




5-2011

2011 Literary Review (no. 24)

Sigma Tau Delta

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-2011-

LITERARY REVIEW

An Upsilon Sigma Chapter (Sigma Tau Delta) Publication

May 2011

WHITTIER COLLEGE

Whittier, California

No. 24

2011

Literary

Review

Whittier College

May 2011

Number 24

*An Upsilon Sigma/Jessamyn West Chapter Of
Sigma Tau Delta Publication*



2011 Literary Review Editors: Réme Bohlin and Mary Helen Truglia

Sigma Tau Delta Advisor: Dr. Sean Morris

*The 2011 Literary Review was designed and laid out in Microsoft Word
by Mary Helen Truglia.*

*The front cover photograph, “Contemplation at Normandy” by
Catherine F. King was edited in Adobe InDesign by the brilliant Jade
Blessinger of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.*

*The back cover photograph, “Nature’s Playfulness” by Carlyn
Werderman was edited in Adobe InDesign by the talented Jade
Blessinger of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.*

The book is set in various sizes of Times New Roman and Monotype Corsiva fonts.

*Printing was supervised and completed by Highlight Graphics USA
Company, in Santa Fe Springs, CA.*

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank a number of delightful people for their participation in this labor of literary love:

Professor Sean Morris: Thank you for your constant enthusiasm, advice, and for opening your home to our (incredibly long) reading party. This book could not have come into being without you.

The English Department Faculty: Professors Charles Adams, Tony Barnstone, Charles Eastman, Wendy Furman-Adams, William Geiger, Sean Morris, dAvid pAddy, and Andrea Rehn – thank you for astounding us with your literary brilliance both in and out of class, and for helping English majors and all students learn to write and read with efficiency, style, thoughtfulness, and beauty.

Angela Freeland, the English and History Departments' secretary: Thank you for your help and constant kindnesses.

Freddie Malcomb and Kallia Wade: Thank you for staying many hours past the call of duty to help read the piles of submissions! Your dedication is extraordinary! We see many a "sliced loaf cake" in your future!

Jade Blessinger: Thank you for sharing both your time and design expertise with us! All of the work herein would literally lack a cover without your skills!

Everyone who submitted to the Lit Review: We are so impressed by the breadth and scope of the many submissions we received this year! Although only some are published herein, we want to thank each and every person who allowed us the privilege of reading your hard work.

Media Council: Thank you for all of your help with the funding of this year's Lit Review.

Highlight Graphics Co.: Thank you for working with us and our changing deadlines!

In Memoriam:

Melanie Sorensen and Dr. Sharad Keny

To two kind and intelligent ladies, the students, staff, and faculty of Whittier College remember you with love and mourn both of your losses.

Sweet is the memory of distant friends! Like the mellow rays of the departing sun, it falls tenderly, yet sadly, on the heart. ~Washington Irving

Unable are the loved to die. For love is immortality. ~Emily Dickinson

Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 2011 *Literary Review*! It has been several months and many long hours in the making, and we are thrilled to be able to share the poetry, prose, and artwork within.

In editing the *Literary Review*, we endeavored to pull writing selections from various disciplines: English Literature, Economics, Philosophy, and Art History, just to name a few. We are pleased with this year's contributions, making the *Review* a fair representation of academic work at the college. Reading submissions early one Sunday morning, we could not help but admire the talents of our peers. While some submitted long and witty poems on philosophy, others sent in stunning artwork and photographs from travels abroad. Still others submitted well-written essays on topics as varied as Epicurean ethics, the marketing strategy of tennis player Maria Sharipova, and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. In short, we are very proud of this year's *Literary Review* and of its contents.

Our Whittier chapter of the international English Honors Society, Sigma Tau Delta, is named not only with the Greek letters Upsilon Sigma, but in honor of a Whittier alumna: Jessamyn West, Class of 1923. In the literary world, she is best known for her 1945 novel, *The Friendly Persuasion*. She created a literature appreciation group on campus prior to the existence of Sigma Tau Delta, was a founder of the Palmer Society, and curious Whittier students can even see many of her manuscripts in the Jessamyn West Room within our Bonnie Bell Wardman Library! As graduating seniors, we empathize with her statement that "nothing is so dear as what you're about to leave." The *Literary Review* functions not only as a repository for the past school year's excellent work, but also as a literary yearbook of sorts.

As you page through the following works, we hope that you see the talent, intelligence, and ingenuity that we found within them. Thank you, Whittier College, for an incredible four years, and thank you, readers, for sharing in this community of reading and learning with us.

Sincerely,

Réme Bohlin and Mary Helen Truglia, co-editors

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements & In Memoriam.....	3
Letter from the Editors.....	4
Poetry	8
<i>Whittier Poetry Winners</i>	
1 st Ivy Han, "Discovery".....	9
2 nd Sylvia Burn, "A Sudden Blow".....	10
3 rd Shannon Jaime, "Roadkill".....	11
<i>Honorable Mentions</i>	
Jennifer Spiegelman, "My thoughts like sunlit particles".....	12
Apollonia Galvan, "Wrecking Ball".....	13
Shannon Jaime, "A Web of White Ink".....	14
Selections	
John Jackson, "The Forbidden City's".....	15
Janine Torres, "Identity Theft".....	16
Janine Torres, "Speaking Spanish".....	16
Elizabeth Reitzell, "Bottled Water".....	17
Elizabeth Reitzell, "Breaking Concrete".....	17
Nicholas Dante, "Yellow".....	17
Bryanna Benedetti, "In the Silence".....	18
Nicholas Dante, "An Autumn Night".....	19
Jessica Miller, "The Philosopher's Caffeine".....	20
Jessica Miller, "My Muse is a Goldfish".....	21
Erin Bartholomew, "Time Capsule".....	21
Victor Vargas, "Learning to Hate Mexico".....	22
Catherine King, "Ode to the Chinese Ladies".....	23
Laurin Peters, "To Stay Awake".....	24
Apollonia Galvan, "Southern Decadence".....	25
Mary Helen Truglia, "Inmost Petals".....	25
Mary Helen Truglia, "Edge Of All We Can Know".....	26
Short Fiction	27
<i>Whittier Award Winners</i>	
1 st Kallia Wade, "Recipe for Saltfish".....	28
2 nd Carling McGuire, "Coward".....	33
3 rd Jeffrey Wilson, "Faster than a Speeding Bullet".....	37
Selections	
Réme Bohlin, "Authentic".....	39
Victor Vargas, "Tulpa".....	42
Victor Vargas, "Womanhood's Fairest Flower".....	46
Christina Gunning, "The Addict".....	49
Christina Gunning, "The Box".....	52

Other Writings	55
Juliana Baez, “Happiness in Coupled Relationships”	56
Freddie Malcomb, “ <i>Scott Pilgrim & Geek Culture</i> ”	56
Catherine King, “Epilogue to <i>The God of Small Things</i> ”	58
Catherine King, “ <i>Hamlet</i> , Act I, Scene 2.5”	60

Photography & Artwork	63
Nicole Beauchamp, “Pat-riot!”	64
Noelle Navarro, “Lottery Man”	65
Kate Normand, “Children’s Area”	66
Jacquie Waldman, “Media Overload”	67
Kate Normand, “Natural History Museum, London”	68
Erik Rempen, “Floating”	69
Kyrah Leal, “Aqua di Roma”	70
Mary Helen Truglia, “In Midst of Knowledge”	71
Melissa Samarin, “The Universal Voice”	72
Trisha Ann Scherer, “Bee Twenty Too”	73
Bryanna Benedetti, “Contemplation”	74
Ryne Spejcher, “Slotted”	75
Nicole Beauchamp, “The Eye of a Little God”	76
Mary Helen Truglia, “Donde San Migueleños Viven”	77
Bryanna Benedetti, “California Winter Dreams”	78
Nicole Beauchamp, “Annals of a Sinking City”	79

Scholarly Writing	80
--------------------------	-----------

First-Year Winners

1 st —Faraz Zaerpoor, “ <i>The Meat of the Matter: Putting God Back in the American Hotdog</i> ”	81
2 nd —Alejandra Gaeta, “ <i>Unintended Consequences: The Ironic Results of the US-Mexico Border Fence</i> ”	81
3 rd —Patrick Norton, “ <i>Dreamers and Settlers</i> ”	85

Gender & Women’s Studies Writing Contest Winners

1st: Alejandra Gaeta, “ <i>Las Hijas de Juarez: Femicide in Juarez</i> ”	88
2nd: Bryanna Benedetti, “ <i>Hell Hath No Fury: Christian Backlash Against Feminism</i> ”	92
2nd: Meg Oka, “ <i>Outlaw Poverty, Not Prostitution</i> ”	104
3rd: Julie Henderson, “ <i>Switching Codpieces and Corsets: Cross-Gender Casting in Shakespearean Performance</i> ”	108

3rd: Yamila Perez, "Pretty Boys on a Platter:
Catering Beautiful Musicians to Japanese Women" 118

Selections

- Réme Bohlin, "Milton's Hell: A Land of Punishment
for the Misuse of Free Will and Hope" 124
- Bryce Holewinski, "Harmony to Behold in Wedded Pair:
Viewing Marriage through Milton's Paradise Lost" 130
- Shannon Jaime, "This Side of the Womb: Conceptions of
Innocence in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Winter's Tale*" 136
- Nicholas Dante, "Snow's Two Cultures and
Whittier College" 143
- Kyrah Leal - Dan Graham's *Past Future Split Attention*:
The Question of 'Who am I?' 145
- Patrick Norton, "Dada is Not Quiet" 149
- Boryana Tsenkova - The Importance of the Protagonist as
a Political Tool in *Germinal*, *Mary Barton*, and *Hunger* 152
- Carlee Shults, "Portland's Zoobombers" 159
- Apollonia Galvan, "The Domestic Sphere:
A Guide to the Inner Workings of Gothic Characters" 162
- Marcus Arman, "Maria Sharapova: Tennis Champion,
International Icon, Marketing Superstar" 166
- Julia-Ellen Spruill-Smith, "A Defense of Epicurean Ethics" 171
- Carlee Shults, "You Know I Don't Speak Mexican!:
A Linguistic Look at, like, *Clueless*?" 178
- Nicole Beauchamp, "Language and Loss:
The Relationship Between J.P. Patel and Power" 182
- Yamila Perez, "Travel as Neocolonialism: The Tourist
and Rainmaker as Self-Interested Takers" 187
- Mary Helen Truglia, "Tortuous Language and the Language of Torture:
Authority, Allegory, and Ambiguity in
Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*" 192

Poetry

“If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that it is poetry.”

—Emily Dickinson

First Place Whittier Poetry Contest

Ivy Han

Discovery

Julia stands naked before me with her legs slightly spread open; one hand reaching up to cover her cheek and the other hand stretching diagonally across to curl around her hip bone. She excites me as an artist – or at least that’s what I tell myself, ignoring the warm wetness between my legs. My mind is occupied by thoughts of what two women can do to one another – but I dispel them with a shake of my head. Watching her, I quickly cover my canvas. My brush strokes the curves of her feminine body, calculating the ratio between her breasts and hips, her sensual grace and raw beauty. I swirl my brush lovingly to mark her nipples, her navel, and the hair between her nether regions. Changing poses, she arches her neck into her long, almost masculine, fingers while I stare in awe of her fluid portrayal of humanity. With my brush, I chase her through each transformation, caught up in the thrill of painting her soul as she stirs something within mine. One look from her and I abandon the brush in favor of my fingers, the canvas in favor of her skin. Grazing my teeth against her neck, her jaw, her cheek, and the upper cartilage of her right ear, I listen for her moans and gasps as guidance into this unknown territory. Tenderly, I kiss her soft lips and swirl my tongue against her nipples, her navel, as I continue to travel downward where Life unfolds between her folds. She explores my body with her burning fingers and burning tongue, a trail of fire lingers to mark her caresses. My heart quickens and breathing is no longer a necessity. The momentum carries me towards heaven where stars are colored in magenta, violet, aquamarine, and bright orange. As our touches cool to comfort rather than passion, we sleep entwined in each other – both of us with soft paint-covered smiles.

Second Place Whittier Poetry Contest

Sylvia Burn

A Sudden Blow:

The great wings beating still –
The wet morning bitter and bloody-married,
olives popped in mouths, held between teeth
and smiles, and I am drunk with
sleeplessness and resolute. I am doing this.
And he, like Leda's downy, pulsing conqueror,
will conquer me and we're smiling
because we can't not, it isn't even a question.
At 8 AM the bar is sticky and overflowing
with people just like us, shaking and
staring down into the world in their glasses.
"This is epic," he murmurs, and takes
a piece of ice from my cup, sucks it
between his lips and we get up to go.
I'm putting on my black coat, death march
to the car, the car, the car,
where everything will end
and the river will swallow me whole.
A sudden blow,
his great wings beating.

Third Place Whittier Poetry Contest

Shannon Jaime - Roadkill

Morning rises in my windshield.
Music shakes the glass.
I see a skunk in the middle of the highway,
its tangled pink entrails smoking in the sun,
its fur smeared like black and white paint
on the asphalt, its eyes
staring into nothing.

It's shameful,
when I've never seen a man die, to be disturbed by this.
It's pathetic, when I've never seen his innards spilling out of him,
his bones piercing, collapsing into his flesh, his blood
mingling with the strange dust,
in a country we have named but don't understand

when I don't even know the caliber of rifle
clinging to his chest like a deadly lover,
when I've never heard him scream *oh god don't let me die or
bomb the whole motherfucking plaza so we can get out of here,*
or cry out as if his very sinews were unraveling

when I've never clasped his hand in mine
as he rots slowly, crushed beneath
the weight of our forgetting,
in the filthy gutters of the Gabor road.

...

If I knew you, I would cry for you.
If I knew how much you suffered, I'd let tears
scald my face until we both burst into flame.
If I knew you I could at least love you or hate you
and step for a split second outside
our attempts at perfection, and let these bodies
explode until we were not man or woman or statistic but
beings of agony and light.
If—
But the moment's passed.
My heart is lighter now.
I can breathe. Palm fronds sway in the breeze.
The sky's blue and beautiful.
Loud beats lodge comfortably, complacently,
silver-coated bullets in my brain,
as I drive past the silent wreckage
and leave it all behind me—
the tongue hanging from a gaping mouth,
the paws splayed out in all directions.

Whittier Poetry Contest – Honorable Mention

Jennifer Spiegelman - My thoughts like sunlit particles surround me

Your body explodes on the shelf while I'm doing the dishes
The flash of your toe brushes against my eyelid
And your tooth gets caught in my ear

The light captures your pupil sneaking off with my dress
While your pinky and kneecap take refuge in the cupboard

I try to catch your freckles with the vacuum
But they disappear into the cushions
I throw out your chest
But find your nipples in the recycling

The particles clog the drain
I try to snake out your leg
But your nose kicks me
I turn on the music to swallow your mocking left hand
But your damn thumb was hiding in the outlet

The wind cushions your eyes as the rest of you engulfs my feet
You swirl like a tornado around my calves
You strangle my thighs and hack away at my hip
I surrender when you wring my stomach

And all your sunlit particles dance as my breath molds

Whittier Poetry Contest – Honorable Mention

Apollonia Galvan – Wrecking Ball



My body grays as I feel his hand bulldozing through my waist,
I'm so proud of you, Apollonia, my dad rumbles,
his head cranked permanently to me as I exhibit my award.
My stepmother sits beside him like a barricade,
clamping her hands together tight
so a blow-up won't materialize.
Her reddened face,
her tense mouth,
her eyes
knifing onto my certificate.
She is mad that she can't get pregnant,
can't get my dad to turn around.
I know this at seven.
There's my grandma at the forefront of this battleground.
Her smile...
regal,
genuine,
conscious.
Her sepia stare shows that she can't save me.

Whittier Poetry Contest – Honorable Mention

Shannon Jaime – A Web of White Ink

*There is nothing impure as purity,
you say, adrift upon a pristine lone-
liness. Scattered across infinity,
the world of clockwork God and glass, our bones
recoil from perfection, seeking love.*

So now I'm stranded on these shores of snow
and shit and innocence, the dark milk of
my soul blazing like mint-green stars, aglow
like white ink on a page. The cat's eye burns,
incinerates my undermind, the strands
of silk and dream I've woven. This black sea
within, this holy black desire, yearns
for dawn. Your melancholy web expands.
Ah, but nowhere is everywhere. Is me.

John Jackson – The Forbidden City's

The Forbidden City's
9,999 rooms are all
empty and red, bleakly
boring and
fallen snow resting
like sleep along
walls roofs and
statues do nothing
for me. My eyes
are sore, legs are
bored and I can't stand
seeing another temple,
always a mirror
of the last one.
We come out
the back of the city,
crossing a *feng shui*
moat alive with vendors.
Our tour guide tells us
not to buy anything, they
are hungry dogs
and we can get them
cheaper elsewhere.
Our group's eyes
start to chatter as
they swallow their
fingers when they
see the panda hats! So
much cheaper than
anywhere else we've
been to. They look
at each other as
our guide waves his
flag and urges onward
and we look like
the chickens in the
cages on the sides

of streets, wondering
what our keeper
is doing with that
cleaver. We make it
to the street,
everyone a little
uneasy, but one of the girls
in our group is
too weak, so I wait
for her at the corner. I
notice a woman
sitting against the
carved railing of
the moat. I notice
she is talking to me.
There are tears
in her eyes. She lifts
her little girl bundled
stiff in rusty clothes
that I thought was a
doll, and holds her
out towards me
like Mary holding out
baby Jesus to
the light. And then
she soils herself,
dampening the middle
of her pink pants
and I can see drops
of pee start to drip
onto the ground.
A panda runs toward me
all giggles and pulls me along
the street, away from the mother.
"Don't worry, you can get one
cheaper
somewhere else."

Janine Torres - Identity Theft

My ancestors didn't worry about identity theft
They knew who they were
My brother sent me a message today
So excited that he'd discovered something about himself

There's a man in Chicago
Who has pictures of Grandma and Grandpa
And says he's researched the family history
Going back to the 1500's

Do you think we're related?
And he might know about us?
Is his family our family?
It has to be, he has the pictures

My heart aches for my brother
Because this is how it is
For some grandchildren of immigrants
Seeking from strangers clues to our identity

My dad doesn't talk about the past
Because we live here now
We are American
He changed his name from Carlos to Charlie

I wonder if he's sorry
Or regrets not learning Spanish
Or asking my grandfather more questions
About where we came from
Our legacy, our history

I asked, I took notes, I learned to speak Spanish
And surprised my grandpa with how good it sounded
So good he was worried
Because he'd been swearing over the years

Not talking about it doesn't change who we are
You can't bury an identity
And so my brother sends an e-mail
To the stranger who shares our last name
And has pictures of our grandparents

Even though he lives thousands of miles away
And is a person we've never met
In hopes of learning more about
Who he is, who we are and how we are connected

Janine Torres - Speaking Spanish

All of the old people in my family
Spoke Spanish
When they were speaking to us
But we had to speak English
Back to them

A mix, that's what we are
We hear Spanish
But speak English
We blend the two

Because it's really important
To find a good job
And that won't happen
If your accent is too thick

They didn't know it would be better
To speak both languages
You could make more money
And get a better job if you spoke Spanish
My grandfather didn't know that

Elizabeth Reitzell

Bottled Water

Plastic surf flows as
we perch on Geyser ebbs and
ride recycled waves.

Breaking Concrete

One defiant sprout
springs up, interrupting the
Synthetic landscape

Nicholas Dante

Yellow

I went to the garage this morning
looking for a hammer and found
a half empty can
of yellow paint.

You told me yellow was a neutral color,
and because we didn't want to know
if it was a boy or a girl,
you said it was the clear choice
for painting the room.

All the little toys and
pieces of furniture we bought
somehow miraculously matched
the room's dandelion walls.
Bed sets, rocking chairs, teddy bears;
all shades of sunshine.

You can barely even tell that the walls
are yellow now. They are silently
veiled in cobwebs
behind filing cabinets and boxes
full of important documents:
receipts, reports, old calendars,
and two death certificates with
the same signature in stiff black ink.

Bryanna Benedetti – In the Silence

I've been waiting for this silence all night
It's been hiding there ---
behind your empty words
of promises with no chance of keeping
and planted plans
with no promise of reaping.
The small talk of *how do you do*'s and compliments
make no recompense
for the truth concealed behind your words,
imprisoned behind your slightly parted lips.
Betrayal, sealed with a kiss
as you run out of words to say,
to cover
words to hide the name of your newest lover.

Oh you thought I didn't know
when you come home smelling of Chanel and cigarettes
and crawl into our bed amidst the silence.
And it grows and grows
taking on a mind of its own
when you work late and I stop asking.
Silence has a way of masking
itself.

'Til one day the silence is all we know
and though we play house well
it's only for show.
Dinner after dinner I watch your lips
release line after line of bullshit.
I want to laugh out loud at your ignorance,
But instead I embrace the silence
among other things.
I sit with my ankles crossed at the white linen table
staring into your eyes
listening to you fill the air with lies
and elaborate on our fable.

But in this silence which you hide
I, too, do confide:
I have secrets of my own
more than you may ever know.

Nicholas Dante

An Autumn Night

Sitting on a chocolate couch
in my arctic studio cave,
an old friend is telling me of
a new love:
some blond, buxom babe.

He does not know that this sofa
he sits upon
was once a bed for two
on sultry July nights.

Nor would he know
on that splintering stool before him
you used to rest your hard-working feet
and read my mind, smiling
at indecent thoughts.

He continues to describe this woman
with the *voice of an angel*
But all I can hear is
your low rhythmic purr,
like bare feet dancing in wool socks.

Then the music of the mix
he and I are listening to
fades into that cheesy Dylan song
you introduced me to
on Halloween
when we were warm from whiskey.

A tiger and black cat,
laughing and singing,
then touching and stroking
Uninterrupted.

These were infinite hours that ended
when I woke up
in an oven pre-heated to one hundred
and three degrees
and our flesh was sticking together
like naughty Velcro.

You peeled away and left me
with only your faint pumpkin air.

...

And now my friend, Romeo,
tells me it's getting late
and he must go;
we say goodbye.

The room is silent and so I lay
on those cushions of memory
trying to forget
that one sleeps here tonight
instead of two.

Jessica Miller

The Philosopher's Caffeine

I took one philosophy course.

Foolish me was dumb enough to take one philosophy course

That stamped corruption in a textbook and called it love.

It sliced me with the plight of women,

Who should die and who should live,

A jelly bean bag of perspectives

Pelting against my cheek bones as I skimmed the pages

Scrambling for

The Truth

The Answer

The right way to hold the map

Only to uncover Kantredictions, Millions of

Objections, Singers, Sobles, Nussbaums,

All lined up blindfolded for me to reanimate,

Deeming me the Socratic Method actor,

Until it all unraveled into one global mass

As I sprouted eyes on every surface of my body

With my knowledge of

The Truth

The Answer

The right way—though direction is only relative.

Now I am this, now

I am a golden god who can riddle you one about

Mankind—Hume

Womankind—Card

Humankind—Singer

Kind—Callicott and Daumer

So I wake up to perform my existence

If I really exist,

Wondering who or what I am performing for

And I slide my all-seeing feet into my red-slicking heels—

But these are a symbol of female oppression.

Burn them. Burn them!

And I sweep my arms through the sleeves of my dress—\

They expect me to wear a dress.

I'll show them,

Chauvinistic patriarchal gendered hierarchal socio-sexual-political bastards.

I'll present myself in long pants (black); sneakers (gray);

And a white shirt that shields and defends my objectifiable breasts.

Well.

Now I look like a man.

And I won't reinforce that patriarchy

By imitating a thing that makes having a big ass feel like a crime.

I am Woman, hear me roar!

(What does a woman's roar sound like?)

I want to be a woman-look like a woman-

Without being a man and

Betraying my vagina with a silk tie.

Female but not feminine

Male but not masculine

The Switzerland of sexuality

A toss-up of a gender, really,

But last time I checked

Gender is a social construct

Just like race

And marriage

And the unethical farming of animals.

I'll just have to go naked!

Yes!

Clothes are social constructs!

HA! Nice try, male priests and politicians.

I will call as I scamper off into the woods to

Treat the moss with the same respect I treat

my mother

And epitomize my own external

philosophical

perfection

Until I die of starvation

Because the fruits of the trees

Are a mere means to my appetite.

I suppose philosophy is an end in itself.

Jessica Miller - My Muse Is A Goldfish

My muse is a goldfish in an old apple juice jar;
its fins curve rhythmically in the water and
make sultry adjustments with each twitching motion.
It slides along neutrally in a 4-inch diameter world,
feeding off the last atomies of sugar-water
which become a sweet, slow corrosion.
It cannot talk, cannot fight, cannot change
anything but itself-- drifting in a circle, not knowing what a circle is.
It get sad, then forgets, then gets scared, then forgets,
until it dies, and after a day or two, I forget.

Erin Bartholomew - Time Capsule

* Based on George Ella Lyon's "Where I'm From" Poem

I am from yellowed linoleum countertops,
flowerpots flooded with African violets, and plaid couches.
I am from the Japanese peach tree
that crouched in my front yard, its blossoms surrendering
to steaming summer asphalt.
I am from ivy that wound around the
oak tree's splintered bark,
stitching nature's lacerations.

I am from the tree house made by cracked plywood
and my father's calloused palms.
I'm from frog-shaped goggles and pruned finger tips,
from chlorine scented skin and tangled hair.
I'm from "Goodnight Moon" and "The Hungry Caterpillar,"
with a Raggedy Anne doll
and butterfly kisses.

I am from "Free Fallin" and "Gypsy."
From Nana and Pop-Pop,
their igloo home in Buffalo.

I'm from corn pudding and strawberry pie,
from secret family recipes.
I'm from the plastic pink time-out chair
that sat in the corner of the play room,
from dress up boxes drowning under rainbow beads and Indian headdresses.

Sleeping in the quiet of my closet is a shoe box,
stuffed with swim team ribbons,
dried up nail polishes, and baby pictures.
A time capsule, preserving all that is me.

