She

is everything a wife from Egdon is supposed to be, and it is a role that Thomasin accepts gracefully, even at the cost of her own happiness.

If Thomasin is exactly what a wife on the heath should be, then the seductive Eustacia Vye is everything it is not. Eustacia's relationship with Wildeve is somewhat mysterious in that Hardy never clearly spells out its specific dimensions. (A reader could easily assume that they have, in fact, been lovers in the past.) One thing is certain; the emotional turbulence, overwhelming sensuality, and ambivalent feelings that characterize this relationship are felt equally by both participants. Wildeve is torn between devotion to Thomasin, his faithful wife, and his strong attraction to Eustacia, the latter usually emerging victorious. Eustacia, too, wrestles with her feeling for Wildeve. She considers herself to be Wildeve's social superior but continually falls victim to his powerful charm. One author accurately describes her ambivalence toward Wildeve with these words:

To her, Damon Wildeve is shallow, a man of little sophistication whom she half despises and half desires (and despises herself for desiring) and whose utter conventionality abrades her. "There isn't a note in you which I don't know," he tells her. He also speaks of her "hot little bosom." One can see why she both detests the trite sexuality of his words and yet responds to - or allows his seductive mastery over her (Lucas 149).

The conflicting emotions she feels for Wildeve are characteristically Eustacia. She is not satisfied with what she has, but she reaches out blindly for "something more" without ever really knowing what that "something" is. Hardy reveals, through Eustacia and Wildeve's relationship, the indecision, and what might be called immaturity that exists in Eustacia. These two lovers are eventually bonded in death, Eustacia from possible suicide and Wildeve from a desperate attempt to save the woman he calls "a rare plant in a wild place" (310).

Albert J. Guerard, a noted critic of Thomas Hardy's work, remarks that Hardy's first and second novels showed

surprising knowledge of girlish coqueties and mannerisms, while later novels offer insight into feminine motives and feelings (63). It is apparent from Hardy's writing, and especially his female characterizations, that he possessed great understanding of women. However, he is often criticized for his exaggerated and somewhat negative generalizations about women by feminist supporters. But it is not out of hostility or pessimism that he writes such portrayals of women; it is most likely the opposite. Hardy seems to be fascinated with the female and all facets of her--physical, psychological, and emotional. One author wrote this of Thomas Hardy and his work:

For Hardy really is a lover of women in the fullest sense. E. M. Forester remarked that Hardy conceived his novels from a great height, but his females are drawn from very close up; there is an almost myopic insistence upon the grain of their skin and texture of hair. Sound, scent, mouth, cheeks, plumpness--no detail is allowed to escape our senses. . . . This indeed declares itself as Hardy's pattern in the treatment of female sensuousness, and his own sensuous response to his women characters (Miles 31).

Consider some examples of Hardy's "sensuous responses" that show his capacity of appreciation for women, responses that take the form of Thomasin and Eustacia's descriptions.

Hardy's Thomasin is an innocent, kind-hearted woman whose tragic circumstances seem very undeserved. It is not until the sixth book, Hardy's unplanned addition, that Thomasin finally receives some of the good fortune the reader feels she is entitled to. Hardy uses Thomasin to show that even the purest, kindest, and most optimistic person can be subject to unjust circumstances as dictated by chance or destiny. Geoffrey Thurley praises Hardy on his originality and "mastery" used in Thomasin's introduction. He writes, "Hardy never surpasses these sentences in their reverence of the human soul and the almost religious delight in women" (89).

If Hardy's affection for women is expressed through his words on Thomasin, then it is obviously shown in his characteri-

zation of Eustacia. Eustacia is the "queen" of Hardy's novel, as much as she is the "Queen of Night" although she does not possess the "goodness" Hardy ascribes to Thomasin. She is proud, self-centered, and deceptive; so why does the reader empathize with her in the last scene? Why does Eustacia, defeated by her own inner nature as much as the environment around her, emerge as the tragic heroine? Is it because the reader has been "fooled" by Hardy's allusions and elevation of character? One writer has noted that Hardy first conceived Eustacia as a less appealing character than she turned out to be "after the author, too, became fascinated and gave her tragic proportions" (Eggenschwiler 444). Did Hardy himself fall victim to Eustacia's charm, created at his own hand? Perhaps the reader experiences strong feelings for Eustacia because he can recognize the very real, unpolished "humanness" in Eustacia. Her greatest desire is "to be loved to madness. . . . And she seemed to long for the abstraction called passionate love more than for any particular lover" (Hardy 61). Eustacia's motivation remains, through all her flirting, scheming, and irrational behavior, the search for love. The fact that she never finds it within herself makes success impossible and her search futile. Hardy would not have done justice to Eustacia's character to make her anything less than what she is: the tragic heroine whose potential is lost in a desperate attempt to fulfill it.