Victor Vargas - Learning to Hate Mexico

As a child,

I spent some time in Mexico.

I learned the tongue and loved the people

And loved the tongue and learned the people

As a child,

I—Laughed with friends,

Chased the pigs around their sty,

Pressed the blade to the charred meat,

The heat of the day taught me to love the lunch of beans,

And a rattlesnake will be the best lover I'll ever flee.

Small, cramped, it smells like soggy orange juice and feet

Our small, two room apartment with the single, drooping bed we all share

All four of us

The parrot down below cursed in Spanish

I cursed back in English

I've fallen down the narrow staircase : It hurts like a bitch

And I hated this small, insignificant Mexican town

I hated the drunks sprawled in front of the bar, my dad among them

I hated the way no one could swim and the lake was brown with dirt and blood

I hated the way everyone looked at me like I was a delicious, fat cow

And somewhere in all that hate, maybe I loved it a little too.

Childhood like a Paradise Lost,

Michael the fallen angel leading me by hand to the bathroom,

Dark kisses are the best kind of motivation,

The police took away my cousin one night,

But really it was me they took away and they never gave me back.

At some point I had to admit that I didn't know who I was

But that was alright because apparently no one else knew either

Spanish conquest

Mexican blood

English words

Catholic Education

So I tried calling myself Hispanic

But I wasn't from Spain

So I tried calling myself Mexican

But I wasn't from Mexico

So I tried calling myself Chicano

But—

“Not accepted by Anglo-Americans as true Americans

Not accepted by Mexicans as true Mexicans”

That's from UrbanDictionary.com - What the fuck.

And it snowed one day, when Christmas was nigh

And I ran out into the field of rocks and cow shit

And the cold touched my skin and chilled my breathe

And there was beauty in the sky, in a land blotted by the conquest and search for gold

And I slipped on some ice and clunked my head on something hard

And I cried then, but I laughed later because this was pain tied to Mexico.

Catherine F. King

Ode To the Chinese Ladies With Lily Feet Studying A China That Once Was:

After the ideal
For masculine skill
Was redefined
As 'Scholar'
Men became
Softer, Heavier
More feminine-looking
Needed something
To differentiate
Male and female
Hence,
Foot
Bind
Ing

The professor asks someone
To demonstrate walking with 'golden lilies'
There is silence. I stand up.
I want the sense firsthand.
The professor tells me to try and walk
On only my big toes
My gait is clumsy, slow,
A little child again playing ballerina
Badly
I 'walk' around the table, feeling foolish
"Now there's a rapist chasing you! Run!"
In try and falter,
Only swaying more rapidly,
Like a bell clanging in alarm
But it is not only my ill-used legs
My face is hot. I feel weight on my shoulders
Anger, too proper to be voiced,
Shame too meek to be spoken,
Outrage too faded to be strong
But so many
Faded voices
So many
little angers
From across an ocean and many dynasties
How dare I mock their pain
How dare I mock their beauty, their battered pride
How dare I
How dare I?

The demonstration is done.
I sit down again.
I understand now what a Hungry Ghost is.

I run, I ran, and I will run.
I swim, I swam, and I will swim.
I dance, I danced, and I will dance

On the River of Stars
(Polluted now to dim by the River of
Electric Lights)
I send this message:
Forgive me, ghosts with bird feet
Ladies whose spirits were as weak as your
feet
Ladies whose strength could have borne
mountains
Forgive me my pantomime,
And I shall memorialize you
The only way I know how
Through
Feet
Of
Poetry

Laurin Peters – To Stay Awake

To Sleep by Charlotte Smith

Come, balmy Sleep! tired nature's soft resort!
Oh these sad temples all thy poppies shed;
And bid gay dreams, from Morpheus' airy court,
Float in light vision round my aching head!
Secure of all thy blessings, partial Power!
On his hard bed the peasant throws him down;
And the poor sea boy, in the rudest hour,
Enjoys thee more than he who wears a crown.
Clasp'd in her faithful shepherd's guardian arms,
Well may the village girl sweet slumbers prove
And they, O gentle sleep! still taste thy charms,
Who wake to labor, liberty and love.
But still thy opiate aid thou dost deny
To calm the anxious breast; to close the streaming eye.

To Stay Awake

Oh balmy sleep do not come, for nature is far too young to be tired.
And my rosy temples and poppies are beginning new life!
And my happiest dreams can come when I am ready to go to sleep.
And my head is no longer aching, since I took an aspirin.
And all my blessings are secured by the man above.
By the way, the peasant sold his hard bed on eBay,
Since he got a better deal at Ikea.
As for the sea boy, he disappeared with the ancient mariner,
To sail to Australia, in search of koala bears!
And he who wears a crown, does not enjoy sleep anymore,
Since he prefers to dance all night with his girlfriend Katrina!
And the faithful shepherd has run away with the village girl,
To elope and party all night in fabulous Las Vegas!
O Gentle sleep! Please do not infringe upon my right to stay out late!
Since I am far too young to go to sleep at 10 P.M. like the others.
So please, close my streaming eye, when I say goodbye to nightlife!

Apollonia Galvan - Southern Decadence

A glass of Cognac rests on the chocolate colored bar,
murmurs of madness and drunkenness
derive from a Mississippian tongue.

Tennessee Williams,
in his tawny suit and tie
talks of his sister's schizophrenia.
He's found his Blanche Dubois.

He lingers still
listening to the chimes of streetcars,
the notes of saxophones,
the screech of inhuman voices.

His eyes close,
His mind heats
till the colors of the boulevards blend in.
He marks his next move
with the stroke of his cigar.

Taking out his pen,
he looks to paint the Louisiana mood,
as the sounds of New Orleans brass begin to sapphire the sundown sky.
The French Quarter glows.

Mary Helen Truglia – Inmost Petals

The inmost petals of your heart are pale
as snow that falls at night in empty wells.
Snowflakes sleep in mounds that morning's light unveils
as softly rounded, silent, frozen bells.
No wine, no sacrament or gong can wake
these petals pressed like praying hands, unless
some loss, the kind that causes saints to shake
and weep, arrives to strike a deep distress.
Then, when everything you understand
is lost, when everything you think you are
dissolves into a blaze of fear that stands
beside you in the dark, a lethal star,
those snowy petals unfurl, warmth takes wing,
and blossom with the ripening blood of spring.

Mary Helen Truglia – Edge Of All We Can Know

For Jackson

Maybe someday I'll lie and tell you
"There is no war."
I dream that by the time you walk
without falling
the war won't sear you
because it will be over.

Something that looks like baby's breath
grows wild in the canyon within eyes' reach.
One inhalation and you bring the world
to genuflection – rebirth in the dead of winter,
warmth from snow.

Every so often, I still mourn that I could not
hold you that first day you wailed
into existence, could not give you that most human
of all greetings – touch. I wished you into
my dreams, caught in the deepest blue
cielo of another land.

Downtown lights stir blinking eyes
fresh from northern climes.
A gentle gurgle from the next room
is infancy waking, wanting more
than I presume to understand.

Rocking you, I invent new words
to old lullabies while five in the morning
turns to six. Any minute now

the world will pause,
pushed to a precipice by your eyes.
You can only see to a foot's edge
where every face becomes a field
of possibilities,
where the rain still tastes
like mobile-spun innocence.

A thrush sings the day into light
as a thrush sang a thousand years ago
and the day rubs the dark off its hands.

Short Fiction

Fiction reveals truths that reality obscures.

Jessamyn West

First Place Whittier Short Fiction Contest

Kallia Wade - A Recipe for Saltfish

Ingredients:

½ lb. Saltfish (codfish)
1 dozen ackees
1 small onion
1 tsp. black pepper
3 slices hot scotch bonnet pepper
1 small red sweet pepper
Cooking oil

Method:

1. *Soak saltfish in warm water to taste*

“Millie! Make sure you wash the saltfish good, I don’t want it too salt.”

Mother was always shouting something or other to me—mainly specifications on how to complete a given task that she had already explained to me umpteen times before. “Wash the white clothes with only blue soap, or else it will still show the armpit stains,” “When you tidy your room, take care not to forget where you put my duster, because the last time you forgot I had to use a dirty piece of cloth for weeks.”

I don’t like ackee and saltfish.

More particularly I don’t like ackee, even as I made the traditional Jamaican meal for Mother it occurred to me that I never did. For some reason I found the inclusion of the fruit unnecessary and corrupting. I often questioned why the recipe called for us to take a singularly, worthwhile meal of seasoned saltfish and fried dumplings and add to it a fruit that was not—in my opinion at least—meant to be eaten. If the pegs were not cleaned of the toxic red interior properly, the effect would be severe vomiting, and seizures. Every time I cooked it I was reminded of the time at primary school when Monty Jackson had bragged of making the meal for himself and packing it for lunch. The result was Monty being carried off to the sick bay after throwing up his packed lunch all over the stone benches by the metal swing set.

Ackee is poisonous.

As I placed the salted codfish into the plastic, pink colander, I tried to remember how long it was that I had this ‘silent submission and compliance’ approach to my mother’s unnecessary ranting and raving.

It never used to be that way. Actually, before Mr. Thompson came, I remember that my mother and I used to talk. Letting the cold water from the tap run over the slimy, grey scales of preserved fish, washing away the pungent smell of sea salt, I let myself reflect on the days when I would climb into mother’s bed.

I never knew why I always wanted to lie on her stomach. It wasn’t particularly flat, neither was it taut with the worked muscle I knew she had from lifting loads of laundry, and from scrubbing and polishing the expanses of cold stone floors of her employers. Instead her tummy reminded me of pain. Against my face her stomach felt like the crushed pumpkin she forced me to eat every morning and it was drawn with the deep but pale lines that roamed from the edge of her slip, past

her navel and up and around to her lower back—evidence of the hard child birth she had had with me. I would lay there for as long as I could and as often as I could (mostly on weekends when she did not have to go Miss Angela or Miss Jacqueline or old Mister Albert up the street). She would sleep and I would lay there, normally with a book, reading or asking her my eight-year-old, questions about life: “Why did Mister Albert never walk anymore?”, “Why couldn’t I play with Miss Jacqueline’s children or go to their school or have their toys?” I would do this until she had to leave to go to the market, or till the sweat and warmth forming between our bodies became too much for her and she would shove me off her, telling me to move to my bed or grumble a loving but irritated “go find something to do, girl-child”.

I loved those times.

I never thought the day would come when she would spurn my company, only talking to me when she needed to tell me to do something—normally followed by a “You never did it right.”

But that day came.

2. *After soaking saltfish, place it in cold water and boil.*

Letting the saltfish simmer, I moved on to place the lid on the steel pot, stopping to check with a spoon how salty the water was. The taste of metal mixed with the still too salty brine in my mouth and I poured off some of the water into the sink and replaced it with fresh water. As I walked to and from the rusted refrigerator—old with time and peeling because of the salty sea air that flowed throughout the island of Jamaica, particularly affecting our shanty house on the beach—I let myself relive the years leading up to Mr. Thompson.

As I passed my ninth, tenth, and eleventh birthdays, Mother would always ask me if it had happened yet. Looking back, I guess she was especially nervous about my crossing over into adolescence. She would ask me if I needed deodorant or whether I had started growing hair in special places or whether I thought it was time to upgrade from the merino tank tops I wore under my school uniform, to the tighter and more supportive cotton contraptions I heard the girls bragging about on the primary school playground.

Mother got progressively more nervous when I informed her about the fuzz under my armpits and when I confirmed her suspicions about needing a bra after all.

When I received my monthly gift from Mother Nature on May 22nd, at the age of twelve, (I remember because Monty at school had been laughing really hard at the fact that there was a particularly gross red blotch on my bloomers when I went upside down on the monkey bars) Mother was in a frenzy—needless to say, I never went upside down on the monkey bars again.

She tried to tell me about the birds and the bees, or rather the hummingbirds and the mosquitoes, if one was to use prevalent Jamaican flying creatures to describe the conversation she had with me.

She told me about how I should stay clean and that I could no longer play rough with Monty and the other boys at school.

She said I had to come right home after school and not play marbles on the floor because young ladies don’t do those things.

She told me that I wasn’t to let anyone touch me and to tell her if they did.

I shouldn’t have told her when they did.

3. *Using only ripe, open ackee, clean and remove the seeds, taking care to get rid of all traces of interior red pit from ackee pegs.*

As far back as I remembered my mother always had dates. They would never sleep over or stay for prolonged periods at the house, but they would visit, many times calling out from the white-washed picket fence in the yard for “Miss Madge”, or “Madgey”, or “Sister Madge”. These, I assumed, were not in any way serious affairs. The men would appear in our lives the way the little, beige, pepper-pot soup clams washed up on the white sand beach down the hill and then they would disappear just as quickly with the tide. The day Mister Thompson walked in from the beach I should have known his slow and searching gaze would not be as unimposing as the indentations left behind from the clams in the sand.

Mr. Thompson was the first man mother decided to introduce to me since my father decided to leave us when I was three. I guess my mother really liked him because eventually his weekly visits turned into a constant presence and then slowly his things started to become regular household fixtures in our lean-to structure my dad had built for us before he left. At first I just noticed his brown dirt-caked, worker-man boots by the front door, but then his sharpened shaving knife appeared by the kitchen sink and his dirty, cement splattered shirts were gradually added into the weekly laundry. Soon, Mister Thompson himself became a regular fixture in our household, as he moved right in to mother’s little bedroom.

I don’t remember when it was that I noticed his gaze. I just remember I always had a feeling of unease when he was around me. His eyes roved the burgeoning bumps of my young chest and slid down to my growing hips. He would wink at me when I bent to place his plate in front of him at dinner time—of course never in front of Mother. For a long time I ignored his unwanted flirtations, as we were never alone at home together. His work at the construction site, the next town over, normally kept him away from home till mother came home from cleaning houses.

One day however in the middle of summer break, Mister Thompson did not go off to work at the construction site in the morning. I remember mother fussed about him before she went to clean house at Miss Jacqueline because he had complained of a headache and sore throat. After giving him her fool-proof cerasee tea (of which she had almost drowned me with several times when I started to show signs of illness), she left him in bed to recover, telling me to mind him and not be too noisy in the house.

I went about my usual duties that day, starting with my routine sweeping out of the house and then I attempted to finish a book my friend Malika told me was “the best thing since sliced bread.” In the afternoon I started on crocheting the black and purple bathing suit I wanted to wear to the youth retreat put on annually by the community centre down the street.

When the sun was high in the sky and the warmth of the house became too much for me to bear—I had messed up on the looping of the section I had worked on because of my sweaty palms—I made my way to the kitchen to get myself a drink of the lemonade I saw mother make the night before. Sitting at the table, Mister Thompson had propped himself up on the wooden chair with mother’s nice bedroom pillows (I remember thinking that she was going to be very angry if she saw someone removed them) once again glaring at me with the predatory stare I had reconciled with myself was just something he did.

“Millie! Pass me a bottle of Malta out of the fridge there for me,” his raspy voice called out to me. I responded by doing just that, thinking nothing of retrieving the malted beverage that he had stacked in the fridge and drank daily. When I carried it over to him he grasped the bottle in my

hands, but instead of taking it and allowing me to step back and finish pouring my lemonade he also grabbed at my waist.

I remember that I had asked him if he wanted something else, staring fearfully into his face. But at that point he wasn't listening; he simply lifted and carried me to Mother's bedroom despite my calling out, screaming, crying, scratching and biting. I think nothing could have stopped Mr. Thompson from doing what he did to me that day on mother's green and red floral print sheet set.

When Mr. Thompson threw me onto bed the coolness of the linen raked against my hot skin, his fingernails scraped into my arms where he gripped me to hold me down.

"Mr. Thompson, Mama's gonna get back soon," I pleaded with him, struggling to free myself.

"Hush up, Millie!" he ground out, his stale breath felt warm against my cheek, and he held on to me harder and stronger.

I felt him rip open my yard dress and the tiny brown buttons skittered against the stone floor. His calloused, worker-man hands roved my breast and I looked up at his face searching the deadness in his eyes for the sympathy I hoped to find but was not reflected in their depths.

"Get off me!" I choked on the sobs that rose in my throat; tears streamed from my face and they rolled down my cheeks and seeped into the floral pattern of the bed.

When he invaded my body, I screamed out from the overwhelming pain and submission I felt. The effort of forcing out the shriek had the combined effort of both exhausting me further and making me hoarse for days following the incident.

I tried hard not to listen to Mr. Thompson's grunts as he labored above me and as the saline tears streamed down my 13 year old cheeks, I watched the teacup containing Mother's cerasee tea rock and teeter off the bedside table, finally shattering against the red stone floor.

5. *Wash ackee five times. Cover and boil until moderately soft then drain cover and put aside.*

In the days that followed I told no one of what happened. Mister Thompson had warned me that he would tell my mother that I had been stealing and was lying if I said anything and he would see that I would not ever get to go to the beach retreat. I think I needed to escape on that beach retreat more than I had ever wanted to do something in my whole life.

Mr. Thompson continued to take days off from the construction site routinely during the building of the new hotel in the next town, and during those times he continually took me into mother's room. I suffered my disgrace quietly and swallowed the bile that rose in my mouth whenever he touched me.

Mother noticed from very early on that something had changed between me and Mr. Thompson. I would catch her staring at me out of the corner of her eye at dinner after I walked the long way round with my plate to get to my side of the table and ate looking down at my food in silence for the entirety of the meal. I tried to avoid Mr. Thompson as much as possible, putting his food on the table before he even walked into the room.

I remember the retreat came and went, and though the threat became null and void, it was the remaining shame that kept me from saying anything.

The day came for something to be said sooner than I knew.

Ackee is poisonous.

6. *Pick up (flake) the saltfish and remove the bones.*

“Millie! The teacher sending you home from school again?”

I watched as Mother’s face scrunched and her brow furrowed in that tell-tale mixture of frustration and concern I was constantly receiving for the past few days.

“What is wrong with you, child?” her question stirred questions of my own that had been swirling around in my mind for almost as long.

“I dunno...” I mumbled an indistinct reply.

In all of my time at secondary school I hadn’t been sent home for sickness. Not when an epidemic of pink eye broke out among the entire 8th grade class, not when cases of malaria had radio broadcasters advising parents and teachers to keep students at home and not even when the stomach flu suddenly had Monty once again sent to the sickbay for throwing up in math class. However, it seemed like I had either picked up some sort of virus because this was the fourth day Mrs. Christie was sending me home after the warmth of the morning and my nausea caused me to faint before I even completed the first assignment of the day, or Malika was right about her suspicions.

Mother shepherded me into the house complaining that this was the last time she could take off from working at Mister Albert for the week.

Woozily making my way towards the comfort of my bed, I felt sickness once again rise from my stomach and I ran outside to the wooden latrine where I emptied the crackers the nurse had given me that morning before sending me home and then some. When I got back into the house I caught mother watching me again with a look that told me there was something she wanted to say but wouldn’t.

7. *Sauté thinly sliced onions and sweet pepper rings. Removing half of the onions, add saltfish and the ackees, and turn up the fire/stove slightly. Finally, add black pepper, pour into a serving plate and garnish with remaining onions and pepper slices and enjoy!*

As I placed the dish of Ackee and Saltfish on top of the black and red, crocheted place-mat on the old mahogany table, I remembered I had left my own meal under the mesh plate cover in the kitchen.

“Mamma, the breakfast on the table!” I called out to her.

When we sat down at the table set for two, she ate her ackee and saltfish and I ate my lone seasoned saltfish with fried flour dumplings.

Meanwhile, under my housedress my stomach continued to grow with new life. I would have to find a way to break this to Mother, though I knew she already knew about my hideous secret.

Ackee is poisonous.

Second Place Whittier Short Fiction Contest

Carling McGuire - Coward

Marcus grunted into wakefulness as the car behind him blared its irritated horn. The traffic light in front of him had turned green and was already on its way to yellow. The car honked again and Marcus ran a hand over his face, trying to wipe away the fatigue. He was still in the bleary stages of switching out sleep for consciousness and had little to no idea what was going on. As he looked around, the metronome swish of the windshield wipers reminded him that it was raining. He always took comfort in the dull thud of the wipers. It was a calming, rhythmic, lulling... Marcus' eyes snapped open and he jumped as the car behind him blasted at him more viciously.

"Alright! Keep your pants on!" he grumbled to himself as he put the car in gear and pattered across the intersection. It wouldn't be too long before there was another light, he could see it up ahead. Marcus could see in his mind's eye the driver behind him rolling his eyes and thinking to himself "*Why me? Why am I stuck behind grandpa, here?*" "*Well, too bad.*" Marcus' own thoughts replied. Exactly; Too bad, so sad for the other driver. So he'd be delayed a couple minutes from his destination. Boohoo. He was too tired, and possibly too drunk, to care very much about anybody else. All he wanted was to get home, where it was safe and dry and warm and where he knew Haley would be waiting. The driver behind him would just have to be patient with him. The light coming up had begun to turn yellow and, while sober he could've mustered what little guts he had to speed through, he eased the brakes into place and came to a stop as it switched to red. The car – which upon further inspection in the rear-view was a truck – had obviously had enough of this, exclaiming a long, loud, and upsetting honk. It seemed to Marcus that the driver's plan now was to make him as uncomfortable as possible while stuck at the red. Unfortunately for Marcus, it was beginning to work. He ran his hand over his face again, squeezing the wheel tightly and setting his jaw. Before he was even fully aware of his own actions, he had his hand out the window, replying to the incessant honking with a particularly rude gesture.

The honking stopped short as Marcus pulled his hand back inside, wiping the rain off on his coat. Only then did his actions come to the forefront of his mind. What had he just done?! Suddenly his mouth was dry as the Sahara and his head was remarkably clear despite the booze. His stomach clenched and writhed like a swarm of eels. His heart was suddenly pounding erratically, doing a tap dance in his rib-cage complete with cape and hat. He stared with wide eyes into the rear-view, wondering whether –

His fears were shortly confirmed as the driver's door suddenly swung open. The driver eased out of his vehicle and stood in the rain, getting soaked as he strode towards Marcus' vehicle. The truck was far less intimidating than the man driving it. He was at least six-foot-three and looked like he smashed cinder blocks with his fists for a living. The rain had plastered his hair to his square head and had soaked his equally square body. All Marcus could bring to mind was Frankenstein's monster lumbering towards his car at a steady pace. It didn't take a rocket scientist to realize that he was about to get soundly throttled if he stuck around. It was at least two-thirty in the morning, there was barely a soul on the streets and the man was getting ever-closer, appearing to grow in size as he reached the tail-end of Marcus' car. Marcus pressed his foot to the gas, deciding he'd rather be ticketed for running a red light than hospitalized for flipping someone off. For this, he'd take the risk. He heard the sharp thud of a fist against the trunk as he wheeled away, leaving the monster man bellowing obscenities behind him.

I should have stood up to him, he thought, pulling up to a curb after taking an elaborate route to avoid being followed, *Just because he was big didn't mean I couldn't deal with him. There's no*

excuse for rudeness and he started it. Wiping cold sweat from his forehead, Marcus suddenly felt more tired than before and he was still breathing with an uneasy wheeze. He should have stayed and dealt with things. But he wouldn't. He never did. Marcus was a coward after all, a frail and paranoid creature. Not a man, no. Men stood up to their fears. Marcus was constantly on the run from his. From a young age, he had become a veritable cornucopia of worries. His mother, a particularly fussy woman, could effortlessly find every possible worst-case scenario in even the most mundane of activities. Constantly, she would watch Marcus climb trees, ride bikes, play catch with his father all the while calling out explicit warnings that perhaps he was getting too close to the street or that there might be rusty nails in the grass and to come inside.

Marcus' father, on the other hand, was quite the opposite. As a child, Marcus had been convinced that his father was indestructible. The man had endless confidence, enough for himself and his family. That is, until he met with misfortune in the form of an out-of-control semi on a crowded freeway. Five years old, Marcus stared at his father laid up in a hospital bed, breathing through a tube, and realized that his father was fragile. The worries of his mother finally burst from the dam of untroubled happiness and brought with it the fears and concerns that lurked within the world. Since then his hesitant nature had labeled him for schoolyard troubles, opportunities never met, and people never stood up to. He was only thirty-four and not unattractive, but his stresses made him seem far older, or so Haley had told him. Sometimes he wondered just how she put up with him.

He always dressed plainly, a black sweatshirt and jeans, figuring that it would attract the least attention. He had installed a third lock for the door to their apartment this year, unconvinced that someone wouldn't try to break in. He constantly checked his pocket for his keys, fearful that he'd left them on a café table or locked them in his apartment as he left. There was hardly anything left in the world that Marcus did *not* worry about. Now he was worried that he'd made an enemy that would follow him to the ends of the Earth *just* to pummel him to jelly. He'd often envied those in high positions. CEOs, Managers, Directors, all of them people who had taken a leap of faith peppered with risk and were the better for it. No matter, it seemed, how hard Haley pushed sometimes, that wasn't Marcus. Marcus sat in a claustrophobic cubicle doing dead-end IT work for those above him. His co-worker had been promoted several weeks ago because he'd had the guts to ask for a promotion. Marcus became a green-eyed monster for several days before settling back into the doldrums and paranoia that was his life.

Now as he sat against the curb, listening to the rain and the thump of the windshield wipers, Marcus cursed his fearfulness. Frankenstein's monster was likely miles away by now and yet he was still shaking. He still glanced anxiously in the rear-view mirror, expecting to see the headlights of the angry truck and its driver swing around the corner. His fears went so far as to paint the picture of the monster man suddenly rearing up from the back seat and slamming Marcus' face into the steering wheel with the force of a sledgehammer. Marcus' practically felt his teeth break against the rubber-sheathed metal. He shuddered, wiping his hand over his eyes in an attempt to expel the vision. He tried to breathe deeply; he needed to calm his perpetually frayed nerves. He opened the glove box and withdrew the trusty flask, taking a swig of courage that burned all the way down. He took several more before feeling calm enough to return it to its rightful place.

After a time, his eyelids felt heavy and the fatigue of today's work sunk into his bones yet again. Almost forty-eight hours of defragging hard-drives, clearing viruses, reformatting, and transferring data had left his eyeballs gritty and his brain fried. The seven or eight hours sleep in-between was not enough and he was certainly feeling it now. His eyelids slipped closed and the steady heart-beat thump of the windshield wipers echoed in his ears as he drifted off.

Tap tap tap

What now?

Tap tap

Why the noise? All Marcus wanted to do was sleep.

Tap

Complaining internally, Marcus finally resurfaced in the waking world, struggling to open an eye and find the source of such irritation. Upon finding the source, Marcus silently wished that he had stayed asleep. A brutish face stared at him through the driver's side window. Square head rested securely on square body. Frankenstein's monster had returned and he was tapping on the glass with something; something that should have been connected to a car, Marcus' car. The spark plugs; plucked from his engine like fresh fruit all while he'd been sleeping. Marcus' thoughts briefly flitted to the cell phone in his pocket. He could call for help, but not before his imagination conjured a vision of the monstrosity outside exploding through the window in a fury of glass and fists if he were to try. There wasn't a way out of this now. He was stranded. Marcus could no longer feel his limbs and a swarm of butterflies fluttered frantically in the pit of his stomach. The man was beckoning him with a meaty finger. Marcus felt sick and prayed to whatever Gods he could for the man to go away, but there seemed to be little chance of that. There was only one thing to do.

Trembling, Marcus got out of the car and stepped into the rain. It was chilly, but he was already so numb he couldn't tell the difference. The man looked even bigger up close, several hundred heads taller than Marcus. Marcus stared into his flat and gruesome features, which did little to try and decipher what was behind the small, dark eyes that stared back. Whatever was behind them frightened Marcus to his core. He knew he couldn't fight. It would be useless to try. There was only one other approach.

"P...please – "

"Shut up," the voice sounded like gravel being crushed under heavy tires and carried an alcoholic pungency that could intoxicate a person just by breathing it in.

Marcus closed his eyes as the man grabbed his collar, slamming him hard against the side of the car. The first fist fell, then the second and the third. Marcus' head hummed from the blows, his brain a bell that knocked painfully against the inside of his skull with every hit and rang out through his ears. It was an odd feeling, really. Almost an out-of-body experience; Marcus could feel the pain and the pummel of fists, but all the same it felt as though someone else was receiving the beating of his life. And in this tiny frame of observation, what Marcus saw infuriated him: a frail weakling being battered and bruised by a beast for a simple gesture. He had been hunted down and his car had been incapacitated for this?! And Haley must've been sick with worry by now! All the schoolyard bullies, all the stolen lunches, locker-stuffings, ice packs on fat lips as a child, opportunities missed, arguments not fought for, bosses talking down to him as an adult all flooded into his mind at once.

That helplessness, that horrible weakness, that vision of his father in that bed, barely able to open his eyes that haunted him so often suddenly took a form other than fear. Marcus suddenly felt something swell within him, a boiling, steaming mass of anger that wanted to burst forth,

spewing rage and searing the flesh of the other man like white-hot lead. Marcus felt his fists ball up, felt his teeth clench and, pouring this volatile substance into his arm, he swung.

The punch missed easily by several inches, though perhaps the gods decided to be kind in this one moment. The Frankenstein abomination jerked back surprised by the sudden attack and, in doing so, stepped on an empty bottle of Rolling Rock someone had left in the street. The ground was wet from the rain and his footing was unsteady, the bottle skidded under his foot and the behemoth lost his balance, flailing his arms and plummeting Earth-ward, cracking his head against the blacktop, out cold. Marcus stood, stunned and bloodied, panting. Slumping against the side of his car, he tried to recover his senses and wondered if the black splotch in his left eye would ever go away. *Haley is really going to kill me...*

Once the paramedics had arrived and patched up his face, the police took Marcus' statement. He explained as best he could, his head foggy from the beating it took, feeling as though he was dreaming. The policeman jotted things down in his notebook and flipped it closed after some time.

"You all right, son?" he asked.

Marcus nodded dumbly.

"You need a ride home?"

Marcus mumbled something out of his swollen lips that sounded remotely like a "please."

"Right. Hop in the back, we'll get you on home." The policeman steered Marcus with a hand on his shoulder. "Gotta say you must be one ballsy sonofabitch, pickin' a fight with King Kong over there. Y'got some serious guts, kid."

Feeling a faint spark of pride, Marcus wanted to smile. But he didn't.

He was afraid it would hurt.

Third Place Whittier Short Fiction Contest

Jeff Wilson - Faster Than a Speeding Bullet

You may not know this, but as a kid, I used to love comics. Hell, I still love comics. Superhero comics, I mean, with the stupid monikers and the improbable superpowers—not that Japanese bullshit with the huge eyes and the funky hair.

You see, comics taught me that you can be your own man, regardless of who you are. All you need is power, a purpose and an identity of your own. It didn't matter whether you were good or evil, by putting on a mask and utilizing your abilities, you entered the gaudy world of costumed warriors and endless adventure. I wanted that.

I didn't want to be just another bastard kid who never had enough to eat.

I wanted to be an orphan from space or the victim of some freak lab accident. I wanted a dark past and ninja training. I wanted a costume that branded me as entirely different from the rest of the world and a name that reiterated my individuality in every syllable.

I didn't want to grow up in a glorified shack with nothing but a despondent mother and an endless desert for company. I didn't want to be born into a life of isolation in Cochise, Arizona.

You're probably wondering who I am and why I'm telling you this.

The name of the town may be familiar to you and I imagine you trying to remember where you've seen it before. You probably fail, remembering only beer after beer after beer in the bar eighty miles away. Irretrievably lost are thoughts of that small-town girl you met in a gas station and the passion you shared.

You've probably even forgotten the decision you made over twenty years ago, when you drove out to Vegas and never came back, not realizing that you were changing three lives, not two. Would it have changed your mind to know that she was pregnant?

You're probably wondering how I know this. Or maybe you've already figured it out.

But I did not come all the way out here just because I wanted to track you down and leave you this letter. This visit is strictly professional.

You see, someone wants to send the world a message and they want to write it in your blood. Maybe you borrowed money that you never intended to pay back or maybe you just pissed off the wrong person. You might have broken another woman's heart and once again turned your back on children you didn't even know you had, but the motives of my employer are irrelevant. My point is that now I *have* power, a purpose, an identity—things that you never even tried to give me.

Even as you read this, the sights of a VSS sniper rifle are zeroed in on the back of your head and a 9x35mm bullet itches to race through skin and bone. I can almost see the adrenaline wash over you, coloring every thought you have with desperation. Hell, this could all be a joke, right? But you know better.

You're probably wondering if the window is strong enough to slow down a bullet.

The fact is that you won't be saved by some alien god-man just in time, you can't dodge a bullet, and you are not going to suddenly discover that you can generate force fields with your mind.

This isn't a fucking comic book. This is your requiem.

So sit back. Relax.

Don't look out the window (you wouldn't be able to see me anyway).

Just close your eyes and slowly put the letter down.

Réme Bohlin – Authentic

Gary felt completely ridiculous. He sat at the edge of the waves, accompanied only by a wicker basket, champagne, and petites-fours. Why had he assumed a perfumed letter automatically signified a romantic assignation? For goodness' sake, she had picked two in the morning at Gower Beach of all places! It was an unlikely spot to trade sweet nothings due to the water treatment plant at the end of the beach. He remembered a special he saw on *The Local Investigator*. Tim Dahl, the host, had investigated the claim that the plant had a hidden laboratory that involved sea turtles from Japan, arsenic, and unsuspecting school children from Panther Elementary. It had been quite a good show.

But where was she? Liza was usually so prompt when she came to walk his Jack Russell, Ruthless. She and Ruthie really got along. That's partly why he felt such a strong connection to her. And she was beautiful. She had silky brown hair that curled to her shoulders, and wide brown eyes, innocent like a doe's. And the most adorable beauty mark just above her left eyebrow. Thinking about her, his lips tingled in longing to kiss that beauty mark. Despite the cold and windy night, he felt enveloped in warmth as he thought of their meeting earlier that day.

...

Gary carefully slid the vinyl record from its autographed sleeve. His Crosley record player sat open on the oak coffee table, ready to receive a record. As he placed the record beneath the sharp needle of the Crosley he heard a knock at the door. A glance at the mantle showed it was three o'clock. Ruthie bounded from his doggie bed and raced towards the door.

"Come in," Gary called.

Liza peeked around the door and flashed a smile at Gary before bending down to run her hands through Ruthie's hairy coat. The red lips, the front teeth that overlapped just a little, cut to Gary's center and he felt a heat rise to his throat and cheeks. Suddenly itchy, he loosened his tie and wiped his hands on his biscuit colored slacks.

"Hi Gary, is Ruthie ready for his walk?"

"Yes, yes, but come in. I wanted to share something with you." He motioned her into the living room before going to the Crosley and pressing play. They sat on the couch, Ruthie between them. "L.A. Woman" came out of the record player, raucous and ready for a good time. Watching the rise and fall of Liza's golden crucifix, Gary indulged in a little fantasy.

The convertible raced the setting sun, speeding through hills burned red and brown by a long summer. Liza's hair blew straight in the wind. Gary drove with one hand, whipping around corners with the skills of Earnhardt. The other arm lay across Liza's bare shoulders. Even in his fantasy the touch was hesitant, light. They came into the Valley, the night lights glittering in the hombre's twilight. Magically, fantastically, the road ended beneath the giant "H" of the Hollywood sign. Each particle of the settling dust carried that day's sunny heat, and fell like spice on Gary's skin as his hand curled around Liza's nape.

And then The Doors ran out of lyrics, and Gary found himself the object of Liza's cinnamon gaze. He cleared his throat.

"Well? Did you like it?"

Liza's smile was warm and knowing.

"Yes, Gary, I liked it. Why that song?"

"You seem to have an appreciation for the valuable, the rare. A lot like me actually." His smile was a little stretched as he grasped for any common ground between a 25 year old woman and a man who'd begun receiving AARP.

"Anyway, the song is the title track of one of the last albums that Jim Morrison ever made with The Doors." Picking up the record sleeve, Gary showed her Morrison's autograph.

"I was lucky enough to find this autographed album on eBay." He felt pleased to be able to share this with her.

"The Doors?" Her eyes were politely puzzled as she bent over the sleeve and scratched a delicate nail over the signature. A little horrified at her ignorance and the scratching nail, Gary quickly slipped the sleeve from her hands. He put the record back in its sleeve before going to the cabinet where his other records were organized alphabetically. The Doors came after Tony Bennet but before Nina Simone. Liza came and stood at his elbow, looking at the records. The back of his neck flushed as he felt her body heat, and he only nodded when she said "I'll walk Ruthie now. See you in an hour?" Later, he would notice a piece of vellum tucked inside Ruthie's collar.

...
A chill wind brought him back to the sand, the waves, and his inadequate jacket. He adjusted the wrist tabs and zipped the collar up as high as it would go. He sighed and thought again about the note. What had it said exactly? He fished in his pants pocket and pulled out the neatly folded square of vellum. He brought it to his nose and inhaled her perfume before he spread it out on his knee to read by starlight.

*Dearest Gary,
I have waited a long time to arrange this meeting, but I have come to know that you are a good man. Will you meet me tonight at 2 a.m. at Gower beach? I'll be waiting for you.
Yours,
Liza*

Well, she didn't ask for champagne or petites-fours. But the perfume! Surely that meant something?

In any case, he'd been stood up. If she was going to make a fool of him, he wished she could have chosen a more comfortable spot. He pulled a tasseled loafer off and shook out the sand, brought out a handkerchief and carefully wiped the salt spray off the Italian leather. He considered the wicker basket, the champagne Fedexed from France, the petit-fours. His underarms felt damp thinking about her sleeping through their rendezvous, or worse, shimmying to Latin music with his neighbor and her other employer, Alejandro.

He scrubbed his hands through his graying hair, and took his glasses off, pinching his nose between two fingers. Sighing, he reached for the champagne bottle. After all, it was a 500 dollar bottle, including shipping and handling. The French version of UPS had probably laughed at the American throwing his money around. He imagined them with their thin angular faces, cigarettes hanging coolly from the corners of their mouths.

He didn't have cigarettes, but he did have the champagne. He peeled off the foil and pointed the bottle toward the water. He placed his thumbs to the cork and there was a loud POP!

Champagne bubbles joined the froth of the ocean. Gary worried about the cork. It would probably end up in the belly of a shark, or obstructing the esophagus of a penguin.

He pulled out a champagne flute and filled it to the rim. He sipped and thought about Liza, her beautiful skin, her soft voice, that luxuriant hair. Gary thought about his own sharp widow's peak, his soft belly that crept over his belt, and teeth stained by black coffee. And he felt ridiculous, stupid, delusional! Not even the shlop of seaweed washing onto shore soothed him.

...

Gary pulled into his driveway just as the night sprinklers came on. The water quickly overflowed the small patch of grass and ran into the driveway and the gutters. He left the wicker basket in the trunk, determined to deal with it in the morning. Motion censored lights helped him find his house key. As he moved to open his front door, he noticed it was slightly ajar. His heart began to pound and blood rushed to his head and feet, leaving a cold knot in his stomach.

With one finger he slowly pushed the door wide, revealing an empty foyer. But where was his marble Diana? His 19th century coat rack? His porcelain candy dishes for collecting keys and loose change? He wandered into his house, into the rooms cleaned of his hobbies and valuables. He ended up in the living room staring at an empty cabinet that used to hold the autographed album L.A. Woman. But the thieves had left something else. Ruthie's doggie bed. Gary realized he hadn't heard him bark, and he began to call his name.

"Ruthie! Come here boy! Ruthie! Ruthless! Come here NOW!"

A frantic search revealed no Ruthie. No matter how loudly he yelled no spotted terrier came trotting towards him. It became difficult to see with tears crowding beneath the lenses of his glasses. Hiccups escaped him as he pulled out Liza's note and began tearing it up methodically. Soon, it resembled wedding confetti. Hating himself, he stuck the pieces back in his pocket and slowly went out to his car. He knew that he would later tape the pieces together. He climbed into the driver's seat and the door thumped softly closed. The hiss of the sprinklers faded as Gary thought again of his L.A. woman, the dust a spice on her skin, her overlapping front teeth, her cinnamon eyes, and that scratching fingernail. The barking of a dog jarred the night and his reverie.

Victor Vargas - Tulpa¹

1

Screw denial. Screw anger. Screw bargaining. Screw depression. Screw acceptance. Screw Schrödinger's Cat while we're at it.

I wonder if Schrödinger ever mourned his cat in the box. His potentially dead cat in the box.

To exist in a paradox of mentalities, to be alive and dead and to accept and deny, I decided right away that my survival depended on this. It's a concept similar to Orwellian doublethink, no, maybe it's exactly the same.

Accept that: I am not a real; I am a voice, an imaginary friend.

Deny that: I am not real; I can think, I can move, I can listen.

The very moment that I accept one over the other, I am screwed. People have at least the minimal comfort of being told there's an afterlife. I have no one to tell me that there's an aftervoice. I don't have a lot of room for error here.

Schrödinger's cat was both alive and dead.

I am neither.

2

There's Sebastian, a young boy who lives down the street. He's my younger brother. Or an echo of him, I should say. He's one of the few who doesn't actually live in this old house, but he comes by often enough that it's easy enough to forget that. He knocks on my windows at night sometimes and invites me to talk with him out back. He's good company, so I don't mind. But sometimes I worry about him. I think that maybe he spends a little too much time here. I think that maybe it would be better if he could forget about this house...

Emily is afraid she's going to develop some weird genetic disease that runs in her family. Polycystic kidney disease, it's called. She doesn't have health insurance so she doesn't know how she's going to pay for treatment if she gets it and she's terrified of living out the rest of her life bedridden and in debt. Sometimes I just want to scream at her not to worry, but in my head she sounds so small and pathetic that I can't bear to raise my voice to her. Sometimes I'll walk up at night and hear a quiet weeping coming from another room in the house and I'll know it's her.

My mother, Esther, is inside too. I've heard that some people carry their parent's voices in their heads for years in a sort of nagging little conscious but that's not the case for me. Esther is kind, she's generous, but she doesn't like me very much. I think she'd rather not be cooped up inside my head with me so she wanders whenever she can. I'm not sure where it is she goes. My real mother died in a car accident six years ago.

Paws is a cat. When the afternoon rolls around, I'll hear it look for me in the house's different rooms and when it finds me, it'll meow incessantly around my knees until I give in and open it a can of cat food and leave it in the bathroom. But of course Paws isn't real, so later when I check the bathroom the food will still be there and I'll have to throw it out and repeat the process again tomorrow with a brand new tin because once I tried to stow away the food and give Paws the same food the next day and he ran away and he got run over by a car and I had to be rushed to the hospital with a broken leg.

There are more. A lot more. I could probably write a novel about all the voices in my head if I cared to, but I don't have the time so I'll just say this:

Kenny is gay in a frightfully stereotypical kind of way. Roger hates Kenny in a frightfully stereotypically homophobic kind of way. Chicago is a pyromaniac who lugs a fire extinguisher wherever he goes. Samantha studies really hard so that she won't fail her next Calculus test and be forced to spend summer vacation in school away from her boyfriend. Theodore is old and sometimes he stands in front of the sink in the kitchen and stares out the window, lost in a slowly

¹ A Tulpa is a "magical creature that attains corporeal reality, having been originally merely imaginary."

creeping senility. Phoebe really wishes that she had applied herself a little more in college and not dropped out. Ice-Man sort of wants to be a drug dealer, but he isn't quite sure where to go for a supplier and he talks with a nasty lisp that makes him self-conscious. Alexander thinks he's my best friend. Seth really is my best friend. Fidel is a coyote and gets people across the border in a big white van he forced me to buy. David can't decide whether he wants to be a doctor or a lawyer. The other David is annoyed that he's the only one inside my head that has to share a name with someone else. Victor wants to be a writer but the publishers have other ideas. Michael hates his father and blames him for all the problems in his life. For his part, James—Michael's father—thinks Michael is a failure and a sissy boy and he's glad he walked out on Michael when he was twelve. Francis loves music—rock music, country music, rap music, classical music, blues, regaetton, pop, whatever. Peter's a radical pervert in the best way you could probably hope from a person you have to live with in a crowded house with; when he masturbates to his scat and gore porn, he always does it at night when everyone else is asleep. Rebecca has a bit of a drinking problem but she's getting better after last month's intervention that we had in the basement. And there's me. I suppose it wouldn't be very fair to the others if I didn't lump myself with them; after all, they're all more vibrant and colorful when compared to me.

I am Sebastian's brother. I am Emily's shoulder to cry on. I am Esther's shame and regret. I am Paws' feeder and occasional chin scratcher. I am Kenny's awkward friend. I am Roger's enemy. I am Chicago's bummer of cigarettes. I am Samantha's stressed all-nighter study partner. I am Theodore's replacement family. I am Phoebe's sick and tired listener of her nostalgic past. I am Ice-Man's annoyed audience for his newest half-baked rap lyrics. I am Alexander's bemused and pitying roommate. I am Seth's adoring roommate. I am Fidel's tolerant hostage. I am David's neutral well-wisher. I am sick and tired of David's envy. I am Victor's soothing consoler and confidant and raving reviewer even though I secretly think he can't write at all. I am Michael's sympathetic buddy. I am James' reluctant friend because he's an awesome guy to everyone except his own damn son. I am Francis' only hope for survival because he never comes out of the attic and I'm the only one who bothers to bring him food twice a day. I am Peter's ashamed borrower of porn. I am Rebecca's worried and suspicious housemate.

And, most of all, I am we. And we are me.

I suppose it's kind of funny. Kind of nutty. A special kind of crazy. I don't see people. Imaginary people. Hallucinations. Figments of my insanity. Or whatever it is you want to call it. But I hear them just as surely as I can hear my own thoughts. I hear Rebecca when she pounds on the bathroom door in the morning and screams at Samantha to hurry up and get out because we have a headful of people and only three bathrooms. I hear Paws whenever I step on his tail on accident because he likes to nap on the mat by the front door and he hisses and darts off. I hear Roger whenever he makes a gay joke at Kenny's expense and I hear Chicago out back every afternoon, smoking his cigarettes and answering my brother Sebastian's excited and curious questions about the big wide world. And I hear Theodore out there too whenever he gets angry with Chicago because he just told Sebastian something stupid like the time that he said that the reason it rains is because the sky is blue and if the sky was red it would rain fire instead. I hear Francis who stays cooped up in the attic all day with his surround speaker system and even though I paid to have it soundproofed, I can still make out the annoying beats and base as the house aches and throbs accordingly. I can hear Victor whenever he's locked up in the room he shares with Kenny and Alexander and Michael and Seth, and he locks himself up in that room and he cries for the whole day because he just got another rejection letter from another publisher telling him they would not be accepting his newest novel for publication.

Do you understand?

I don't see people. I hear them.

I don't think I'm crazy. If I was seeing people then sure, I could admit to having more than a few loose screws. But as it stands, I don't think it's too bad.

After all, we're all just voices in our heads. I just have a few more than most.

Yes, that's what I think.

No, that's what I thought.
Until I met Benita.

Until the day Benita trounced me on my front porch.

And it had been such a lovely day too. I'd been catching up on my reading in the kitchen. I wasn't alone of course. There's just too many to ever have the chance to get a room to yourself these days but I was at least relishing the peace. David was helping Samantha with her latest study guide and Fidel was telling Ice-Man that he knew a guy who knew a guy who might be able to hook him up with a little weed to sell. Upstairs Francis must have been listening to something classical because the house wasn't shaking rhythmically. Aside from that, there was a soothing quiet in the house that I barely recognized anymore. I liked it. I could hear myself think.

And then Sebastian walked into the room. I could hear his faint steps through the living room. Not the heavy sounds of a grownup. Not the hollow sounds of a girl. Just the timid little steps of a child.

"Hey," he said. "There's someone at the front door asking for us."

"Who is it?" asked David.

"I don't know her. She's really pretty but really small. She wants to meet us."

Us. That's me. That's them. We.

I think it bugged me at first, not being an I anymore. I've learned to deal with it.

We're all just voices in my head, after all.

"A girlfriend?" said Samantha, coyly poking me with her elbow.

I put my book down and got up. I bumped into Emily in the living room and she told me to watch where I was going, even though that wouldn't have helped because I couldn't see her at all. Outside there really was someone waiting for me; a short Asian girl. She had her arms crossed and she was tapping her foot in a really annoying kind of way, making a sound that Esther sometimes made when she really wanted to get out of the house.

"Do I know you?" I asked at the door, unsure of what to make of her.

But she ignored me. She just kept standing there, arms crossed, suspicious eyes glancing up and down the house's windows, as if she expected to get attacked or something.

"Hello?" I waved my hand. "Can I help you?"

Still she did not respond. She was ignoring me. Which was fine. I could play that game too. I was about to close the door in her face.

That's when Sebastian returned.

"Well?" the girl asked him, small little face relaxing at his appearance. "Where's your big brother?"

I couldn't see what Sebastian did, obviously, but the girl's eyes turned in my direction. He must have been pointing at me. "Right there."

The girl looked at me for a long time. She had a really stupid expression on her face. Like slacken surprise. Or dumb confusion. Or cold anger.

She wasn't looking at me. She was looking through me. She was still ignoring me.

"Can I come inside?" she asked.

"No," I said.

"Sure," said little Sebastian.

And that's how Benita walked into this old house.

Sebastian walked her around the house and I could only follow on her heels.

In the cramped kitchen, she greeted both of the Davids, and Kenny, and Samantha and they hit it off right away in a way that made my stomach twist and churn with a seething bile I didn't know I had in me. In the backyard, she chatted with Chicago and Seth and Theodore for a few minutes about casual and mundane topics like the nice weather. She made small talk with Alexander, and Emily, and Ice-Man, and Roger in the parlor. And once on the second floor landing, she stooped down in order to pet the "cute kitten" which purred its approval. She even managed to catch a red-faced Peter as he walked out of the bathroom on the second floor and made a beeline for a bedroom.

And all the while, she never said a single word to acknowledge my presence.

I was mad. I was furious. She was completely ignoring me. Here I was, the only real person in the damned house, and she was walking circles around me. She was wasting her time with the voices. With the goddamn figments of my imagination. With the loose screws.

The afternoon started to dim and Benita said it was time to go home. Sebastian escorted her to the door and I followed, grinding my teeth.

“It was good to meet you, Sebastian,” she said. “You’re welcome over to my house anytime.”

“We were happy to meet you too,” my brother responded, a voice somewhere below my waist.

She paused at the door, biting her lower lip. “I was just a bit worried. A lot of people...” Benita said. “Well, a lot of people do live in this house. I was worried about you... I always see you come into this old house... But everyone seems nice. Well, mostly”

“They are.” Sebastian agreed. “Mostly.”

Benita turned to leave. I couldn’t wait to see her go. But again, she paused on the entrance. “Sebastian?”

“Yes?”

“About... about that big brother you were talking about...”

“I really miss him.”

“I’m sure.”

“But it’s okay. Because he’s always here with us. He’s here right now.”

Uh oh.

Something wormed into the back of my head and suddenly I knew I was in trouble. Not me but we. Not I but us. No, maybe it really was just me.

I heard that dyslexic people don’t think in voices. They don’t have voices in their heads. Not many like me, not even one for themselves. How terrifying. That’s how I felt then.

Like I wasn’t just a voice in my head.

Like I wasn’t real at all.

Like I was a voice in someone else’s head.

“But you know he’s not real, right Sebastian?” asked Benita. “You know? Your brother... he’s... he’ll always watch over you, but he’s gone...”

Sebastian didn’t answer. Benita finally turned to go. But suddenly that wasn’t enough for me. Suddenly I had to hurt Benita because suddenly Benita had really hurt me. Because suddenly Benita had made it so that I couldn’t hear myself anymore.