Perhaps Hardy, like his characters, was motivated by love—the love of women, the love of writing about them, and the love of his own response to that writing.

The Return of the Native is a novel of relationships. It is a series of significant interactions between the environment, the dwellers of the heath, and the author himself. It is more than the simple story of an isolated English village and its inhabitants. But perhaps it is not quite as complicated as today's scholarly, jargon-filled journals would imply. This is not to discredit their theoretical intellect, but to suggest that maybe the principal behind the novel is relatively simple. Maybe the power behind Hardy's novel does not come from skilled manipulation of words, the Greek allusions, or complex symbolism, although

each of these things is important. Perhaps Hardy, like his characters, was motivated by love--the love of women, the love of writing about them, and the love of his own response to that writing.

Dr. Pitirim Sorokin, a learned scholar himself, says, "We are biased against theories that try to prove the power of love--they appear unconvincing, superstitious, and certainly unscientific" (18). This is certainly true of some of the modern analytical approaches to literature and the readers behind them. "Love" seems too "simple" an answer to the intellectual side; it isn't "noble" enough. But surely the human side, the heart, asks, "Is love simple?" or "What could be more noble than love?" Maybe this is the dilemma Thomas Hardy faced. Perhaps he attempted to express all that was in his heart for Thomasin and Eustacia within the confines of the existing literary technique. If his style appears clumsy, it is possibly an extension of the difficulty he faced in being, simultaneously, an emotional participant of the plot and its objective creator. Rosalind Miles comments on this in her essay "The Women of Wessex":

As a lover he becomes too involved with his fictional creations; as that we feel that the blood that courses through the veins of his heroines is drawn straight from his own heart. Hardy tries hard to make the reader see these women in his way. By such phrases as "our Eustacia," Hardy seems to commend them to our affection. But what he really means is "my Eustacia." A true Pygmalion, Hardy seems to have undergone a series of verbal and imaginative love affairs with his creatures (Miles 32).

The Return of the Native is a time-honored piece of work. The intricate technicalities are a source of its esteemed distinction, but so is the truth behind it. It is unfortunate that many of the same characteristics that make Hardy's novel appealing also disturb some readers. One might simply accept Eustacia's apparent superficiality without further investigation to see what exists below the dramatically painted exterior or remember only Thomasin's submissiveness instead of her concealed, but very

substantial, strength. Perhaps this novel, as many of Hardy's writings, angers some women/feminists because they are not ready to accept and acknowledge the "Thomasin" or "Eustacia" within themselves. As previously implied, much of Hardy's success comes not from his intellectual tidiness, but from the human truths behind his works. Somehow these truths survive, transcending the title of "classical literature," the complexity of psychological analysis, and maybe even the monotony of college research papers.

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Contributors

LYNNE BANISTER is a freshman working on a degree in Marketing Education. She currently lives in and owns an exercise business in Cumming.

RACHEAL FORRESTER is a freshman honors student at Gainesville. Raised in northern Hall County, Racheal developed an appreciation for nature and her country surroundings. She plans to major in Fashion Merchandising. Racheal's essay "Why Georgians Should be Concerned with the United States' Contribution to Canada's Growing Acid Deposition Problem" is this year's 1st place prize winner in the essay category of the Gainesville College Writing Contest.

JOHN E. MCKAY, whose essay won first place last year, is a sophomore at Gainesville College. John plans to study engineering and has begun writing a book based on his experiences as an Advanced Emergency Medical Technician for Grady Hospital.

JOHN PICKELSIMER is a Forsyth County Marshall and a freshman at Gainesville College. His essay "Death by Accident" was chosen as the 3rd place essay entry in this year's Writing Contest. John hopes to receive a degree in criminal justice.

LISA ROBERTS is a freshman English major and is one of this year's co-editors of *PERCEPTIONS*, the College's arts magazine. Lisa has played the piano since she was six years old.

DONDI VICKERS, author of "Hardy and the Women of the Heath" received 2nd place in this year's writing contest. A 1988 graduate of Gainesville High School, her interests also include Spanish and the theatre. She hopes to one day to be a playwright. Dondi has transferred and is now attending Berry College as a sophomore English major.

hoi polloi is typeset in Palatino, a serif type face of grace and command.