And so when Benita stepped out into the porch, I followed, ready to push her down. Ready to make her acknowledge that I was real. Make her acknowledge that she could see me.

“Watch out!” Sebastian cried.

Benita turned around, confused.

“He’s going to hurt you!” My brother tried to warn her.

But it was too late. I was on her. My open palms were ready to knock her off balance. Down she would go. And that would force her to acknowledge me. That would force her to admit that I was real. then I would get my voice back. Then I could be real again.

But Benita’s eyes narrowed and suddenly she shifted her figure beneath me and one short hand grabbed my wrist and another grasped my arm and the next thing I knew I was flying. And of course, how could I have known that Benita was a red belt in Judo? She grabbed my frail little voice and sent me sailing across the sky.

But of course she didn’t actually grab me. She couldn’t. She couldn’t even see me. But Sebastian saw what he wanted to see and so it was so.

And then Benita was gone and then Sebastian was asking if I was alright, laying like that out on the street, and then I decided that I needed help.

And then I could hear myself think.

Victor Vargas – Womanhood’s Fairest Flower

There's a guy sitting below a freeway overpass, stretching his bare feet and picking at his overgrown toes while he lounges in the shadows. All the while he watches as Rose — his bitch — scurries desperately out in the heat of the day; when cars and trucks and vans pull into the off-ramp and delay a while for the red light, Rose jogs between the cars, big belly round with child displayed prominently as she stops at the idling vehicle windows, holds out shaking hands while biting a quivering lower lip, and pleads for money.

Just like the lazy man had taught her.

It was a good racket. Rose could pull down thirty or forty dollars an hour on her best days and about half that on her worst. He'd keep 80% for himself and let her keep her meager cut. The lazy man below the overpass yawned. Life was good. He had two more girls working similar stints at two other freeway off-ramps and another girl yet — Jasmine — back at his home, an encampment hidden in a shrubbery corner where the freeway and river met, guarding the base and cooking their dinner.

They were all pregnant, all the girls the lazy man had under his thumb. Rose, the youngest, was in her second trimester and nearing the third; Lily, the mystery girl, was still in her first trimester, but she'd already delivered twice; Holly, the tallest girl, was the newest after Rose and six months into her pregnancy; and Jasmine, the oldest at 31, was only a few weeks into her first trimester. They wouldn't keep them of course; they would deliver and the lazy man would take the babies and whisk them away. He would tell the girls that he was taking the babies to a hospital or a fire station or a police station and that they shouldn't worry because they would probably be adopted and face a far better life than anything they would get otherwise. Of course he would only tell them this — really, he took the newborns to an apartment building on Elm street. A janitor there who lives in a cramped little hovel of a room in the basement level paid him 200 dollars in 40 crumpled five dollar bills for each baby he brought him. God only knew what he was doing with them but the lazy man wasn't going to go and ask awful questions for answers he didn't want to hear and ruin the good thing he had going. Then there were a few weeks wait and the lazy man would work on getting the girl's pregnant again. His father had taught him to prostitute the girls at this point, let them get their babies like that and earn him a little more dough on the side. But he didn't like it; the girls were his. His possessions. His things. And he didn't like to share if he could at all help it.

It wasn't just a pity thing either, for the sole sake of evoking pity when begging. Being pregnant meant that the girls were more dependent on him. Less likely to work up the courage to get up and run off someday.

He didn't like to admit it but he was just as dependant on the girls as they were on him.

Rose was the youngest and newest girl. Unlike the other girls, she was not yet truly broken. That was the reason he was watching her, even though the others girls went without inspection. Jasmine thought she might run off if he didn't do something about her soon. A few months ago he had thought her pregnancy would do, and it seemingly had for a while. But the fire had eventually returned to her eyes and when he spoke to her, she seemed to be full of passive defiance. None of the other girls would look him in the eye when they spoke; even Holly, being much taller than him, bowed and leaned in his presence. Only Rose always looked him in the eye, refusing to look away timidly. Actually, she scared him a little. None of the other girls had ever presented so much trouble. Not for himself or his father before him. And he honestly wasn't entirely sure of what he should do to break her. At first he had considered selling her for a few nights on Figueroa, but he

had decided against that. No, now he was leaning in favor of paying some guys to rough her up. Maybe break a bone, but definitely draw a little blood. Then he could step in and save her. Make him look like a big shot. Maybe that would finally break the obstinate girl.

Rose approached the lazy man and he stood to greet her. It wasn't good to sit when the girls were standing, especially if they were yet unbroken. Him looking up and them looking down gave them power over him. And he couldn't have that.

She gave him the money she had earned so far. He would take a calculator to it and divide it later, even though most of the girls had more formal education than him and could probably do it better than him in half the time. It was important that he be precise down to the exact cent. Then the girls could respect him for that, even if it was begrudging. He was cruel with his girls but his father had taught him that if he wanted to control a weak person, they had to like him too. They had to fear him of course, but they had to like him too. But only a little.

The lazy man pocketed the money and pulled Rose into the darkness of the overpass, blocking her from public view with his body. He kissed her gingerly once, and when she moved to pull away, he swung an open palm at her face.

A deep, rosy color bloomed on her skin where he had hit her and he found her lovely then. And others would too; it would help her draw in more funds when working the off-ramp. But the lazy man did not like how she tried not to flinch or show pain at his show of power. It was then that she was the unbroken woman, untamed beauty and he wanted her then, big belly and all.

He sent her back among the cars. Back to work. Rose was a problem for sure but it was a problem he could deal with later; when her rebellion threatened to spill over to the other girls. In fact, it might be better if he waited. Now, the others only viewed her with something like pity. Like a memory of something they once were. The lazy man began to formulate a half-finished idea. Rose was unique. The danger she poised was unique. But maybe the lazy man could use her; twist her defiance and cement it into a warning for the others. Maybe if he played his cards right, broke her at the right time, maybe... Maybe...

And the lazy man's thoughts trailed off like that, watching Rose's back as she walked off, back into the stream of cars.

The lazy man had not noticed that Rose had taken something from him, when he had pulled her into a kiss. She had deftly reached an enterprising hand into one of his inner pockets and drawn out an old and grimy object. The lazy man's calculator.

When she returned to the center median of the off-ramp, Rose approached the first car that cruised by to a slow. The backseat window was open. When the driver had given her two dollars, she walked past and slid the calculator into the window. The car pulled out; the driver had not noticed. Later the lazy man would fume with anger at its loss. He would replace it as quickly as possible tomorrow, but that didn't matter. He wouldn't have misplaced it. He would know someone had stolen it. He would know *she* had stolen it. But since he would never find it on her and she would deny it, he would never prove it. She would turn his decision to never leave her out of his sight against him: it would serve as evidence in her favor. He wouldn't beat her too savagely, for fear of harming the unborn child inside her. What mattered was that a small seed of doubt would be planted in the other girls. Maybe even in the lazy man.

Rose sighed.

She rubbed her swollen belly. Her forehead was burned, her feet stung with acute pressure, and her back pained her because of her lack of support. Still she felt only happiness. And it was all because of the child inside her, because of the life that depended on her. For a long time she had been like the other girls, wandering around with glassy eyes and sneaking drugs behind the lazy man's back (he was strictly against that sort of thing, alcohol and drugs), listening listlessly to any order he gave.

But one day she had felt something within the bulge on her belly kick and the realization had hit her. Another life was now entwined together with hers. She wasn't powerless. She had created this new life and she was responsible for it.

The lazy man had said that he would turn the child over for adoption when it was born, but Rose had already decided that she would not allow it. She would keep her child and she would break away from the lazy man.

But not before she broke him.

Christina Gunning - The Addict

The big, dark blue, curvy jar was just in view from her seat on the cold tile floor. The counter seemed a hundred feet tall, with dark brown drawers waiting to be made into stairs, and loomed over Lizzie as she stared at it. She knew, with absolute certainty, that there were cookies in the jar. Not just any cookies. Not the cookies that came out of the crinkly packaging from the cupboard. Those were hard and crunchy with big chunks of chocolate in them. Lizzie liked those cookies. Just like she liked the little white ones that looked like animals at the Zoo and the thin black round ones that tasted like the little white candies Mommy pulled out of the noisemaker in her purse. She liked them.

But the cookies in the jar – the thick, warm, gooey, chocolatey, fresh from the oven cookies in the jar – those ones, she *loved*. One bite from one of those cookies and Lizzie’s head went foggy on one side. The chocolate melted down her throat and went straight to warm up her stomach. The thick cookie parts crumbled in her mouth and all over her hands making a wonderful mess on her clothes. Those cookies warmed her hands and her mouth and her throat and her stomach and made her face feel like it was going to fall apart from smiling so big.

And Mommy had put them on the counter.

Mommy had pushed them all the way back so that Lizzie couldn’t even reach the little edge of the bottom of the Blue Jar and tip it off like last time. Last time, she just edged it closer and closer until it toppled right into her arms. Then she ate all the cookies in the Blue Jar as fast as she could and threw up all over the floor. It was the best moment of Lizzie’s life. Mommy had found her lying in cookie crumbs and throw up and Lizzie had tried to convince her that she didn’t touch the cookies. But Mommy didn’t believe her. Mommy yelled and yelled and made Lizzie go sit in Time-Out: the worst place in the world.

This time, Mommy tried to hide the cookies away from her and pretend like the Blue Jar was empty. But when Daddy dropped Lizzie off, the whole house smelled like ooey, gooey Blue Jar Cookies. Daddy had stuck his head in through the doorway which Lizzie wasn’t supposed to let him do but since all he did was take a deep, long breath, she let him be jealous that she was going to eat Blue Jar Cookies.

“My little Lizzie.” He had said, squatting down in front of the doorway. His knees came into the house which Lizzie wasn’t supposed to let happen either but before she could even shake her big girl finger at him, he wrapped her in a big, Daddy Bear Hug. Daddy’s Bear Hugs are almost better than Blue Jar Cookies. He likes to pull Lizzie in tight against his chest and his big, long arms can almost wrap around her *twice*. Bear Hugs make Lizzie’s whole back warm from his arms and her whole front warm from his chest. It’s like a Blue Jar Cookie for her outsides instead of her insides.

When Daddy was finished giving her a Bear Hug, Mommy started shooing Daddy out. She made shoo-shoo motions with her hands so Daddy held up his hands like the bad guys do on TV. Lizzie doesn’t know why he does that. Daddy isn’t a bad guy like on TV. Daddy’s just Daddy even though now he has a little box house instead of living with Lizzie and Mommy. Daddy’s box house smells like Lizzie’s house after Mommy does Spring Cleaning. Like bathroom lemons and mop water. It makes Lizzie’s head hurt. But the Blue Jar Cookie smell makes everything better.

The house still smelled like Blue Jar Cookies as Lizzie scooted back so she can see the Blue Jar better. Mommy moved it away from the cooling box so Lizzie couldn’t use the handle to swing up onto the counter. Mommy put all the chairs on top of the table so Lizzie couldn’t use one as a stepping stool. Mommy hid all of Lizzie’s regular stepping stools too. Even her fishy one in the bathroom was gone! But Mommy left all the drawers in the counter.

“Lizzie Bean! Where are you, baby?” Mommy yelled from the TV room. Lizzie turned to stare at the opening of the kitchen and then hurriedly forced herself to her feet and ran off out the other opening. She peeked her head back into the kitchen as Mommy entered.

Mommy is so tall that she can almost look at the top of the cooling box without using her tippy toes. She has long curly, whirly hair like Lizzie except hers is pretty red and Lizzie’s is sun-

colored like Daddy's. But the best thing about Mommy is her dancing feet. Mommy has thin, little feet but they're really strong so she can swing Lizzie up into her arms and dance them both around the whole TV room without being tired. Daddy used to dance with them too before he moved into his box house.

Mommy always smells like food. Daddy used to smell smoky like when Mommy burned up dinner that night when she was crying. Now he smells like bathroom lemons sometimes but mostly like playground grass. Lizzie likes the playground grass smell better than the burned up dinner smell. Sometimes she hopes that Mommy does too because if Daddy smells better maybe he'll be allowed to live in Lizzie's house again instead of his box house.

"Lizzie, enough hiding. I know you can hear me." Mommy made an angry face and Lizzie stuck her head further into the kitchen, frowning.

"No angry." She said. Mommy let out a sharp *phew* and laughed.

"No. No angry."

"Promise?"

"I promise." Mommy laughed again. Mommy has the best laugh. It's like Grandma's music makers that run into each other when it's windy.

"Cookie?" Lizzie asked, running at Mommy's legs to wrap one arm around each.

"Not yet. We have to eat dinner first." Mommy bent over to run her hands through Lizzie's hair. Lizzie pushed her head back to stare up at Mommy's hair-curtained face.

"Cookie for dinner."

"No."

"Yes."

"Lizzie, no. We have to eat dinner first and then you can have a cookie. Come on, baby. Let's go play a game." Mommy tried to walk backwards towards the TV room. Lizzie pulled her arms away from Mommy's legs and flopped back onto the hard floor to stare at the Blue Jar. Mommy stood next to her for a long, heavy-feeling second and then went back into the TV room. Lizzie twisted her neck to try and see Mommy but she had disappeared. And if Lizzie couldn't see Mommy, Mommy couldn't see Lizzie.

Lizzie crawled forward and stared at the bottom drawer. She pulled on it and it slid out silently. She could only see the white and black speckled bottom through a maze of Mommy's cooking thingies. Lizzie stood up and placed her foot carefully into the maze. The thingies shifted without letting her foot sink to the bottom of the drawer. She put her foot on the brown edge that stuck up at the front but the drawer clunked down and wobbled. Lizzie frowned at the drawer and stepped back. She pulled out the next drawer so the brown edge of the most bottom drawer was all she could see. Then she did this to the next highest. The top drawer was too high to reach.

Lizzie ran to the TV room opening and poked her head into the TV room. She could see the light on in Mommy's study room and Mommy's shadow self on the wall. She ran back to the drawer stairs and, quick as the flash on Daddy's camera, climbed the first three steps. Clunk, clunk, clunk. The third drawer wobbled as she stopped, trying to pull out the top drawer, the last step. Lizzie leaned to one side, opposite of the way the drawer wobbled, but as soon as she did the drawer wobbled the other way. Cluck, clunk. Lizzie clutched the counter with both hands, jumped and THUD landed on the counter next to the Blue Jar.

Lizzie's chest hurt and she took quick short breaths as she pulled the Blue Jar over the uneven counter surface and into her lap. She pulled the top off the Blue Jar and the jar let out a hot, cookie-smelled sigh into her face. Grinning, Lizzie stuck her hand in the jar.

"Lizzie! No!" Lizzie looked up to see Mommy in the TV room opening. She had her Angry Face on. Lizzie frowned and pulled a cookie out of the jar anyway. Didn't Mommy understand all the work she had done to get here? Lizzie knew she worked really hard for the cookie and when she worked hard, she got a Reward. A Blue Jar Cookie. Mommy's long, long legs moved her dancer feet to the counter so fast, Lizzie didn't even have time to steal a bite before the Blue Jar Cookie was back in the Blue Jar and the Blue Jar was on the highest shelf in the highest cupboard.

“No!” Lizzie shouted. “Cookie!”

“No cookie.” Mommy grabbed Lizzie in her armpits and lifted her off the counter. Lizzie twisted, screaming, and tried to reach back over Mommy’s shoulder for the Blue Jar.

“Cookie!” She screeched, hurting her throat but not caring. She reached and stretched, grabbing onto the doorframe as Mommy tried to take her into the TV room. Lizzie knew where they were going. The TV room led right to Time-Out. Lizzie pulled so hard on the doorframe that Mommy had to stop. Mommy turned and pried Lizzie’s hands off the doorframe, capturing them both in one of her hands. Lizzie threw all her weight down towards the floor, pulling her hands sharply towards her chest. Mommy almost dropped her but still managed to keep one arm wrapped around her feet. Lizzie hung, her back towards the ground, hands and feet held captive by Mommy’s hands. Lizzie lifted herself by her hands and feet, arching her back, then dropped her weight towards the ground again. Mommy’s grip tightened.

Lizzie started crying. Her eyes screwed up tight and she opened her mouth to let out a scream that hurt her ears. Tears began to pour out of her eyes but even this did not slow Mommy down. Lizzie tried to pull her hands away, then tried her feet but nothing she did made Mommy stop. They were through the TV room now into the For Guests room. Lizzie shrieked and cried and screamed but Mommy still set her down in front of the huge mirror. The mirror sat on the ground on its big golden frame and Lizzie could see the whole For Guests room in it

“No! No, no, no, no, no, no, no!” Lizzie screamed, trying to crawl away. “No Time-Out! No Time-Out!” Mommy picked her up and put her back in front of the mirror. She turned Lizzie to face the mirror and Lizzie saw the little girl in the mirror. She had curly, whirly hair like Mommy’s painted the same color as Daddy’s. She had little hands and little feet. Her face was all wet and her eyes were all red. Lizzie started crying even harder and so did the little girl in the mirror. Mommy pointed at the girl in the mirror.

“Bad girl.” Then she pointed to Lizzie. “Bad girl.”

“No! Not bad! Not Bad Girl!” Lizzie shrieked. She watched the little girl’s face screw up to one side as she felt her own face get even wetter.

“Yes. Mommy said no cookies. You did a bad thing. Bad girls get Time-Outs.” Lizzie sucked in three sharp breaths and shook her head wildly. She choked and saw Mommy turn to leave.

“No! Sorry! Sorry, sorry!” Lizzie shouted, twisting on the spot and holding out her hands to Mommy. Mommy turned.

“Three minutes.” She said, holding up three fingers. Then she pointed to the mirror. Lizzie turned back and watched Mommy leave the room.

“I hate you!” She screamed as loud as she could. Mommy didn’t answer. She waited a long time, still choking on tears.

“I want Daddy!” She screeched. Still Mommy didn’t answer. So Lizzie just screamed until she couldn’t scream anymore and then she coughed until she could breathe again. Then she cried until she and the little girl in the mirror fell asleep.

Christina Gunning - The Box

Jamie could always remember the numbers. Six, twenty-seven, eighteen. They were stuck in her head in an ongoing tribal chant. Every time she found herself at the mailroom staring down the dial on her mailbox, they leapt into action, instantly falling into their traditional mocking motions. She bent over sideways and considered the letter through the tiny window. It could be something terribly important. It could be a letter saying she had won six thousand dollars simply for being amazing. It could be a tragic love letter from a secret admirer that she wouldn't have known existed except for the desperate slip of poetry he had mailed.

Jamie groaned and tapped on the glass of the window, glancing around. She could always remember the numbers but the order completely escaped her. And it was impossible to know if the box failing to open was based on the incorrect ordering or on her inability to line the stupid metal arrow with the stupid little indent. The letter *could* be something amazing or it could be another waste of paper from the school telling her to do something that her email told her to do three weeks ago. The manic mix of electronic and paper communication caused everyone to get information twice. Incredibly frustrating.

Jamie reached out and grabbed the dial, spinning it three times to the left to clear out the three previous tries that had left her in this state of exasperation. She flexed her fingers several times, gave the box her dirtiest look and got down to business.

"Six," she said quietly, twisting the dial so it lined up with the line just past the '5'. Then she quickly turned it back the other direction, passing the six,

"Twenty-seven." Her hand twitched slightly off the line two past '25' but she pulled it back resolutely. Once again, she pushed the dial in the opposite direction, going straight for the last number.

"Eighteen." She paused and pulled out on the dial before twisting her wrist to the right. It simply continued in that direction without providing the satisfying catch that was supposed to signal the opening of the mailbox. Jamie stomped her foot.

The letter could be nothing but it could be everything. It just stared balefully out of its little metal prison. Usually Jamie would just give up and ring the doorbell, disturbing the nice ladies inside the mailroom in order to put her out of her misery but this time, this time she was determined to do it for herself. She had finally conquered the lock on her dorm room and she wasn't about to let some little mailbox ruin her record. Jamie dropped her oversized shoulder bag onto the floor, ignoring its customary clanking as the contents settled, protesting, against the concrete. She ran both hands through her hair and wracked her brain for the right order of the numbers. Six, twenty seven, eighteen was already out. She had tried it four times, ruling out the possibility of operator error.

"Twenty-seven." She began, after clearing the dial again.

"Hey, Jamie!" This shout was accompanied by the thudding of two feet as her best friend, Anna, leapt three feet to land practically on Jamie's toes. Jamie twitched away, spinning the dial.

"Damn it." She turned to glare at Anna. The five foot two blond cringed.

"Did I mess it up?"

“That would be... yes,” Jamie said.

“Sorry.” Anna’s lower lip trembled almost imperceptibly and Jamie rolled her eyes.

“Geez, Anna. I told you she was doing something.” Anna’s boyfriend of forever, Arthur, wandered up to them, looking as if he’d just happened upon them accidentally. Jamie knew this wasn’t true. He was rarely more than three feet away from Anna.

“I said sorry! God.” Anna’s trembling lip was immediately replaced with irritation.

“Forgot your combo again.” Arthur observed. Arthur didn’t ask questions. He made statements.

“I know the numbers...”

“You just forgot the order.” Arthur and Anna chorused. This was an unfortunate product of the three of them spending two years attached at the hip. Chorusing, thank god, did not happen in most people’s daily lives.

“So I’m predictable. Big surprise.”

“Just go ask the woman who works in there,” Anna said, bending down to consider Jamie’s letter. Jamie’s eye twitched.

“Oh no. She’s got her determined face on. She’ll stay here all night if she has to.” Arthur shook his head.

“Go away now,” Jamie said. The other two shrugged.

“Good luck.” Anna sung over her shoulder. Jamie gave her the finger and sighed. She pulled out her cell phone to check the time and realized she had been standing in front of the box for a full five minutes without making any progress.

She bent over at the waist so her eyes were level with the dial and attempted twenty-seven, six, eighteen to no effect. Twenty-seven, eighteen, six was also incorrect. As was eighteen, twenty-seven, six and eighteen, six, twenty-seven. Jamie glared so hard at the mailbox that the space between her eyebrows started to ache. There had to be a correct combination in here somewhere. Those were the right numbers. They were triumphantly conducting their tribal dance as she stood there, baffled and frustrated.

“Stupid box,” she muttered. The letter, she decided, had better be something amazing. It better have money in it or good news of some extravagant sort or what was the point of all of this? What was the point of, she paused to check her phone, ten minutes of frustrated dial-spinning if there was nothing worth having inside the box?

“Six.” She began again, after once again clearing the dial. She twisted her head as far upside down as it would go in order to insure that the metal arrow was dead center above the six line. She heard a large group of people come up behind her and ignored them completely, fully focused on the box.

“Eighteen.” She drew out the word as she passed the six line and landed on eighteen. The fingers of her right hand were locked around the dial as her left hand trembled out an alternate beat

against her thigh. A boy shouted right behind her and she glanced over her shoulder in frustration at the large group of boys milling aimlessly behind her.

“Twenty-seven.” She bent over even further, watching as the arrow hit the last line. She yanked back on the dial, said a prayer to a god she only believed in when she needed something and twisted her wrist to the right.

The dial caught. Her entire body trembling now, she leaned back slightly to pull the small door open. Just then, three guys pushed one of their friends. He stumbled, bumping into Jamie as she maneuvered the mailbox open. The door snapped shut. Jamie’s eyes widened as she stared at the now re-closed mailbox.

“Sorry.” The pushed boy mumbled, hurrying back to her friends. Jamie didn’t reply, eyes fixed on the box that she had finally managed to get open. The dial had shifted past the twenty-seven. She turned it back on mark and repeated the pull out motion to no effect. The box had locked again.

Jamie bent down to look at the letter again. The money-filled, desperately important love letter stared back at her, daring her to give up and walk away. All of her past failures gathered around her and looked between her and the box. Her eye twitched and, pressing her entire force of will onto the dial of the mail box, counted out six, eighteen, twenty-seven. The lock caught and she glanced around before slowly pulling it open.

There was a single, square envelope inside. She pulled it out and watched as it trembled before her eyes. She snapped the box shut, spinning the lock several times to the left to lock it. Then she tore into the envelope. Inside was a hallmark greeting card with a picture of a thumbs-up sign on the front. Eyebrows furrowing, she opened the card. It simply read “You’re great! Love, Grandma.”

Jamie swore, tossed the card in the trash and vowed never to open her mailbox again. As she turned to walk away, she saw someone slide a yellow package slip into her box. She bent down and pressed her nose against the glass of the box, trying to remember the order she had just spun in.

“Damn it!” She snapped, taking hold of the combination dial. She had forgotten.

Other Writings

*“What is reading but silent
conversation?”*

—Walter Savage Landor

Juliana Baez - Abstract for “Economics of Happiness in Coupled Relationships”

Happiness economics is combined using the field of economics and psychology to expand on the notion of utility and happiness. Everyone wants to know the secret on how to have a lasting, happy marriage. The paper used the economic model OLS (Ordinary Least Squares), to organize and interpret the data. Often times, happiness is equated with the amount of income and material items that you own. In this paper we used a survey from the National Center for Family and Marriage with 1,264 responding to emotional, physical, and financial questions around their relationship. This research highlights several other factors, other than income, that effect happiness. The larger finding show that emotional factors, such as how much you love your partner and how well your partner meets your needs, are far more relevant in the happiness and satisfaction levels in a marriage than any financial components. The estimated coefficient for both are the highest among all variables, the LOVE variable has a .604 Beta at a 95 % Significance level and NEEDS has a respective .424 Beta at 95% Significance Level. This paper goes to dispel the myth that financial factors do not play a large role in happiness levels in a relationship.

Freddie Malcomb –What Does Scott Pilgrim Mean about Geek Culture in the Mainstream?

The whole phenomenon of *Scott Pilgrim vs The World* (the movie) is kind of fascinating to me, because as this Cracked article (<http://www.cracked.com/funny-4739-scott-pilgrim/>) points out, movies that geeks are crazy for do not seem to do well at all. Scott Pilgrim seemed, for a while, to be the great new hope to change that pattern. Spoiler alert: it didn't.

A brief history for those who don't know about the whole thing: the first Scott Pilgrim graphic novel was published in August 2004. Written by Brian Lee O' Malley, the book has received generally positive reviews, and if there is such a thing as the underground comics scene, it is one of the success stories to emerge from it. The next 5 books have a similar story (review-wise, not plot-wise), and the whole series has benefited from the movie. According to BookScan's Top 20 Graphic Novels for August 2010, all six books have jumped to the top sellers list, with Scott Pilgrim's Precious Little Life (Vol 1) at the number one position, indicating that the movie has fueled a pretty good amount of interest to the series as a whole.

Scott Pilgrim vs The World (the movie) was one of the biggest hype machines that the internet has seen in a while. If you want a physical representation of how excited people were for the movie, look no further than this picture of the *Scott Pilgrim* Comic-Con panel. The excitement for *Scott Pilgrim* drew a huge advertising budget from Universal. From billboards to posters on the sides of buses, from commercials to signs on the side of buildings; interested or not, very few people could say they were unaware of the movie. Despite all of this, the movie was poorly received in a numbers standpoint.

Box Office Mojo lists that as of 9/7/10 (the day before this article is being written), *Scott Pilgrim* has grossed \$29,392,215 (Foreign- \$9,527,630). This comes after a \$60 million budget to

make the movie. To put that in perspective, here are two other releases that came out on the same weekend:

The Expendables: Domestic- \$94,383,026 Foreign- \$90,000,000

Eat Pray Love: Domestic- \$70,763,971 (Unreleased outside of the states)

Here's a movie that was released 5 days after *Scott Pilgrim*:

Vampires Suck: Domestic - \$33,367,217 Foreign - \$756,000

The Expendables, *Eat Pray Love*, and *Scott Pilgrim* all shared similar budgets of 60 million-plus dollars. *Vampires Suck* was made for about \$20 million. I'd like to pepper in some stats for the reviews that these movies have taken. Listing these movies according to Rotten Tomatoes's rating system in order of worst movies to best, we get this result: *Vampires Suck* (6%), *Eat Pray Love* (37%), *The Expendables*(40%), *Scott Pilgrim vs The World* (81%). The percentages noted are the percentage of positive reviews the movie has received. Metacritic, a similar website, almost mirrors the results of the other search: *Vampires Suck* (18%), *The Expendables* (45%), *Eat Pray Love*(50%), *Scott Pilgrim vs The World* (69%).

It's difficult to imagine the reasons that the movie did not do as well as people thought it would. Maybe geeks aren't as big an audience that people thought it was. Maybe people are scared of new ideas, and going to the same type of movie that was released last year is comfortable. I'm not really trying to judge here. *Eat Pray Love* was probably a great movie if it's what you are into, and it certainly doesn't try to hide what it's about. *The Expendables'* cast is an action movie aficionado's dream, although I'm told it should have been executed better than it turned out. And *Vampires Suck*... well, you couldn't pay me to spend two hours at a theater watching *Vampires Suck*. Maybe if it could pay off my college loans, but certainly nothing short of that.

As my title points out, and as much as it pains me to say this, it might be that geek culture does not translate well to the mainstream. It certainly seems like it has its merits, but of course I think that: I'm a huge nerd. I get all of the little in-jokes and what the SNES sounds are. Joe America does not always get those jokes, and he might feel alienated because of it. It is safer to see a more popular movie because you know what you're in for.

But look at the good the movie has done for geeks: a good percentage of people who didn't know about the comics have been motivated to buy them. The movie itself is sure to be a cult classic, and as director Kevin Smith says, the movie's success isn't about the money, it's about the movie itself. Also, Micheal Cera finally got to fight in a movie instead of being a wimp, so that was nice. I know what little money I have to spare on such things is going to a Special Edition *Scott Pilgrim* DVD, and maybe the comics if I have extra spare money. *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World: The Game* is another huge success story. A \$10 game that turned out to be anything but shovelware, it has received hugely positive reviews (Metacritic shows a rating of 77 as of 9/8/10). It even gave pixel artist Paul Robertson a job as lead animator for a video game, something which I personally have been waiting for since I saw *Kings of Power* 4 billion%.

A box office success or not, *Scott Pilgrim* rocked the world. It could be that geekiness is best left to live in the world of the geek, but I am personally ecstatic that this project had such an impact on the geek world. It might not be everyone's cup of tea, but it's like they say: trying to please everybody is sure to result in a mediocre product that almost no one will enjoy. This one's for the nerds, I guess, and I for one am glad to be a member of that group.

Catherine F. King - Epilogue to *The God of Small Things*

Written to accompany
Arundhati Roy

A motorcycle is not a Small Thing.

A motorcycle is a roaring, gleaming Big Thing. It sways and dips on highways, drunk on its speed and color, a feckless beast. Rather like a river.

It was a motorcycle, sleek and red, that greeted Estha with a glinting, even, silver smile when he stepped out of Ayemenem House, the morning after he and Rahel had broken the last love laws that there were.

“What—” he began to ask, then paused. Inside, the roar of Baby Kochamma’s ever-hungry television had already begun. Rahel was perched delicately on the cycle, reading its instruction manual. She looked up at him, a diamond glinting in her nose. “Well,” she said, ready to answer his unfinished question –

When Sita was reunited with her twin sons and her husband after years of unjust exile, her only wish was that the Earth Woman take her back to her bosom, to prove her faithfulness and purity. And the Earth Woman did just that, cradling Sita in her arms. Sita was never seen again.

—“Ready?” Rahel finished.

Estha blinked, seeing a Rahel-shaped Hole in the Universe among a feral garden and the smells of moldering pickles. “But,” Estha started, “We only just got back.”

“So? This is a house of poison.” Inside, a white audience laughed raucously at Rahel’s words.

“Where did you think we would go?”

Rahel overturned white tickets in her hand. They flashed like moth wings. “To the airport. From there, to Bombay. From there, to London.”

“London?” The city of holiday. Of buses and police booths floating in the water. But not people. The city with bottoms of bells.

The same images passed in each of their minds. In their mind. And when they looked at each other and realized that, each smiled.

Clutched in Rahel’s hand was a small cloth bag. When she saw Estha’s glance, she held it out. “Ashes of Sophie Mol,” she explained in a little voice, which was not the same thing as Sophie Mol’s own ashes.

“What, we’ll drop them on the Thames?”

“Yes.” The Rahel-shaped Hole in the Universe was healing, filling. Just by being with Quietness, which was no longer so Quiet.

Of course. They would take Sophie Mol home.

“Do you remember,” Estha could not help but ask, “The last time we set out on an expedition? With Sophie Mol?”

“Always,” Rahel snapped, and for a minute Estha feared her love for him wavered. But that was a momentary anger. “But we’ll do better this time. We’ll ask the right questions. We’ll be careful. We’ll get it right this time.

“Listen,” she went on, “I’m going to London whether you’re coming or not.”

“No. Stay.” Estha held out a hand, pausing his sister, pausing the sun, the moths, the river, all the small things that buzz and hum and crawl and swim. “It’ll only be a minute to get my things.”

His Small Essentials.

The Eternal Baby he left on the couch without a word. Left to stare forever into a river of changes, always showing her her own face.

He knew Rahel knew how to drive the cycle. That was a small thing he remembered. He remembered, before he felt it, her joy when he ran out the door, his knapsack on his back.

Helmets on. Hips fitted in against hips. Hands clasped over stomach, back to chest, two bosoms, but one heartbeat.

Like a river in monsoon, the motorcycle pulsed into vibrating life.

Estha and Rahel stared and smiled at the open road like it held Velutha and Ammu’s ghosts on it. Encouraging. Rahel said something.

“What?”

“I said, ‘We’ll be together now.’”

“Yes.”

The two of them. We. Us. Home now. And Sophie Mol. Going home.

As the motorcycle flowed out of the house of poison and moths, its growls drowning out old memories, a single moth floated by and flapped its furry, untouchable wings over them. Like a blessing.

The two-egg twins, with their sacred ashes, two bosoms but one truth, rode out onto the road, singing and shouting in joy, for from now on, no more Quietness or Emptiness, except what they desired:

*“Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
In a cowslip’s bell I lie,
Merrily, merrily, I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.”*

Gradually, the motorcycle, its riders, and its little bag of ashes, even its sound, became a small thing, a series of small things, on the dawn-lit road.

A twinkle in the Earth Woman’s eye.

Catherine F. King is...The Play Botcher.

The Play Botcher Presents: Hamlet, Act One, Scene 2.5.

Day. A garden of Elsinore. Winter. Ophelia wanders it by herself. Hamlet approaches.

Hamlet: Ophelia, what art thou at?

Ophelia: At plans.

Hamlet: What dost thou plan?

Ophelia: A garden, please my lord.

Hamlet: In this raw skeleton of a curtilage?^o

courtyard

I disbelieve. A garden in these stones,
No sooner sprout than will a death's head^o speak,
skull

Or peace fall on the soul of Norroway.

Ophelia: Being a woman, I can hardly talk
Of th'affairs of state, or what strange world
Should lie beyond the shiv'ring frame of life
But plants I know, and winter is not death.
My lord, there's as much life in this small plot
As may be found within your own –

Hamlet: Pray, what?

Ophelia: No mind, my lord, 'tis not my place to say.

Hamlet: If there's life, thou must prove it.

Ophelia: Sir, I will.

You well can see, by these small shoots of green,
That snowdrop shall poke up his humble head
And spread white petals. Your mother, the queen,
Planted the monkshood in this plot last fall.

And once to me you gave respectfully
A clump of daffodils² that grew right here.

But then, you were a child.

Hamlet: As were you.

I do recall that gift; it made you glad.
What else will grow, barring capricious winds?

Ophelia: The mayflower is wick.^o There will be blooms

alive

Of white and red all over this fair ground.
Before St. Dymphna's³ day, the may will bloom.

Hamlet – my lord – last night I dreamed
Of water, whispered names, and bits of song.

Hamlet: A fearful strain indeed.

Ophelia: And you were gone.

Hamlet: Oh, wren⁴, fear not a dream for my poor sake.

I shall not be away any time soon.

My uncle has seen readily to that.

² Snowdrops symbolize 'hope.' Monkshood means 'beware,' and 'a foe is near.' The Daffodil signifies 'respect,' 'deceit,' and 'unrequited love.'

³ The mayflower represents deceitful hope, and welcome (as in of Fortinbras). St. Dymphna, feast day May 15th, is the patroness of the insane, and also of victims of incest.

⁴ Small bird sacrificed in a ritual ceremony in winter.

But mayhap thy slight frame is warning you
Of phlegmatic imbalance pending swift—
Here, take my cloak.

Ophelia: Thank you, but you recall,
I am a sanguine⁵ girl.

Hamlet: Oh, God forbid!
To say that thou art sanguine is to say
That thou hast seen the crows of Ares' flock⁶
Dripping unholy gore from ebon^o claws,
ebony

Or perhaps, on the surgeons' table, thou
Hast been in sleep coldly anatomized^o
To say that even thy small, helpful hands
Have worn the stench of iron, smear of blood,
When such a one as thee should –

cut open for surgery

Ophelia: Hamlet.

Hamlet: Ophelia, I do forget myself.
Forgive me, 'twas a nightmare of the day.
Be careful with your words – I would not have
Such thoughts about you whispered on the wind
Lest they catch on the ear of some kind⁷ fae,
Who seeks to make them e'en a morsel true.

Ophelia: Then speak them not, lest fancy turn to rue.

Hamlet: Do not go on the battlements tonight.

Ophelia: My lord?

Hamlet: A bitter wind is chasing us to-day,
How much the worse when night her dark wings spreads?
I'd have thee stay inside.

Ophelia: Hamlet, my lord,
Believe me, when I said I am sanguine,
I meant I never have been taken ill
Not cough, nor cold, nor even baby pox^o
And therefore, sir, be sure that I am strong.

chicken pox

Hamlet: That eases not my mind. The Persian king^o
Mithridates
Who drank up little poisons with a smile,
And strengthening his liver 'gainst his foes
Was wise in his way, arming for the worst.
And then, in contrast does infection strike
Most strong where young, untested humors flow.
You'd best be on inside.

Ophelia: Sir.

Hamlet: None of that.
Yet^o thou and I may speak with forthrightness,
As friends from childhood, as confidantes.

Still

⁵ Phlegmatic and Sanguine are medical humors: Hamlet worries that Ophelia is in danger of too much phlegm, the element of water and winter, and she tries to assure him that she is 'sanguine,' which refers to blood, springtime, and air.

⁶ Ares, god of war and bloodshed, had the carrion crow for his sacred bird.

⁷ A euphemism: the fairies were thought to be malevolent, and so were called "the Fair Folk" and similar to allay their wrath. The phrase connotes the Kindly Ones, also known as the Furies, who pursued murderers.

Then call me by my name.

Ophelia: Hamlet, I will.

What this missing scene from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* provides is a glimpse into Hamlet's relationship with Ophelia, and what they were like, as individuals and together, before their lives began to unravel. What is most poignant about their relationship is how unspoken it is: unlike other lovers of Shakespeare, they don't spend any time waxing rhapsodic about how much they love each other. They talk to each other about real, everyday things – the weather, gardening, plans for the evening. Hamlet, of course, does most of the talking, and is prone to existentialist and nihilist musings, but Ophelia's place in these conversations is to take him back to reality: to remind him of the promise and beauty of life, as well as its pain, and to snap him out of his morbid musings, though she rarely forgets his rank as prince.

Both characters here are consistent with their writings in the rest of the play: Ophelia is gentle and self-effacing, and Hamlet is morbid and thoughtful. What is notable about their relationship is that it is clear how much Hamlet cares for Ophelia, even without once saying "love" – he worries for her health, he listens to her descriptions of the garden, and he warns her against meeting the ghost. He attempts to protect her from the most mundane of dangers, little realizing that it is he who shall prove the most destructive to her.

Their relationship in this scene is, on the surface, innocent – Hamlet refers to flowers that he gave her as a child, and while it is clear that they care for each other, they don't dwell on their feelings or their relationship. But some scholars argue, based on other evidence in the play, that not only are Hamlet and Ophelia sharing a carnal relationship, but Ophelia is pregnant. There is considerable evidence, and even this particular passage has its suggestions. Rather than dwelling on the bloody, mysterious past, or regarding the days to come with dread, this scene focuses on the future with a feeling of hope. Ophelia's discussion of the flowers that will soon blossom could be read as having yet another meaning, suggesting a pregnancy that she knows about, but that is not showing yet. Furthermore, she seems constantly on the verge of expressing some secret to Hamlet. Then again, this is not the only interpretation possible from this scene. It could simply be a conversation about gardening, laden with hints of what is to come.

The foreshadowing in this scene is enormous, and helps to balance out the play's later actions. Ophelia's symbolic ramblings on flowers, and even her foresight of "blooms of white and red all over this fair ground" foreshadows the arrival of Fortinbras, and the portents of war. Here Ophelia's role is expanded to an unwitting prophetess, who glimpses the future but is unable to either understand it or circumvent it.

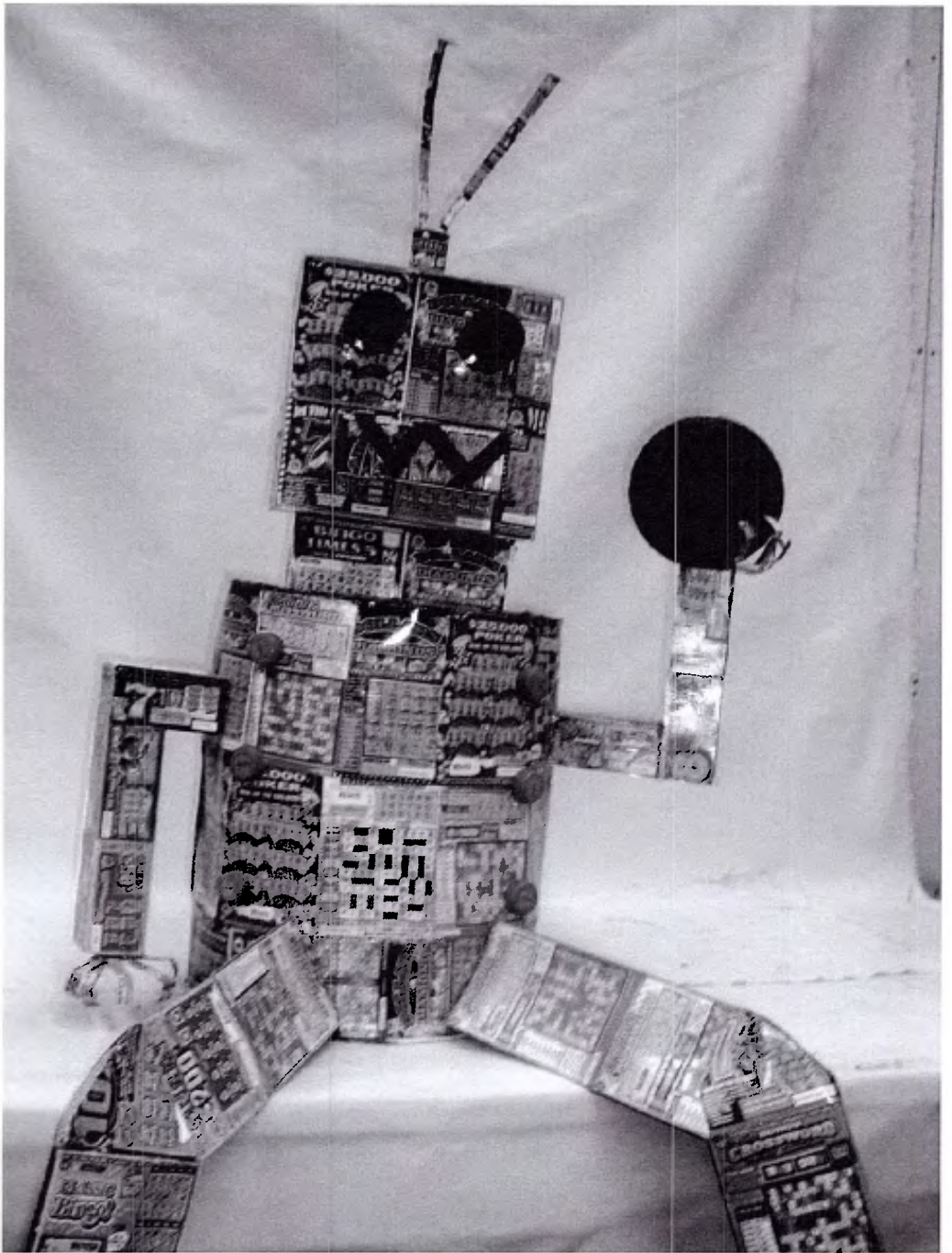
Other references that solidify this in the play's structure are, Hamlet suggesting that a "death's head speak," foreshadowing his conversation with his father's ghost, and the skull of Yorick. Also, Hamlet calls Ophelia's hands "Helpful," very interesting as her name means "Help."

Photography and Artwork

*Art is not a thing; it is a way.
-Elbert Hubbard*



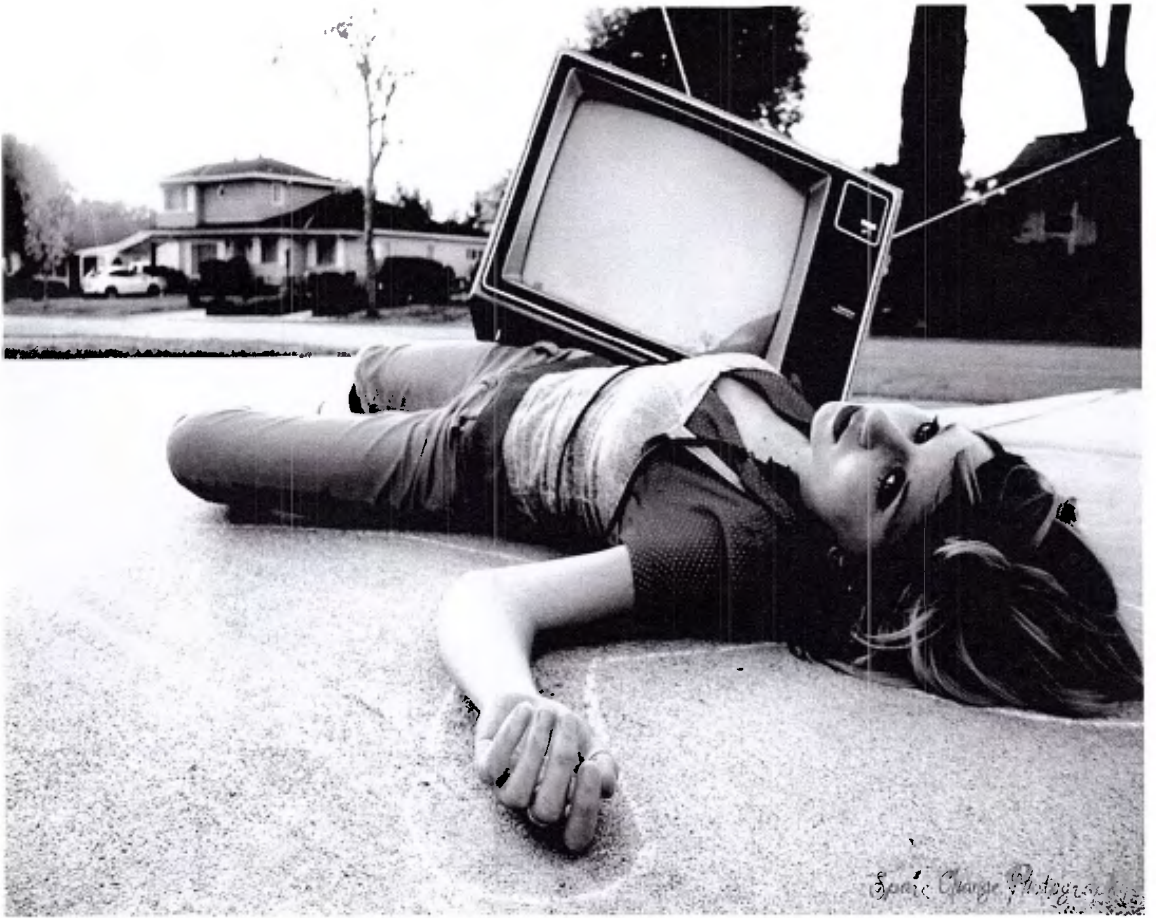
Pat-riot! – Nicole Beauchamp



Noelle Navarro – Lottery Man



Children's Area – Kate Normand



Media Overload – Jacquie Waldman



Natural History Museum, London – Kate Normand



Floating - Erik Rempen

- **Note: This is a painting, not a photograph. Wow!**



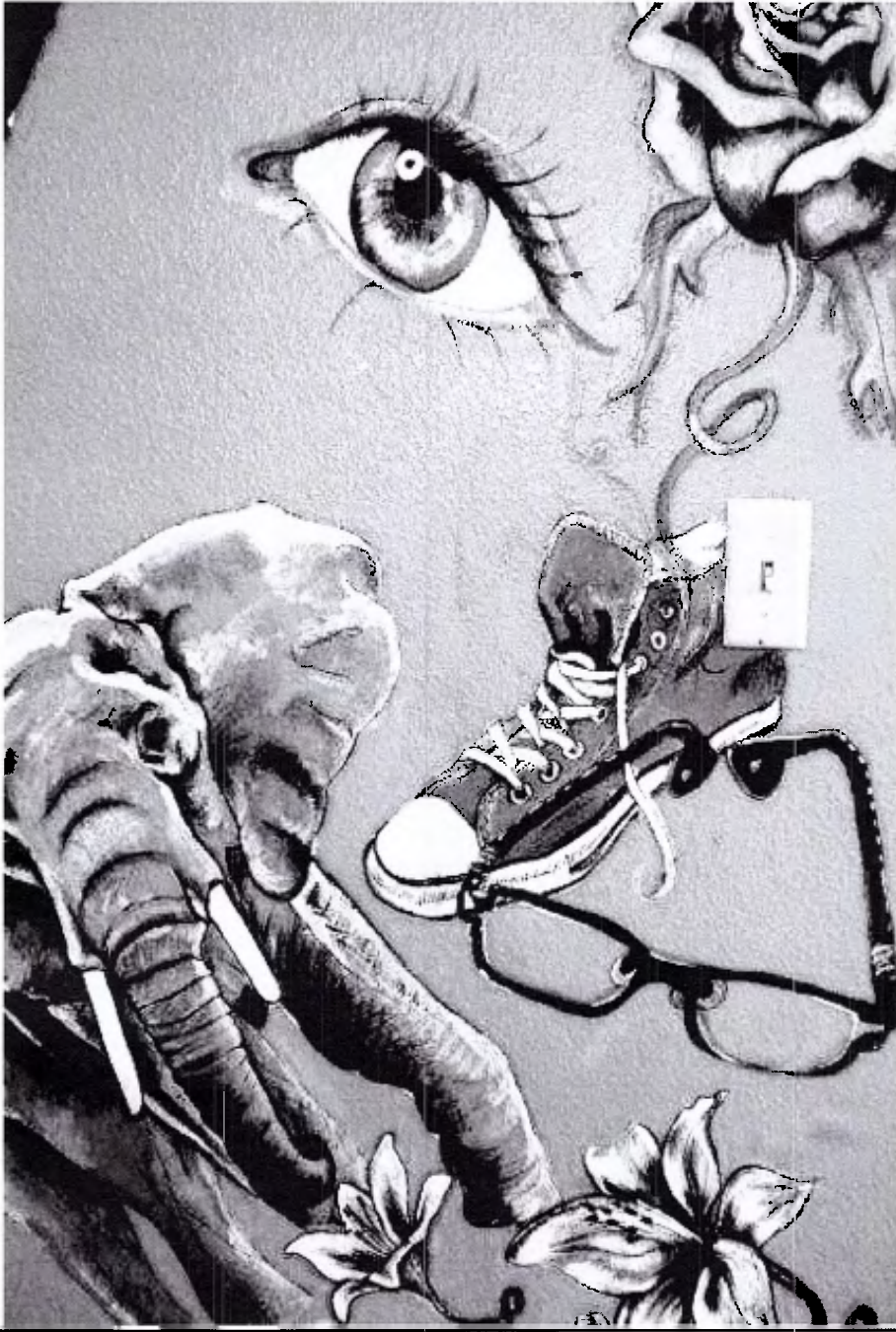
Aqua di Roma – Kyrar Leal



And let thy feet/millenniums hence/be set in midst of knowledge – Tennyson
Mary Helen Truglia



The Universal Voice
(mixed media - oil, pencil, and newspaper) – Melissa Samarin



Bee Twenty Too – Mural – Trisha Ann Scherer



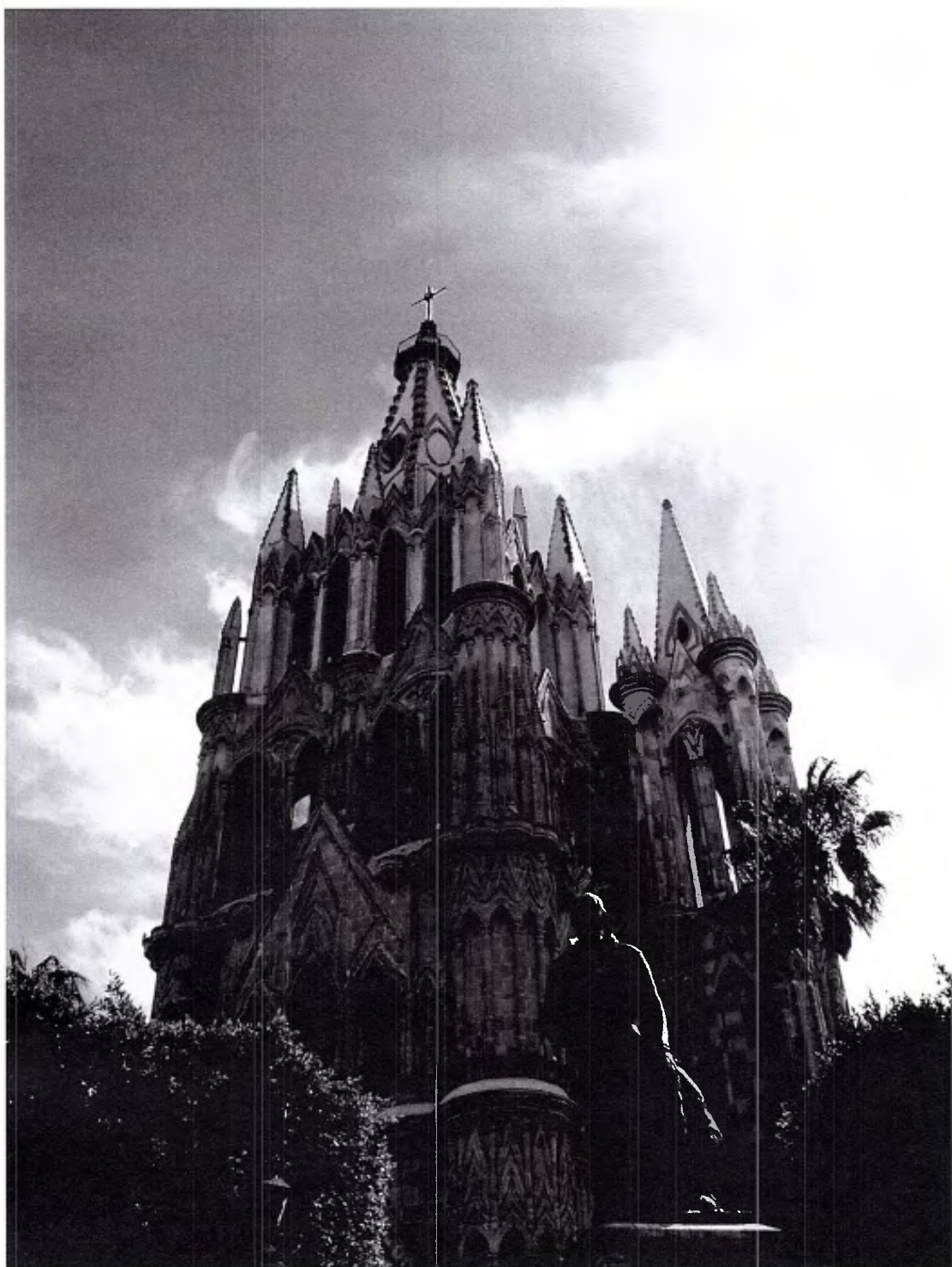
Contemplation – Bryanna Benedetti



Slotted - Ryne Speicher



The Eye of a Little God – Nicole Beauchamp



Donde San Migueleños Viven – Mary Helen Truglia



California Winter Dreams – Bryanna Benedetti



Annals of A Sinking City – Nicole Beauchamp

Scholarly Writing

The act of putting pen to paper encourages pause for thought, this in turn makes us think more deeply about life, which helps us regain our equilibrium.

- Norbet Platt

First-Year Writing Prize – First Place

Faraz Zaerpoor - The Meat of the Matter: Putting God Back in the American Hotdog

- **This essay was not submitted to the editors for publication. We love the title, however!**

First-Year Writing Prize – Second Place

Alejandra Gaeta - Unintended Consequences: The Ironic Results of a Border Fence

“Establishing a substantial probability of apprehending terrorists seeking entry into the United States” is a benefit listed under the Secure Fence Act on the Homeland Security website. Apparently building a physical fence will improve the chance of preventing terrorists from entering the U.S. through the Mexican border. In recent years, National Security has become the most popular issue in America, along with the economic recession it has sparked a focus on the southern border and illegal immigration. The fence is just one of the many ways that the border security is being expanded but it seems to have sparked the most controversy among the citizens of the United States. The fence, though, has not actually been doing its job very well as it instead has caused more problems than it was intended to solve.

The southern border of the United States is probably one of the most heavily guarded borders in the world. A terrorist would probably not decide to attempt a crossing from Mexico as the chances of getting detained are assured. Thus it does not make sense to say that a border fence will improve the chances of catching terrorists. The website, NoTexasBorderWall.com argues,

“The real reason that the federal government wants to build a wall along our southern border is not to keep out terrorists, but to stem the tide of immigrants entering the U.S. illegally in search of jobs. These immigrants, usually among the poorest in the hemisphere, are not people we need to be protected from.”

Claiming that terrorists are a threat from the South gives credibility to the fence. However, it’s doubtful that if a terrorist was very determined to cross into the U.S., that they would choose

to do so from Mexico when the biggest act of terrorism to date within the United States, the attack on 9/11, the perpetrators were actually allowed through security with legal temporary visas. (FAIR.org)

Terrorists are not often a threat associated with the southern border, what is often heard about in the media is the smuggling of people and drugs into the United States. Homeland Security repeatedly states that the fence, along with other measures is actually being effective. Peter Andreas, the author of “The Escalation of U.S. Immigration Control in the Post-NAFTA Era,” however states that the opposite is happening. Andreas claims, “An evaluation of such upbeat claims of policy success reveals . . . Almost every indicator that administration officials point to as a sign of success can also be read as a sign of failure. . . INS progress reports and press releases are most notable for what they do not say: there is no claim or evidence that overall levels of illegal immigration have actually declined as a result of tighter border control.” (598) Instead of reducing the amount of smuggling, the tightening of border control, especially the fences being built around the popular ports of entry are reinforcing the organization of smuggling groups. Making *coyotes*, or smugglers, more expensive is not really a sign of victory as the family of immigrants already in the U.S. usually pays for them. (Andreas. 599)

People are crossing into the United States through rough environmental challenges because fences are being built around the most popular ports of entry. Obviously building a fence across the border won't be that easy as the terrain is varied, ranging from dessert to canyons and everything in between. The Secure Fence Act clearly states that the fence is also to protect environmental health. This conflicts with the actions of the Department of Homeland Security as they are willing to alter the land, even fill in canyons, in order to ensure a level fence can be built. In response to protests and lawsuits filed by environmental groups against the building of the fence along the border between California and Tijuana, the government passed the Real ID Act. (NoTexasBorderWall.com “Environmental Impact”) This act gives Homeland Security permission to ignore environmental laws that conflict with the building of the fence. The fencing off of land between the U.S. and Mexico affects the ecological system that exists across both borders as species of animals are being pushed out of their natural habitats.

Besides aiding environmental health, a border fence is also supposed to protect the population from the possible spread of harmful diseases. It makes sense to say that diseases should be kept out; an epidemic would cause major panic and numerous deaths. However, the fence inadvertently causes the deaths of immigrants attempting to go around to cross the border. It may prevent the spread of disease but in doing so it causes what it is ultimately

trying to prevent, a large number of deaths. Because of the fences, migrants attempting to cross are being forced to resort to remote areas and, in 2005, actually led to as many as 427 recorded deaths, not taking into account the bodies that go undiscovered in the wilderness. (NoTexasBorderWall.com “The Human Cost”) Attempting to avoid an epidemic is a noble purpose, nonetheless the fence has unintentionally caused the deaths of immigrants that are forced to go around it through the desolate environment on their own.

There are groups that support the building of the border fence. One website in particular, BorderFenceProject.org, gives a whole spiel about why exactly a fence is necessary. A claim, stated in bold print reads, “Because illegal aliens murder 9,000 innocent Americans every year and we take a trillion dollar hit overall to our economy, illegal immigration rewards us with a 9/11 or worse every year.” Similar beliefs are echoed by these pro-fence groups, claims that illegal immigration creates violence, terrorism and adds to the enormous debt that our country is in. According to their allegations, a border fence would solve all of these problems. A border fence would protect America, the “bastion of western civilization.” (minutemanhg.com) There is no evidence to support the beliefs being spread by these websites. The fence is not seriously affecting the smuggling of people and drugs across the border; there is a report however that has found that there is a slowing down of illegal immigration in response to the dip in the U.S. economy. The Immigration Policy Center asserts that, “The data reveals that, ironically, enhanced border security has created ‘reduced circularity in migration’—essentially locking migrants in the United States as the prospect of going home and returning later has become increasingly expensive and dangerous.” (Immigrationpolicy.org) Illegal immigration has significantly reduced yet it is not the fence that is hindering it. The beliefs held by groups like these are blinded by their own prejudices and ignorance of the facts.

“Don't ever take a fence down until you know why it was put up.” says the poet, Robert Frost. So why is a fence being put up along the southern border of the United States? The reasons listed under the Secure Fence Act do not seem to play out in real life. Instead of preventing the problems that illegal immigration and drug smuggling have caused, the fence has created even more for the people of both the U.S. and Mexico. In a newspaper article by Rene Romo, he writes, “several Hispanic residents interviewed on both sides of the border said they considered the structure offensive and likely to fail as a deterrent in the absence of other measures to boost employment in Mexico and reduce income disparities.” The fence will just become another obstacle that immigrants learn to overcome in order to make a better life for themselves and their families. Now if the reasons for their decisions to migrate to the United States were considered, the problem would be traced back to its roots. It is possible

that by working to fix the problems in Mexico and other South American countries, the need for the fence would cease to exist which would in turn, save millions of dollars for the United States. Otherwise, if the fence continues to be built, illegal immigration will continue as a fence does not solve the problems pushing people to abandon their homes simply so they can live in better conditions.

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First-Year Writing Prize – Third Place

Patrick Norton – Dreamers vs. Settlers

We cannot deny the fact that we are dreamers; and if we do, we are either deluding ourselves or having trouble identifying what ineffable force it is that drives us. After all, “no one can ever give the exact measure of their needs, their ideas, their afflictions...” (Flaubert 177). But just because we all have our dreams, fantasies, and aspirations does not mean that we have to be held captive by them. In *The Great Gatsby*, Nick is driven by romantic sentiments and attracted to lavish living, but unlike everyone else, he does not let his dreams get the better of him. Conversely, Gatsby obsesses over Daisy and builds up her image in his head. Similarly, Emma, from *Madame Bovary*, lets her romantic fancies run wild to the point that she expects her life to parallel the sensational and luxuriant lives of the heroines from the over-dramatized novels that she reads.

Since her dreams are so lofty and unrealistic, Emma is perpetually dissatisfied with her life. Her unhappiness also stems from the fact that she confusedly thinks that romance is what she really wants out of life, when in reality she just wants to live a life of luxury. It isn't surprising that Emma's thinking is misguided, considering the fact that French women of the 1800's could only achieve wealth and find comfort by attaching themselves romantically to rich men. But even when Emma attaches herself to a relatively well-off man, Charles, she is still unsatisfied because he doesn't live up to her romantic notions of a gallant and self-sacrificing hero. At first Emma thinks, “She was in love; but since she lacked the happiness that should come from that love, she must have been mistaken, she fancied. And [she] sought to find out exactly what is meant in real life by the words felicity, passion, and rapture, which had seemed so fine on the pages of the books.” Because of this desire, Emma goes off searching for affairs with men who seem heroic and chivalrous to her.

Similarly to Emma, Nick dreams of romance, saying, “I liked to walk up Fifth Avenue and pick out romantic women from the crowd and imagine that in a few minutes I was going to enter into their lives, and no one would ever know or disapprove.” (Flaubert 32, 33) However, unlike Emma, Nick doesn't insert himself into the lives of these fellow romantics. Also contrary to Emma and Gatsby, who constantly and unrealistically seek out the ideal, Nick says, “I had no girl whose disembodied face floated along the dark cornices and blinding signs, and so I drew the girl besides me, tightening my arms.” (Fitzgerald 95) The girl that Nick draws up in his arms is Jordan. Although she is a famous golf player, she doesn't

represent any ideal to Nick. In fact, Nick acknowledges her flaws but still remains romantically involved with her for a time despite them.

As opposed to Nick, who settles, Gatsby remains fixed on his unattainable goal of rekindling his long lost romance with Daisy. Nick reflects on Gatsby's fixation, saying, "There must have been moments...when Daisy tumbled short of his dreams—not through her own fault, but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion." (Fitzgerald 95) Nick is right that Gatsby's vision of his life with Daisy is an illusion, for Gatsby and Daisy come from different worlds; Daisy is from East Egg, Long Island, or "old" money and Gatsby is from the Midwest. Similarly to Emma, Daisy is attracted to luxury. Knowing this, Gatsby devotes every fiber of his being towards becoming wealthy so that he can impress her. Although Gatsby does become wealthy and is able to impress Daisy with his extravagant parties and "beautiful shirts," his vision is short sighted because the life that he creates in West Egg isn't suited for Daisy, considering how it is representative of new and unstable money.

In the same way that Gatsby tries to create a new and lavish life with the love of his dreams, Emma romanticizes about the exciting and extravagant lives of metropolitan people. And she thinks to herself that, "In the city, amid the noise of the streets, the buzzing theaters and the bright lights of the ballroom, theirs (the city slickers') was the kind of life that opens up the heart, that brings the senses into bloom." (Flaubert 42) She craves leaving the banal countryside for Paris, in the hopes that she will find happiness in the excitement of the city and the arms of a viscount. But she never actually gets to Paris, and "Characteristically, we see her at home, indoors, at the window waiting for something to happen. She is stifling in a shabby little room cluttered with ordinary things, stifling in the everyday tedium of village life." (Roberts xxvii)

Just as Emma daydreams as she looks out of her window, so too does Gatsby, when he looks out at the green light across from Daisy's dock. Nick feels bad that Gatsby fails to fulfill his dream despite that fact that he could literally see it in front of him on a daily basis. He remarks that Gatsby's "...dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the nights." (Fitzgerald 180) And so, in Nick's eyes, the green light that Gatsby projects his dreams towards is just like the "green breast of the new world" and the "orgastic future" that we as Americans dream of but fail to fully realize. (Fitzgerald, 180)

Although Nick pities Gatsby, he does admire him for his attempt to attain his dream. And since Gatsby's dream is representative of the American dream, it serves as an example of one last-ditch effort on the part of every dreamer to step out from beyond their windows and

grasp what lies beyond. Since Nick is a realist and thinks that the American dream is dying, there is little that lies for him beyond his own window, besides the lessons he learns by observing Gatsby. And so, if Gatsby and Emma are the ones who leave their windows wide-open, projecting their dreams towards the “green light,” then Nick must be the one who places blinds over his windows to black out that light. In this way, Nick is like Imlac in *Rasselas*, in that he is perfectly happy to return home and be content with his lot in life.

For example, unlike Gatsby and Emma, Nick keeps his romantic notions of the high-life of city-living in check, saying that, “Even when the East excited me most, even when I was most keenly aware of its superiority to the bored, sprawling, swollen towns beyond Ohio...even then it had always for me a quality of distortion.” (Fitzgerald 176) To Nick, the East represents the opposite of the reasonable thinking of the Midwest; he sees it as a place of extravagant and warped dreaming and views Gatsby as its poster boy. All the while, whether he realizes it or not, Nick is the embodiment of the Midwest and its ideals of morality and pragmatism. After all, Nick “is one of the few honest people that [he has] ever known” (Fitzgerald 59).

As opposed to Nick, who chooses to risk nothing by settling in the most down-to-earth area of the United States, where dreams are corked shut in bottles of forethought and good sense, Gatsby and Emma pursue their dreams regardless of the costs. Ultimately, Emma and Gatsby die as a result of their pursuits. And Nick, perceptive as he is, takes away from Gatsby’s failure to achieve his dream a sad but true life lesson that dreamers risk too much, considering that they rarely achieve their dreams. Flaubert echoes Nick’s insights when he dedicates the last line of his novel to how the deceitful Homais “has just received the Legion of Honour,” thereby making the statement that the ones who get what they want out of life aren’t the naive dreamers like Emma, and by extension Gatsby, but rather those who are insidious like Homais and take what they want at everyone else’s expense. (Flaubert 327)

Gender and Women's Studies Writing Contest – First Place

Alejandra Gaeta - *Las Hijas de Juarez: Femicide in Ciudad Juarez*

No one is safe in Ciudad Juarez. From 1993 to 2004, the hundreds of women that have been murdered and/or disappeared in the city have called attention to the situation in Juarez. There does not seem to be a straightforward answer to the questions of who, what, when, where and why these deaths have occurred for so long and so frequently. Many of the citizens of Ciudad Juarez theorize that the government and the police have some role in the mysterious disappearances and murders of hundreds of women throughout the years. However, research done by various scholars, reporters and writers shows that a variety of factors have led to the continuing practice of femicide in Ciudad Juarez. It seems that the passing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which contributed to the industrialization of Ciudad Juarez, has sparked changes that have challenged the strong tradition of patriarchy in Mexico leading to a dangerous situation for women trying to survive in the harsh conditions of border life.

With the development of industry in Ciudad Juarez, the abundance of job opportunities available to everyone, especially women, drew migrants from all across Mexico. The population of Juarez tripled easily in the years after NAFTA, workers coming in droves from all over the country with the goal of making better lives for themselves. But the city was vastly unprepared for this influx of people, reporter Teresa Rodriguez (2008) notes “The treaty exempted foreign companies from paying any local taxes, so the city had no funds for basic residential infrastructure.” The thousands of workers and their families that made the move to Ciudad Juarez were left to fend for themselves. They created their own shelters from whatever scraps they could find all along the edges of the city, creating what are called *colonias*, or shantytowns. There are no luxuries in these communities in which dozens of family members squeeze into one room shacks in an area with no sewage system, no electricity, no running water and dirt roads that are only manageable on foot. The young women and girls employed at the *maquiladoras* would then be forced to travel long distances on foot and on bus to get to and from work. These women would be employed in the factories, in the small shops in the center of the city or many young women who had the opportunity, would enroll themselves in the abundant computer schools established in the city.

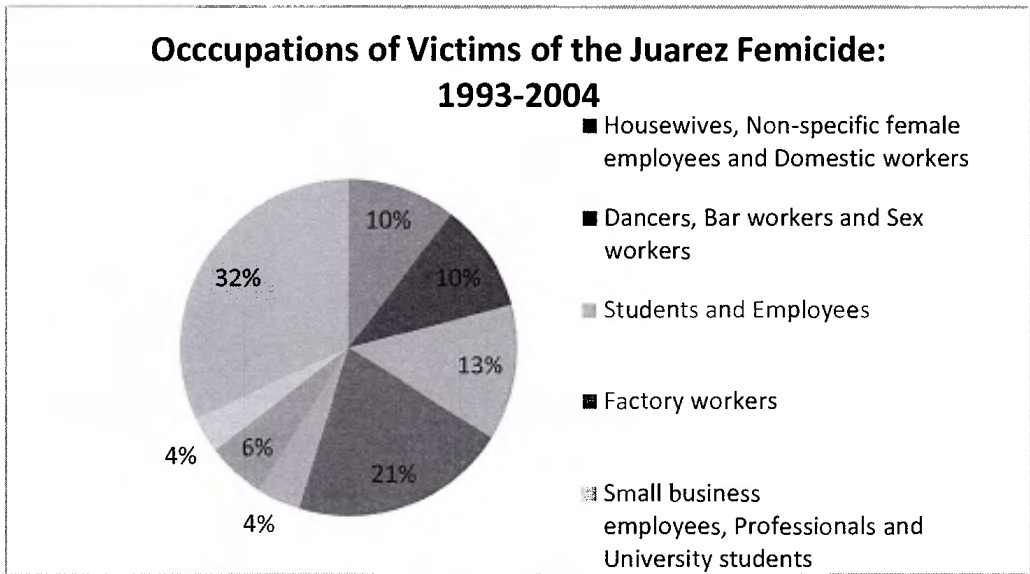


Figure 1: Source- Fragoso, J. E. (2009). *Trama de una injusticia: feminicidio sexual sistemático en Ciudad Juárez*. México: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte. Pg. 107

These women and girls from the *colonias* have been the great number of victims in the decade long femicide occurring in Ciudad Juárez. When families found that one of their daughters had failed to return from their trips to the populated center of Juárez, they ended up going to the police station to report her missing. They soon would realize their mistake in going to the police. Nothing would be done to investigate the disappearance of the young women. The explanation given by the police was that the girls probably had a secret boyfriend they had run away with or they were leading a secret double life in which they worked as prostitutes. Families were told to wait; they were given no information at all about the status of the investigations.

When bodies of disappeared women were found, the crime scenes were severely unprotected; in many cases valuable evidence was lost. This blatantly uncaring attitude displayed by the police is created by the history of patriarchy present in Mexico. The idea is that these women are not fitting their traditional roles as subservient mothers and are instead making the money for the family, reaching for higher education and basically leading independent lives. But it is also important to note that these women were also poor and in order to survive were forced to venture out on their own to get to their jobs. As Figure 1 illustrates, it is most of these “rebellious” women who ended up victims of the femicide. This

behavior is not acceptable in the traditional mindset of Mexican culture meaning that these women were seen as promiscuous and this unfair label was used as an excuse to ignore the growing number of poor Mexican women disappearing (Rodriguez 2008).

The patriarchal attitude of the police was not the only thing that kept them from actually helping investigate the femicide. Diana Washington Valdez (2006) states, "It was common knowledge in Juarez that the police were somehow involved in the women's murders." The theory that many people of Juarez believe is that there are connections between the police and the drug cartels gives them the ability to kill with no consequences. Not only are a good number of disappearances and murders of women their responsibility but also a great number of men have suffered in their hands. An incident in which the bodies of several unidentified men were found buried in the yard of house in Juarez was connected to a lieutenant in a Juarez cartel that "had allegedly hired Chihuahua State police agents to abduct and kill the men" (Valdez 2006). This connection to the cartels is believed to be one of the reasons that the murders and disappearances of poor women are almost covered-up. Some of the bodies found abandoned in the desert have symbols carved into them, proof that they were kidnapped, raped and murdered in the traditional celebration of a successful drug run. The victims are merely things, commodities that are easily replaceable and thus there is no sympathy for their plight.

It is hard to uncover a single, concrete reason explaining the serial murders of the young women of Juarez. All these factors connect yet that does not do much to solve the problem or the mystery of who is behind all of the deaths and disappearances. However, evidence shows that there are concrete factors that led to this continuing phenomenon of death. Obviously Mexico is in the national spotlight for the explosive drug-related violence currently terrorizing the people all across the country but the femicide in Ciudad Juarez has been going on for more than a decade without so much media attention. The victims have been dehumanized and they practically are labeled as disposable. It is obvious to the families of the victims of the femicide that the government will continue to be ineffective in solving the mystery of who is behind all of the deaths and putting a stop to the practice.

Writer Sergio Zermeño offers this solution, "*Para enfrentar este fenómeno no sirve llamar al FBI, es necesario establecer un programa de cooperación entre ciudadanos, organizados en barrios, gobiernos locales, estatales y federales, maquiladoras (que "tendrían" la obligación moral de destinar recursos para proteger a sus trabajadoras), ONG, universidades, etcétera*" (2004). [To confront this phenomena, there is no point in calling the FBI, it is necessary to establish a program of cooperation between citizens, organized in neighborhoods, local governments, the state and federal, companies (who

“should have” the moral obligation to allocate resources to protect their female workers), Non-government organizations, universities, etcetera.]

Zemeño has a point in his call to action, the police and government have been useless up to this point and it is now up to the citizens to start taking action to protect their daughters from those who wish to hurt them in the most violent, unnecessary way.

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Gender and Women's Studies Writing Contest – Second Place

Bryanna Benedetti - Hell Hath No Fury: Christian Backlash against Feminism

Back-lash: The jarring reaction or striking back of a wheel or set of connected wheels in a piece of mechanism, when the motion is not uniform or when sudden pressure is applied.

Backlash 1a: a sudden violent backward movement or reaction, b: the play between adjacent moveable parts (as in a series of gears); *also*: the jar caused by this when the parts are put into action, 2: a snarl in that part of a fishing line wound on the reel, 3: a strong adverse reaction (as to a recent political or social development).

(Burgess-Jackson 2002, 19)

The Oxford English Dictionary definition of Backlash, cited by Keith Burgess-Jackson in his work “The Backlash against Feminist Philosophy,” refers to a machine’s movement and disruptions within this movement, either from within the machine or from outside pressure. The definition can be taken literally to refer to an actual machine, or it can be taken to mean a social or political machine. Using the latter definition, backlash refers to the disruption of a social movement – in this case feminism – when pressure is applied or when the movement is not uniform, meaning that there is tension within the movement. Like any social machine, perfect fluidity and cohesion is ideal but rare, and therefore disjunctions are present. Due to this, it is easy for backlash to occur, either from those within the movement who are not satisfied with the current direction, or those outside of the movement looking in with a critical eye.

Burgess-Jackson considers the machine as a good metaphor for a social movement, not only in explaining the origins of the term backlash, but also to highlight that the backlash movement is not simply individuals attacking feminism, but perhaps a larger social machine or movement, made up of different gears and parts. However, as Susan Faludi explains, “the backlash is not a conspiracy, with a council dispatching agents from some central control room, nor are the people who serve its ends often aware of their role; some even consider themselves feminists” (Faludi 1991, xxi). It is hard to define this supposed social machine or movement, because there is not clear, centralized organization. Instead, the backlash against feminism comes from a variety of sources that may or may not be aware of their role within backlash. Some backslashers are self proclaimed feminists, others believe that they are moving beyond feminism towards a larger goal, and still others will attack feminism in direct opposition. Just because the movement isn’t centralized or the participants conscious, does not mean that the backlash is not destructive. Faludi continues to explain in the introduction

that “a backlash against women’s rights succeeds to the degree that it appears *not* to be political, that it appears not to be a struggle at all” (Faludi 1991, xxii). Just as a backlash in a machine would be more destructive if it were easily hidden within the machine, so too is backlash more destructive if it can blend in with other societal discontent or concern for society. Backlash to feminism, therefore, takes on many faces – faces of concerned mothers and wives and faces of religious conservatives defending their traditions, among others – which allow the backlash to be hidden rather than defined as a political reactionary movement to the feminist movement. The natural imperfect state of feminism as a social machine, combined with the decentralized and indistinguishable character of backlash allows for various organizations and individuals to create a jarring reaction within feminism through critique.

The success of backlash to the feminist movement is apparent in American culture. As American literature scholar Ann Douglas states, “the progress of women’s rights in our culture, unlike the other types of ‘progress,’ has always been strangely reversible” (Faludi 1991, 46). Social movements, in general, tend to promote permanent changes within the society which are seen as progressive, such as the abolitionist movement and the civil rights movement in the United States. The feminist movement, conversely, has gone through various waves of feminism, wherein there have been strong times and weak times of change. Following these waves, there have always been forms of backlash which have reversed the progress of the movement. This backlash not only comes from those directly opposing women’s rights, but also from American women, influenced by the media and propaganda to give up those rights. Faludi explains that “in America...successfully persuading women to collaborate in their own subjugation is a tradition of particularly long standing” (Faludi 1991, 47). The self subjugation of the American woman is very apparent in voting turn out after women’s suffrage, but also in the myth of the man shortage (Faludi 1991, 48), which led women to hunt for husbands for fear of remaining single, and the infertility epidemic (Faludi 1991, 49), when faulty scientific studies were used to convince women to have children earlier and stay out of the public sphere. Women who did not submit to these cultural patterns were attacked with more apparent forms of backlash. This came in the forms of “crisis in the family in the late 1800s (Faludi 1991, 49), where feminists were first charged with ruining the nuclear family, the “red-baiting campaigns” in the 1920s (Faludi 1991, 50), where feminists were tried as communists for their ideas, and the refusal to hire married women following the end of WWII (Faludi 1991, 51).

Although backlash tactics seem to be offensive rather than defensive, much of the backlash is a statement of discontent rooted in real issues that have yet to be addressed by

feminism. Judith Stacey discusses this origin of backlash in her article on New Conservative Feminism, explaining that “new conservative feminism is a reactionary response to a broad social crisis in family and personal life,” which feminists have not been able to solve, or may have perhaps created (Stacey 1983, 575). The New Conservative Feminists, a group discussed in the article, believe that it is necessary to address certain issues that have been overlooked by our current society. Just as feminism was a reactionary response to the lack of women’s rights, “it is important to recognize that backlash feminists are responding...to genuine social problems as well as to problems in feminist theory” (Stacey 1983, 574). These social problems in need of addressing can be found in the lack of uniformity within the feminist movement, both in feminist ideals and feminist solutions.

Backlash against the feminist movement not only comes from conservative reactionaries in the secular community, but also from conservative Christian organizations. Many Christian organizations, including the Roman Catholic and Mormon Churches, fault feminism for a variety of social ills and believe that the movement is in direct opposition to their beliefs, including the support of patriarchy and rejection of female leadership roles. Though many Christian feminists use the Biblical text to support their views, the text can also be used to rally against feminism, due to the interpretive nature of the text. In both the Catholic and Mormon Churches, the Biblical text (as well as The Book of Mormon for the Mormon Church) is wielded against feminism, highlighting and critiquing the discords found within the movement, and reaffirming Church doctrine through the text.

The Catholic Church has faced a good deal of criticism for its adherence to its traditional and patriarchal structure, including its limitations on women’s authority in the church. Pope John Paul II, who was the head of the Roman Catholic Church from 1978 to 2005, released several statements regarding women’s issues in relation to female vocation and rights, two of which are the *Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988) and the *Letter to Women* (1995). Pope John Paul II begins the *Mulieris Dignitatem* by referring back to a section of the *Church’s Magisterium* of the *Second Vatican Council*, which reads, “The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of women is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved” (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”). The Pope begins by referring back to the Second Vatican Council, which opened the Church to changes in the 20th century and gave women more rights and leadership roles within the Church. By referring to this declaration of women’s rights, the Pope is assuring his audience of the Church’s support of women’s vocation and place within the Church, placing emphasis on the word *vocation*. Vocation is

later explained, by Pope John Paul II, to specifically refer to the biological vocation given to women by God: motherhood.

Using Mary the mother of Jesus Christ as an example, the Pope explains that women reach full dignity and salvation through procreation: “a return to that ‘beginning’ in which one finds the ‘woman’ as she was intended to be in *creation*” (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”). The Pope refers to the creation story, in which Eve (or *woman*) is burdened with the pains of childbirth. Although the pain of labor is punishment for sin, the salvation comes in to woman only in the child she gives birth to, which is a gift from God. Mary also shares in this burden as a woman, but is able to reach her fullness when she accepts God’s gift of Jesus, and gives birth to God’s son. In Mary, the “fullness of time” is perfectly manifested in “the supernatural elevation to union with God” through the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, and through this “the ‘woman’ is representative and the archetype of the whole human race: *she represents the humanity*” through procreation. (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”) If Mary, the mother of God, is the archetype of humanity through her role as a mother, so too are all women, by their nature. Moreover, Mary is not only seen as the archetype of humanity, but the example to all women of how women can be brought into fullness with God. Therefore, “supreme vocation” (“*Letter to Women*”) of all women is linked to the biology of women as child bearers, and motherhood is “what is characteristic of woman,” and of “what is feminine” (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”). According to the Catholic Church, the realization and fulfillment of the precious gift of motherhood is what allows women to become fully human, as was intended in the beginning of time.

The importance of motherhood is directly connected to the sanctity of marriage in the Catholic teachings. According to Pope John Paul II’s *Letter to Women*, marriage is a complimentary relationship where “womanhood expresses the ‘human’ as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way” (“*Letter to Women*”), and the two are united “so closely that they become ‘one flesh’” (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”). Marriage, according to the Catholic Church, is not an oppressive structure for women as some feminists argue, but rather a partnership between men and women, with complementary “qualities proper to each” gender (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”). Through the combination of these complimentary qualities, the couple comes closest to imaging God. These qualities are described as being gender specific and, for women, tie into the elevated status of motherhood as the supreme vocation for women. According to the *Mulieris Dignitatem*, each woman is given special feminine resources, “according to the richness of the femininity which she received on the day of creation and which she inherits as an expression of the ‘image and likeness of God’ that is specifically hers” (“*Mulieris Dignitatem*”). In this way, neither set of qualities is given a higher status than the other, because both are expressions of the “image and likeness of God.”

Additionally, Pope John Paul II makes it a point to directly respond to the women's liberation movement and ideas of gender equality through neutrality:

In the name of liberation from male 'domination', women must not appropriate to themselves male characteristics contrary to their own feminine 'originality'. There is a well-founded fear that if they take this path, women will not 'reach fulfillment', but instead will *deform and lose what constitutes their essential richness*. ("Mulieris Dignitatem")

Paradoxically, although the Roman Catholic Church believes that women should not be hindered from reaching their full human potential, the Church also denies women certain roles within the Church based on gender and the inability for women to represent Jesus Christ. In the latter half of the 4th century, St. Augustine commented on women's inability to image Christ, rationalizing, according to Rosemary Ruether, "that women possess the image of God in a sex-neutral way, but as females they do not actually image God. Men possess the image of God, while women are included in it only under the male. Femaleness does not image God, but images the bodily creation that the human male is given to rule over" (Ruether and Williams 2007, 251-52). St. Augustine argues that, because Eve was created from Adam, women only image God insofar as they image what has been made out of man – the image of God. Therefore, women cannot represent the image and likeness of God without men. This seems in direct opposition to the idea that men and women are complimentary images of God. Christology, which deals with the person of Jesus Christ, also supports the idea that women cannot represent Christ in priestly duties, specifically because Jesus Christ took the form of a male. Moreover, the disciples of Jesus Christ were all men, meaning that their successors should only be men. The Church believes that priests are "understood to be Christ's direct representatives on earth. The sacrament of ordination connects them through an unbroken line of succession back to Jesus through his apostles" (Braude 2008, 100). In order to support this Church stance, the Vatican has issued several statements which explain why only men can become priests. Pope John Paul II reiterates this stance in *Mulieris Dignitatem*, explaining, "in calling only men as his Apostles, Christ acted in a completely free and sovereign manner," ("Mulieris Dignitatem") meaning that this must have been a purposeful choice. Jesus had the ability to choose women as disciples, but according to the Bible, he did not, even though he did not necessarily follow social norms in other instances. Therefore, the choice not to ordain women comes directly from Jesus' choice to only ordain men, and the necessity of the ordained to represent Jesus Christ and God, which is not in women's nature.

The Mormon Church, or the Church of Latter-Day Saints, has similar stances on the defense of patriarchy and the limiting of female leadership roles, but takes a different approach based on the tenants of their faith. The LDS Church, along with much of the

Christian community, has been criticized by feminists for the patriarchal structure of the Church and the notion that God and Jesus are both male, placing the male gender above the female gender. Although the Catholic Church and many other denominations of Christianity may have a hard time defending their claims, the LDS Church uses their basic beliefs to defend God and Jesus' male-ness. According to Mormon belief, God and Jesus Christ are "embodied beings" who are "real, individual persons, not abstractions, not forces, not ideas, not symbols." God, and Jesus, the son of God, are both tangible beings who possess gender as "part of their eternal identity, not the outgrowth of the misogynist of any other imagery (Ruether and Williams 2007, 279). Therefore, the cry from feminists to de-gender the Christian God or speak of God in gender neutral terms cannot be answered by the Mormon Church, because it disregards a fundamental belief in their idea of God as male.

Moreover, as Camille S. Williams explains, "just as gender is an essential characteristic of who God is, '[g]ender is an essential characteristic of [each] individual[']s premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose'; each person 'is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny'" (Ruether and Williams 2007, 279). Gender is an important factor to every being, because it places each person within the family relationship, which is vital to the Mormon faith. Just as each human is born as a son or daughter to earthly parents, so too will each person reach their divine potential within a heavenly family structure. The "heavenly parents" described by Williams, infers the Mormon belief that even God is married and lives within the family structure as father. Detailed in a college-level textbook entitled *Achieving a Celestial Marriage*, Mormon youth are given a further explanation into the importance of marriage: "Our Heavenly Father and mother live in an exalted state because they achieved a celestial marriage. As we achieve a like marriage, we shall become as they are and begin the creation of worlds for our own spirit children" (Ostling 2007, 170). God, the Heavenly Father, and his wife, are the epitome of a celestial marriage, which each Mormon strives. This exalted state can only be reached through marriage and children, and Mormons must use their roles within earthly marriage to attain a comparable marriage.

Due to the divine status of family structure in the Mormon faith, it comes as no surprise that the Mormon Church resists many feminists who devalue traditional family life. In response, the Church further stresses traditional family structures and stresses strict conformity. According to the Mormon faith, "exaltation is available only in family units" (Ostling 2007, 170-71), meaning that one can only be saved through the family structure, and according to one's role within that structure. As noted previously, gender is an important factor to a person's essential character and, similar to Catholic teachings, gender specific roles

are defined by the LDS Church. In the 1995 “Proclamation to the World” from the First Presidency and Twelve Apostles, the council declared, “by divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children” (Ostling 2007, 170). The text assigns specific gender roles to both the mother and the father of the household. It is presumed that these roles are for all men and women, because marriage and family life is necessary to attain godliness. In this way, all men are given the power to preside over and protect the family, and the women are given the responsibility of motherhood. Feminists respond to these gendered roles by accusing the Church of devaluing female roles and oppressing women, by limiting options and giving men the authority over women. Many Mormons counter this accusation by pointing out the importance of women to salvation. Anne Braude explains this Mormon counter argument: “The LDS made women very important theologically because it considered them necessary to men’s salvation. Women’s own salvation rested on their status as wives. The role of wife, however, had divine sanction, with God’s wife serving as an attainable religious ideal to which all women could ascribe” (Braude 2008, 24). Additionally, women are given the ability to bring each person into the mortal world and, “like Eve, women are the mothers of ‘all living’ and are ‘saved in childbearing” (Ruether and Williams 2007, 281). In the Mormon faith, women are at the center of salvation because through women, each person is brought into mortal existence, and through marriage (of which women are a vital part), celestial marriage is attainable. Furthermore, the idea of salvation of women through procreation parallels that of the Roman Catholic Church, tying women’s roles, or vocation, to Eve and her God-given role as the mother of all creation.

Besides stressing the importance of marriage and motherhood in Church doctrine, the Mormon Church has also limited the authority of women within the Church to force conformity to these roles. In the beginning of the Mormon Church, in the mid 19th and early 20th centuries, Mormon women were very active in church leadership and had a number of rights that other women in different churches did not. Margaret Toscano, a Mormon scholar who was later excommunicated for her work, researched the history of women’s roles in Mormonism, and discovered that women “participated in faith healings by the laying on of hands,” “controlled their own organization and money,” and “published their own newspaper where they wrote ardently about women’s rights.” Toscano goes on to share that “Eliza R. Snow, plural wife of Joseph Smith and later Brigham Young, had been called a prophetess and high priestess; and her poems and sermons were influential in the church” (Braude 2004, 160). It is clear that the women of the early Mormon Church were given leadership roles

within the organization, such as the printing of their own newspaper and beginning The Relief Society in 1842. Eliza Snow was even considered a prophetess and high priestess in the 19th century, which was unlike all other Christian Churches of the time. However, these leadership roles were short-lived. Women's right to participate in faith healings was revoked by Apostle Joseph Smith in 1846, who believed that women should only bless other women. The Relief Society, which was once run entirely by women, is now under the authority of a male bishop, and many women in authoritative roles were demoted to lesser roles in the organization (Ostling 2007, 372). This change began after the 1940s and continues today, which has not settled well with many Mormon women like Margaret Toscano, who understand the history of women's rights in the Mormon Church and see this as a step in the wrong direction.

Christian positions against feminism often translate into larger backlash movements against feminism, coming from within the conservative and traditionalist movements in the United States. Reasons behind the backlash vary from the positions taken by the Catholic and Mormon Churches, to generalized statements about the evil of feminism. Pat Robertson, self-proclaimed spokesman for the American Christian Right and founder of the Christian Coalition, is an exemplary example the latter, claiming that "feminists encourage women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, become lesbians, and destroy capitalism" (Baumgardner 2000, 61). Although this statement sounds outlandish and non-sequential, the stereotypes within the statement are held by many anti-feminists, who see feminism as the cause behind many social ills, such as high divorce rates, crime, homosexuality, and a failing economy. When asked about their stance on feminism, 26 out of 27 Evangelical Christians from Beachside, California, identified themselves as anti-feminist. According to the researcher, Christel Manning, "these women blame the feminist movement for almost every social ill, from abortion, divorce, and homosexuality to unemployment," with one woman interviewed stating, "feminism is one of the worst things that ever happened to America" (Manning 1999, 168). It is important to note that these statements are coming from American women, who are dissatisfied with the feminist movement and its ability to represent women in general. These women are able to create this backlash because there is disjunction within the feminist movement itself, which must be addressed.

Backlashers react to the feminist movement by challenging its assumptions and pointing out what they see as faults and gaps within feminist ideas. The success of the backlash is not dependent on the strength of the argument, but whether or not the issue is important to a large number of people. One main challenge to feminism raised by backlashers is the claim that feminism devalues gender. The critique of liberal feminism is that it devalues traditional understandings of gender differences and attempts to "blur all the lines between men and

women” (Manning 1999, 175) in order to create total equality. Many conservative women disagree with this idea, because they believe that gender differences do not have to be done away with in order for people to have equal rights and options. Connaught (Connie) Marshner, anti-feminist and member of the Christian Right, spoke out against the masculinizing of women in American society, stating, “macho feminism has deceived women in that it convinced them that they would be happy only if they were treated like men, and that included treating themselves like men” (Marshner 1982, 164). Members of the Christian Right like Marshner, as well as many secular conservatives, hold the belief that gender differences should be embraced, not hidden. Like the Catholic and Mormon Churches, these women see their gender and gendered role as a divine gift. One Christian woman interviewed by Manning explains, “we’re different physically and psychologically, and I think God has it that way for a reason...I can’t see why some women are so intent on being just like men...Women have a more nurturing role” (Manning 1999, 100). Instead of seeing these gendered roles as sexist and oppressive to women, the respondent feels that embracing the differences in gender is important for true feminine liberation.

A second objection to feminism, which stems from the feminists’ supposed rejection of gender categories, is the idea that feminists are against the traditional family. Critics of feminism fear that the push for liberation from societal oppression will negatively affect the family structure and take away the choice of being a mother and housewife. By pushing for women to gain equal opportunity and freedom of choice in the workplace, women who choose to stay in traditional roles feel that “feminists have denigrated their choice to be a homemakers” (Manning 1999, 170) and that they will not be allowed to “take pride in motherhood” (Manning 1999, 175) without being judged by other women. Feminism chooses, in part, to liberate women by encouraging them to enter into the workforce and placing the value of freedom on the outside work, in turn devaluing the work done in the home. Backlashers believe that the work done within the home, such as caring for children and tending to the house, should not be looked down upon as less work or less free, because this in turn devalues family life. Williams explains how this devaluing of the home is destructive, writing, “feminist views of the housewife as parasite or children as burdens or men as oppressors are antithetical to the most important means of love and support most people have: marriage and family” (Ruether and Williams 2007, 295). Williams, a Mormon scholar, explains that the radical views against family and housewives held by some feminists are in direct opposition to her own views on the importance of family, and the views of her Church. Furthermore, many women object to feminism’s perceived attack on the family by accusing the feminist movement of confining women rather than liberating them. One Catholic woman

interviewed by Manning explains that, in her opinion, “the feminist movement has failed to broaden women’s choices; instead it has simply reversed the narrow range of options that are available to women” (Manning 1999, 176). The backlash movement uses an argument from feminism against itself, accusing the liberation movement of further oppressing women by forcing them into a new type of vocation that has been chosen for them, this time by feminists rather than men.

The lack of focus on the family has also led backlashers to charge feminists with being selfish due to their high value on independence. Williams argues that the push for independence and self-sufficiency of women has led to the inability to live in a family dynamic, where the family as a whole is placed before the self. She articulates her argument as such: “each [person] has prepared to make it alone, and, because each [person] has prepared to be alone, it may be harder for them to cooperate in what might be best for their family, especially for their dependent children” (Ruether and Williams 2007, 291). This argument deals with the practicality of selflessness, which is necessary to live in a relationship where selfishness is detrimental to sustain the relationship. Supporters of this argument blame feminism for making women too independent, which in turn makes it hard for them to live communally and selflessly. Some Evangelical Christian women interviewed by Manning equate this selfish independence to a large issue of Americanism, pointing out that “feminists, like most Americans, are seeking to enrich themselves at the expense of others” (Manning 1999, 173). Other defenders of selflessness in family life point to the lack of religious obedience as the cause for feminist independence and selfishness. Well known televangelist Jerry Falwell notes that in the course of history “many women have never accepted their God-given roles. They live in disobedience to God’s laws and have promoted their godless philosophy throughout our society” (Falwell 1980, 136). Whether the argument is supported by concerns of religious obedience, rejection of individualism, or concern for the family, all positions argue that feminism as a theory is inherently selfish because, to the individual woman, it is about self-liberation as well as liberation for all women.

Lastly, backlashers to feminism argue that the feminist movement has gone too far, and is too far removed from the needs of real women to be effective. An occurring stance within this type of backlash is to say, “though it may have started with good intentions, [feminism] has become extremist and no longer represents ordinary women” (Manning 1999, 171). Proponents of this conclusion see the over-highlighting of binaries and seeming dichotomies, such as men to women or superior to inferior, as “polarizing rhetoric” (Stacey 1983, 563) which must be overcome in order to create a holistic view of society, which can include equality. Others believe that the feminist statement and rallying point that the *personal is*

political, is too radical, as it calls for a “collapsing of all boundaries between public and private life and thereby leads to the erosion of both realms” (Stacey 1983, 565). By allowing everything to be politicized, some argue, this allows for the personal to be corrupted, exploited, and demoralized when it should be kept safe in the private sphere. This includes issues rights over one’s own body, spousal abuse, and other personal issues that can find root causes in social structure. Even if some backlashes admit that the movement began with good intentions, the backlash movement is making a statement that the condition of feminism now is not answering the needs of all women, and change must occur.

The form this change will take is unknown, but it is necessary that it occur. The Christian Right suggests a movement towards a conservative form of feminism, placing value on a “pro-family stance” which rejects polarized rhetoric and sexual politics, affirming gender differences and traditional gender roles, and asserting “that struggle against male domination detracts from political agendas they consider more important” (Stacey 1983, 562), such as homosexual marriage and abortion rights. People within the backlash movement are quite outspoken about the need for a conservative change from within and outside of the feminist movement. As Jerry Falwell expressed in his work entitled, “The Feminist Movement,” “Need I say that it is time that moral Americans became informed and involved in helping to preserve family values in our nation? Now it is not too late. But we cannot wait. The twilight of our nation could well be at hand” (Falwell 1980, 150). The backlash, or jarring opposing reaction to the original feminist machine, is gaining power and disrupting the movement of feminism. The question is now, how will the feminist movement respond to the strong backlash? Judith Stacey considers this question thoroughly and suggests that feminists must “forge a political theory and program that comes to grips with the difficult issues that new conservative feminism helps to identify” and then try to find ways to solve them (Stacey 1983, 578). If this suggested self-reflection and change is to occur, it must happen soon. Like a machine, the feminist movement cannot withstand strong backlash for long without weakening and eventually breaking, and the twilight of the movement could well be at hand.

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Gender and Women's Studies Writing Contest – Second Place

Meg Oka - Outlaw Poverty, Not Prostitution

Prostitution is famously known as “the world’s oldest profession.” Lots of scholars like to nitpick this and say that hunting or gathering actually deserves that title, but the fact remains that it is currently and historically ubiquitous: all ancient and modern cultures have had their own form of prostitution, from ancient Greece and the Aztecs to modern-day America. For example, the ancient Greek historian Herodotus in his *Histories* talks about ancient Mesopotamians practicing sacred or “temple prostitution,” a worship practice that enacts symbolic marriage between a god and a goddess with humans representing the deities. In ancient Rome, prostitutes were often foreign slaves or people of the poor, lower class. In ancient Greece, prostitution involved not just women, but boys as well. Prostitution, in its various shapes and forms, has been and will be a part of human society no matter the time period or geographical location. The business is merely fulfilling a basic human need in a professional relationship. Unfortunately, American legislature ignores this simple truth and continues to criminalize and prosecute the profession and all those involved. But because prostitution shows no signs of abating any time soon, American legislature needs to take a different approach. Prostitution should not be abolished or suppressed, but legalized and regulated (or decriminalized), which constitutes state authority and control over the profession, as well as social tolerance of all the aspects of the profession. Although many groups are opposed to prostitution in the United States, the positive effects of decriminalizing the prostitution industry would far outweigh the current detrimental effects of an illegal, largely underground prostitution sector.

While some ancient cultures embraced prostitution, sex workers in other cultures faced social stigmas, persecution, criminalization, slavery, violence and abuse. Sex workers today still face these same problems. In fact, it wasn’t until a crucial event in 1975 in Lyons, France that the sex workers’ rights movement really emerged. When 150 prostitutes took over a church to protest the inaction, lack of protection and abuse from law enforcement, the world took notice. The protest stimulated the development of organizations around the world in England, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States, and in 1985, an “international instrument” for sex workers’ rights was born: the World Charter for Prostitutes’ Rights (Sanders, O’Neill and Pitcher 95-96). The Charter required the decriminalization, regulation and protection of adult prostitution, demanded basic human rights and civil liberties, freedom from discrimination, the right to pay taxes and receive benefits, along with addressing the importance of educational programs that would change

public opinion and work towards the de-stigmatization of the profession (Sanders, O'Neill and Pitcher 96-97).

While the World Whores' Congress at which this Charter was born was a monumental, historical advancement for the movement, it faced initial skepticism and ridicule. An article in *Time* derisively referred to the convention as "hookers" in the "hallowed halls of the European Parliament." It also faced opposition from some feminists who believe prostitution to be detrimental to women in all forms, legalized or not. Like Vednita Carter and Evelina Giobbe argue in Jessica Spector's *Prostitution and Pornography*: Pretending prostitution is a job like any other job would be laughable if it weren't so serious. Leading marginalized prostituted women to believe that decriminalization would materially change anything substantive in their lives as prostitutes is dangerous and irresponsible. (35) This view refuses to acknowledge the very real and very detrimental effects of the criminalization of prostitution. For example, because sex workers are illegal in the United States, they do not have any labor rights. Their lack of rights allows them to be ruthlessly exploited by their clients and employers. In this situation, the circumstances of sex workers are similar to those of the illegal immigrant workers in California. Undocumented garment workers, for example, can't protest their deplorable working conditions, wage theft, excessive overtime or lack of benefits because they're afraid of being deported, even though California law grants them labor rights. In the same vein, because prostitution is illegal, workers have no legal recourse or protection from similar injustices. In fact, because the workers are involved in an unlawful trade, clients have less respect for them which can lead to violence, abuse, rape and even homicide. However, if prostitution were legalized and regulated, the sex workers would be able to report abusive customers and the police, instead of locking up the prostitutes, could then go after the real criminals: dangerous clients.

The criminalization of prostitution affects more than just the sex workers on a personal scale; it affects the global economy. Because there is no regulation of the profession, it encourages human trafficking and forced adult and child prostitution. According to the Council of Europe, human trafficking is at an all-time high. Its global annual market is at \$42.5 billion dollars and an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 people are illegally trafficked every year to over 127 countries (Ross). On a local scale, prostitution businesses are forced underground, which can lead to more illegal activities like money laundering, weapons dealing and drug dealing. Although there is no direct correlation, these illicit activities tend to thrive in similar environments, like poor or industrial neighborhoods (Ditmore 123). Not only does it encourage other organized crime, but the money laundering inherently involved in illegal prostitution undermines the legitimate business economy (World Bank, International

Monetary Fund 11-6). If prostitution were decriminalized, the industry would no longer have to resort to money laundering because their businesses would be legitimate. They would then be contributing to the legal economy, rather than crippling it.

Despite the adverse effects of the criminalization of prostitution, there are groups who are staunchly opposed to the social tolerance of the trade in the United States. Most often these groups are either religious or feminist. Religious opposition is based in doctrinal beliefs about the morality of sex. For example, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that prostitution “does injury to the dignity of the person who engages in it... he violates the chastity to which his Baptism pledged him and defiles his body, the temple of the Holy Spirit. Prostitution is a social scourge” (Roman Catholic Church). Unfortunately, there is no way to argue with religion. Because their beliefs about prostitution are grounded in holy texts central to their religion and not arguments based on real facts, discourse can only go so far; there’s just no way to argue with “prostitution is wrong because God says so.”

Feminists, on the other hand, have varied arguments against prostitution. Regardless of the type of feminism to which they subscribe, those who oppose prostitution generally agree that prostitution is detrimental to women and should be abolished because it is not a conscious and calculated choice (Sullivan). This argument claims that because women in the profession are forced into it, the profession itself is inherently bad or wrong. As Catharine MacKinnon argues, “If prostitution is a free choice, why are the women with the fewest choices the ones most often found doing it?” (MacKinnon). However, that same argument can be applied to low-wage, legal jobs as well. Are there any sweatshop workers who love their job? Clearly, the answer is no. Do they choose to work there? Technically, yes, they have the choice to either work or not work there, but can it really be called a choice when their options are work in a sweatshop or starve? Sex workers who are “forced” into the job are going to be the same kind of people who are “forced” into being sweatshop laborers: neither have much a choice in the situation, but it has nothing to do with the profession itself; rather it has everything to do with their current life situations, such as poverty or limited opportunities. Prostitution as a profession is not wrong because people with limited options are forced into it. What should be criticized and examined instead are the social structures in place that are creating the circumstances that force people into jobs that they find undesirable.

The fight against human trafficking is really where anti-prostitution groups should be focusing their time, resources and efforts. The age-old profession of prostitution is not going away, and working to abolish it is a grievous waste of energy. Instead, what are conceived as the detrimental effects of prostitution need to be acknowledged as the harmful consequences of a trade unjustifiably criminalized that can be combated and eradicated if the industry is

legalized and regulated. Decriminalizing prostitution in the United States will make a valid contribution to the legal economy and has the potential to lessen other illegal activities often associated with the trade. It will give sex workers the option of legal recourse, as well as labor rights, which in turn will protect the employees and, as a whole, make the profession a safer option for the hundreds of thousands of people who choose the career of a sex worker.

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Gender and Women's Studies Writing Contest – Third Place

Julie Henderson - SWITCHING CODPIECES AND CORSETS: Cross-Gender Casting in Shakespearean Performance

In 2003, an actress stood on the stage of the famous Globe Theatre in London. She was performing in a production of *Taming of the Shrew*, but contrary to expectation, she was dressed in men's clothes. As per the director's request, she delivered the following prologue:

The first time this house hosted Shakespeare's *Shrew*
All the parts were played by men. Weird, yes, but true.
And still today you'll find our acting brothers
Portraying sisters, daughters, and their mothers.
Vice-Versa's very rare. But in this odd piece,
The girls do get the chance to wear the codpiece.
Our new production, crammed with female talents,
May help in some way to redress the balance (Klett 2009).

Shakespearean performance has a rich history of cross-gender cast productions, stemming from the historical practice of boy-actresses in Elizabethan England and leading to modern takes on the concept of performing gender. Many contemporary productions and performance companies are exploring gender and cross-gender casting as a new means of interpreting Shakespeare's canon of plays. From selectively cross-gendered productions to all-female or all-male productions, directors and companies are playing with the notion that gender is performative instead of innate. While this argument stems from a feminist platform, and became widely accepted by 1999 (Bulman 232), the practice of cross-gender casting has received polarized reviews and reactions from critics and audiences alike. However, scholars, directors, and performers have found that cross-gender performance reveals dimensions of Shakespeare's characters that members of the same gender can often overlook.

From historical to modern performances, each cross-cast performance came out of a wide array of artistic choices, and received very different responses from audiences and critics. All-male productions are often received more positively because of their association with "authentic" performance, while cross-cast females are often poorly received because of the notion that they challenge Shakespeare's "authority." Still, both types of productions show the performative quality of gender while bringing fresh interpretations to Shakespeare's canons.

Boyplayers and Boy-actresses of Elizabethan England

Shakespearean performance has a rich history of cross-gender casts, beginning with the Elizabethan era where women were banned from performing on stage and female roles were played by pubescent boys called boy-actresses, or boyplayers.

Many scholars of Elizabethan theatre have supposed that “the boyplayer was simply a medium, well schooled in certain techniques which allowed the playwright considerable freedom of conception” (Senelick “Playboys and Boyplayers” 130). However it is impossible to know exactly what the boy-actress was like and how Elizabethan audiences received him.

One of Shakespeare’s most famous female characters, Cleopatra, has been difficult for scholars to imagine being played by young boys. She is arguably one of the most complex female roles in the canon, and she is described as being very voluptuous and the epitome of feminine beauty. “Loathing to grant that unfledged striplings could convey all the complexities of Shakespeare’s mature female characters, they have hypothesized men being cast in these parts” (Senelick “Playboys and Boyplayers” 131).

To try and understand the effect of a boy-actress playing a role like Cleopatra, Senelick created an experiment where the same scene from *Antony and Cleopatra* would be performed, once with a female in the title role, and a second time with a young male as the Egyptian queen. To determine the affect of the boy-actress, Senelick observed audience member reaction, acting choices, and power and clarity of the scene. With the actress, the audience had no unusual reaction. To convey Cleopatra’s power, the actress emphasized her sexuality as means of leveling with the other men in the scene. When the audience watched the scene a second time with the boy-actress, they were visibly and audibly stunned by his presence on stage. He played the role straight, without bringing extra attention to his body or his femininity.

The audience and Senelick alike both found the boy-actress to be more effective in the role because Cleopatra’s power, elegance, and character did not get flattened out into just sensuality (“Playboys and Boyplayers” 132). “For me, the experiment clarified one thing: Shakespeare could write women’s roles as multidimensional as Cleopatra not simply because the boy actor was a master of his craft but because his maleness automatically provided a solidity of presence on which the rest might be predicated” (Senelick “Playboys and Boyplayers” 132). Having a male onstage among males gave the boy actress more power than a female would have, thereby allowing him to explore more aspects of the character than just her sexuality and femininity.

However, two major discrepancies between Senelick’s experimental boy-actress and the Elizabethan boy-actress was his age. Senelick’s boy actress was college age, in his late teens/early twenties, whereas historical documents show Elizabethan boy-actresses to be pubescent – estimated at ages between thirteen and seventeen. Secondly, we cannot use a modern audience’s reaction to a boy-actress to accurately depict or judge how Elizabethan audiences would have reacted because cultural contexts and norms have changed (Barker 68).

Despite these inaccuracies, Senelick's experiment still shows, to some extent, the platform that a male actor can provide to build a female character.

Even in a homogenous setting, with an all-male ensemble, there were still gender differences dictated by Elizabethan society. During this period, pubescent boys were "a culturally acceptable equivalent of a woman" (Senelick "Playboys and Boyplayers" 150). Because of this, Elizabethan theatre was not erasing gender differences. If Shakespeare had been working with a company of all adult men, then his female characters would exist on the same power hierarchical level as his male characters. Though Shakespeare was creating some strong female characters, they were still never equals to the male characters on stage both in power, scope, and number. Rather, Shakespeare was using the audience's moral respect for males on stage to create female characters with strong personalities and not necessarily immense power. The Elizabethan theatre was just using one gender to define the differences (Callaghn 52).

The homogeneity of gender does not just lend to define gender differences, but it also lends to allow the audience to experience the play more fully. In the Elizabethan society that is so occupied with morals and decency, the absence of women onstage allows both the ensemble and the audience to fully immerse themselves in the world of the play and then return to reality "unaltered at the end of the performance" (Barker 62). Barker also states that "the art of the boy actress shows that the combined power of player and audience can create the illusion of femininity onstage providing spectators with images of good women to use as models while fostering a clear sense of the separation between theatrical identities and real ones" (Barker 59).

This sense of homogenous gender definition was soon lost as the theatre transitioned to using both male and female actors onstage. Once both genders were represented onstage, the audience's libido became equally divided. Women in the audience became attracted to the masculine actor, and men to the sensual actress. With this separation, the idea of "pulchritude and allure" became polarized traits of femininity (Senelick "Breeches Birth" 212).

Along with the change, audiences lost their appreciation for gender performance. The idea of a single gender production became ludicrous to the very audiences that once appreciated the boy-actress. The idea that gender was performative became unthinkable and repulsive to audiences and critics alike (Senelick "Playboys and Boyplayers" 128).

"Authentic Practices" and Contemporary All-Male Productions

Many contemporary Shakespearian productions with all-male casts promote their production and justify their casting choices by saying the show is produced with "authentic

practices”. To scholars, that phrase is problematic because we cannot fully replicate the production methods of Elizabethan productions since there is not enough documentation on them. Instead, contemporary interpretations of Elizabethan culture are heightened, and almost circus-like (Bulman 232-233). However, it is because of this claim that contemporary all-male productions have received better reviews and reactions than all-female productions.

In her essay “A Queen in a Beard,” Melissa Aaron notes that “all-male Shakespeare tends to be conservative. It isn’t all conservative of course, but often all-male Shakespeare tries to have it both ways, toying with homoerotic frisson while making it safe for the tourists because it’s ‘historically authentic’” (151). Aaron cleverly coined the term “homoerotic frisson” to describe the tension felt by an audience member while watching a pair of the same sex portray a romantic and physical relationship of opposing sexes. While this relationship is not technically homosexual, the audience member still sees the biological gender of the two performers. This tension is often apparent in all-female productions, however the men’s claim to authenticity seems to disguise the sexuality to audiences. Using this claim to “archeological sanctions,” all-male Shakespeare can undermine the general acceptance that gender is biological and innate, by showing it to be performative (Bulman 242).

The New Globe Theatre produced an all-male *Antony and Cleopatra* advertising “authentic practices”. The production used traditional Elizabethan costumes made using period tools, as well as Elizabethan makeup and wigs. While these elements helped justify the all-male casting, they also lent to highlighting the performative quality of gender by exaggerating the difference between the male and female characters. This exaggeration made it easy for the audience to accept the cross-gender performance (J. Rose 212). In combination, the casting and technical elements provided the audience and critics with “fascinating representations and constructions of femininity” (Conkie 189).

Exaggerated costumes and make-up in all-male productions keep the audience aware that they are watching a cross-cast production. This persistence of awareness prevents audiences from becoming uncomfortable during sexual and romantic moments in the production. Instead of seeing scene of homosexual activity, the audience is aware that they are watching “gender at play, gender as play, and [they are] unthreatened by the sexual indeterminacy that cross-dressing signifies” (Bulman 238).

In addition to cooling homoerotic tensions, the claim of “authentic practices” calls upon the history of the boy-actress as medium for acting, not as social or political commentary. In this sense, boys and men playing the female roles are seen transforming gender and not commenting on gender. Also, because Shakespeare has this authority, stemming from his prestige and canon of work, claims of “authentic practices” appeal to both

this authority and the universalism that many scholars credit to Shakespeare's plays (Conkie 205). It is this appeal that gives all-male productions a kind of immunity from negative critique.

The Performative Quality of Gender

The belief that gender was performed rather than innate began as a radical feminist ideology but has since become more widely accepted in contemporary criticism (J. Rose 230). While original productions of Shakespearean and other Elizabethan plays showed that gender could be performed, with the boy-actress performing as women on stage, it was not until the late nineteen-nineties that this argument started circulating. Audiences and critics alike proved "receptive to the argument that gender might be a cultural construct, and sexual desire dependent on forces other than biological differences" (Bulman 232).

Gender scholars have been observing people for many years in attempts to understand the gendering process. Gendering, referring to actions, interests, sexual desire, etc that combine to define us as male or female, is dependent on culture. What may be considered feminine in the United States may be masculine for a nomad in Africa. The gendering process begins when a baby is born and becomes susceptible to the culture and influences around it (Williams 30). When a child starts to learn what is considered masculine, he inherently learns what is feminine. Capturing this knowledge and communicating it can lead to gender being performed. We see this not only in cross-gender cast plays, but also in drag shows, and even on an elementary school playground as a girl is being called a "tom-boy".

Attributes of masculinity and femininity within a society can be simplified into certain gestures, and poses, which a member of the opposite sex can assume and perform (Senelick "Breeches Birth" 214). Having an actor of one gender playing a character of another requires not only effort on the actor's part, but also on the audience's. "Cross-gender performance asks that audience members learn to read the actor's body in more complex ways. It highlights the discontinuity between actor and role, inviting the spectator to read actor, character, body, and voice simultaneously" (Klett 2006 180). This complexity often results in a v-effekt, or alienation of gender to the audience. The contradiction of signifiers, from voice to gesture, to body can defamiliarize gender to the audience, making them more open to perceive it as performance (Klett 2006 183). This effect can invite the audiences to join the actors in reimagining the characters and story to give Shakespeare a new interpretation (Klett 2009 7).

Elizabeth Klett has studied and written many essays on cross-gender performance in Shakespeare, specifically actresses playing men. She has taken the v-effekt idea from

playwright, Bertolt Brecht, and applied it to gender performance, noting that, “the cross-gendered actress performs gender to reveal that it is a performance. In the process, she denaturalizes gender identity; she questions our perception of gender as a natural, or given, set of characteristics” (2009 7).

Though this notion that gender is performative is widely accepted among scholars and critics, it is not entirely accepted. There is a stigma in Western Culture that masculinity is not constructed, but rather it is innate, dominant, and necessary. In this belief, it is femininity that stems from masculinity, and defined by whatever masculinity is not (Klett 2006 179).

Performing Masculinity: Criticism and Praise for Women

All-female casts are by no means a modern twist to Shakespearean and theatrical performance. There are records dating back to 1626 of all-female productions, and yet modern performances are not accredited with the title “authentic” (Aaron 164). The introduction of actresses to the theatre brought about the Restoration period, during which, there are records of women playing men onstage. This tradition of cross-casting women has permeated the theatre through the eighteenth- and nineteenth- century in both the United Kingdom and the United States (Klett 2009 27). There are even records dating back to 1657 of women that managed entire theatre companies and directed traveling theatre troupes (Senelick “Breeches Birth” 208).

One popular reason for cross-gender casting women into male roles is equality. “Approximately three-quarters of theatre roles in Britain are reserved for male actors – thus depriving women actors and women theatre-goers of the equality they deserve” (Klett 2009 81). The New Globe’s production of *Taming of the Shrew* cited this reason for the all-female cast in their prologue. Lisa Wolpe, Artistic Director of Los Angeles Women’s Shakespeare Company founded the company on the principle of contributing “to a transformation of the perceptions of women’s roles in our society by working to create a deeper, more powerful, unbounded view of women’s potential” (LAWSC). What sets LAWSC apart from other all-female companies like the companies in the Globe, Women’s Will of northern California, and others, is their overt feminist mission statement.

The other popular reason is not as easy to quantify or justify, and that is to refresh and renew interpretations of Shakespeare. By cross-gender casting women into male Shakespearean roles, actors, directors, and producers alike can explore new interpretations of both characters and plots to discover transformational meanings (Klett 2009 x). The Shakespearean canon of plays is so abundant and has such literary value that many scholars regard it as “the primary dramatic text (arguably the primary fictional text) from which we derive our ideas about English Renaissance representations of sexuality and gender” (M. B.

Rose 313). Because of this value and importance, Shakespearean plays have been produced for centuries, often resulting in one common idea as to how a character or a play should be acted out. Many audience members have defined ideas in their mind as to what Lear looks, sounds, and acts like, or how Hamlet's soliloquies should be delivered. However, casting a woman in these famous and iconic roles can defamiliarize them to audiences, and create a whole new interpretation of the character and play (Klett 2009 141).

It is the combination of changed interpretations, questions of "authenticity", and Shakespeare's authority within the literary and dramatic community that result in negative reviews for all-female productions. Because his canon of plays is so large and famous, many scholars and people alike idealize his work, and refuse to accept that it can be re-performed and altered. Many times, this belief comes from the English Culture, intertwining Shakespeare so heavily with English history that they perceive a reimagining of his plays as an attack on English heritage (Klett 2009 2). When all-female productions were presented in England, many audience members and critics alike "demonstrated overt hostility" (Klett 2006 175) in their reviews and reaction to the production.

As mentioned before, King Lear is an extremely iconic male Shakespearean character. Most audience members expect him to look a certain way: old, grey hair, wrinkles, but still strong, and gallant. In 1997, Kathryn Hunter portrayed Lear in London. Hunter defied all preconceptions of what Lear should be like; at the time she was in her late-thirties and stood only five-feet tall, hardly the elderly king many picture. "Hunter's performance disrupted the iconicity of Shakespeare's Lear and the legacy of great male actors who embodied him" (Klett 2009 83). Hunter, who already was a critically acclaimed actress, received very poor reviews for *King Lear*.

Like Lear, the role of Prospero holds incredible associations. *The Tempest* has been regarded by scholars for its universalism, and is even said to be about Shakespeare himself. In 2000, Vanessa Redgrave stepped onstage in the role of Prospero and faced many challenges and prejudices (Klett 2009 87). Andrew Hartly noted much that is essentially male about Prospero comes from the actor portraying the role, and when a woman is cast in it, much of the maleness changes (Klett 2009 98). In fact, Julie Taymor, just in 2010, released a film version of *The Tempest* having changed Prospero's gender entirely and casting Helen Mirren as the sorceress.

Prospero's complexity lends to cross-gender casting and gender switching because he exhibits both masculine and feminine personality traits. Throughout the play, he switches between a "gruff authoritarianism" and a "great generosity of spirit" and Redgrave explored these switches by playing with the mixed signals of her gender identity (Klett 2009 97).

Like Redgrave and Hunter, Fiona Shaw took the English stage playing Richard II in a 1995 production directed by Deborah Warner. Warner says she cast Shaw not as a gimmick, but because she truly thought she was the best performer for the role. What ensued was a commentary on masculinity and kingships. In an interview, Warner stated, “I wanted everybody who came across Richard to have a great big problem when they met this person who must be male through virtue of being a king, and yet who looked like a woman and was effeminate” (Klett 2006 176). Richard II struggles with his role as King throughout the play, and Warner and Shaw translated this struggle through gender, and revealed that not only masculinity, but kingship to be performative as well (Klett 2006 186). Because of this question of masculinity and kingship, many critics called Shaw’s performance androgynous, using the word in both a positive and a negative context (Klett 2006 178).

Unlike the selectively cross-gender cast productions previously mentioned, the Globe also presented an all-female production of *Taming of the Shrew* at the beginning of their season in 2003. While the selectively cross-gender cast actresses faced mostly negative criticism about the seeming difference and disconnect between the actress and the character, the all-female production did not receive this criticism, implying that the gap has been diminished (Klett 2009 147). Another main difference is the element of comedy in the production. Redgrave, Shaw and Hunter all tackled some of Shakespeare’s great tragic and dramatic roles, whereas the actresses in *Taming of the Shrew* “were often directed to play their scenes for comedy, even ones that could be taken seriously” (Klett 2009 150). The comedy eased tension for the audience watching the cross-gender cast actress. Allowing them to laugh at the actresses made the performances more palatable (Klett 2009 138).

Another common critique of cross-gender cast productions, selective or not, is that the “gimmick” casting works against Shakespeare’s universalism. Cross-gender cast actresses are regarded as a novelty or gimmick in contemporary theatre (Aaron 158) because in part of their inability to claim “authenticity” and in part because of the perceived threat to Shakespeare’s authority as one of the greatest English-language writers, “because his plays are ‘universal’: timeless, unchanging, and encompassing all humanity. By casting a women in a male role, these production work against this notion of universality, particularly through the actress’ disruptions of the iconicity of Shakespeare’s greatest male characters” (Klett 2009 13).

Cross-Gender Cast Actresses and Gender Regimes

Western Civilization has a strong history of strict gender regimes, from a majority of societies being patriarchal to women taking the last name of their husband when getting married. As gender regimes and hierarchies start to shift, it is observed for one reason or

another that people, who are resistant to change, tend to displace fears onto women (Howard 426). Since regimes are resistant to change, motivation and action are required (Williams 49) and these cross-gender cast plays are seen as action.

However apparently stagnant, gender regimes are constantly changing. Several decades ago, it was indecent for women to wear pants. Wearing a male specific outfit or costume was perceived as subordinate and an attempt to overthrow the patriarchal hierarchy (Howard 424). Instead, items of clothing were crafted to objectify women, and maintain distinction between masculine and feminine dress (Howard 422). Some of these items still persist culture today, including high heels. But women who overcome this attempt at definition and distinction, such as cross-gender cast women, receive hostile and negative critiques and reactions. Cross-gender cast actresses remind us that “theatrical performance can reflect [and] it can also refract; it has the potential to reinscribe and enforce dominant social paradigms, and to challenge and reimagine those paradigms” (Klett 2006 194). The social and political perceptions of female-to-male performance is what results in the negative critique that its male-to-female counterpart does not receive.

Shakespearean performance is riddled with a history of cross-gender casting, such as the boy-actresses of the Elizabethan stage, to the all-female troupes of the Restoration stage, and the modern interpretations of both. However, acceptance and positive reactions to cross-gender casting is not equal. Contemporary all-male productions can claim “authenticity” which is protection against negative critique of the casting choice. However the “authenticity” of cross-gender cast actresses is not accepted, and thus women playing male characters face negative reviews. In any case, cross-gender casting – male or female – can result in new interpretations and envisioning of the classic Shakespeare canon. These interpretations can be a commentary on gender regimes in Western Culture, as well as being a push for the feminist movement. But, as the Los Angeles Women’s Shakespeare Company says, they can also be a simple way to breathe new life into the old plays, to help cultivate interest and appreciation for the Bard.

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Gender and Women's Studies Writing Contest – Third Place

Yamila Perez - Pretty Boys on a Platter: Catering Beautiful Musicians to Japanese Women

From “Visual Kei” to effeminate Rock bands that sell out the Tokyo Dome on a regular basis, these Japanese “pretty boys” often surprise Western audiences with their physical appearances. Blending musical talent with a more feminine physical appearance, or so is Western perception, these musicians are not only seen as sexually appealing to Japanese women, but are taking on a softer appearance according to the desires of women. Their physical appearances being “feminine” is a Western notion. What these men are doing is catering to what women want, and in doing so, influencing men offstage to also reject the masculine stereotype and take care of their physical appearances.

The first thing that should be noted is that “feminization,” or the perceived notion of male feminization, in Japan is not solely a Western influence. In fact, male beauty and homoeroticism was a reoccurring theme in fourteenth and fifteenth century Noh and Kabuki theater performances. The male patrons of the theaters were usually attracted to young men as well as women, thus the importance of featuring beautiful boys and adolescent men (MacDuff 248). The theater actors were known to engage in prostitution to supplement their income (Watanabe 79).

Interestingly, critical accounts rarely discuss the homoerotic elements in Kabuki or Noh plays although they do discuss the aesthetic and sensual charms of beautiful boys. Critics seem reluctant to discuss these homoerotic elements in favor of the spiritual elements and emotion of Noh and Kabuki. And though spirituality and emotion were very important concepts during the Middle Ages, homoerotic desire was understood to be a sacred force as well as a physical one (MacDuff 249).

Therefore it is obvious that Japanese male sexuality has been varied historically. According to MacDuff, until the Meiji reforms in the nineteenth century, Japanese men were considered bisexual and could engage in homosexual relationships as long as he eventually married and produced children. In regards to beauty constructs, during the Heian period (794-1185) both men and women used cosmetics such as perfumes, eyebrow treatments, and textiles, and literature of the time such as Lady Murasaki's “Tale of Genji,” often reflected the ideal beautiful young men (Tan 13). This male beauty, however, was connected with homosexuality. In fact, in the 1960's only homosexual young men with feminine features appeared in Japanese magazine articles, thus connecting homosexuality with feminine. This would change, however, during the 80's and the rise of visual kei.

In “Not So Big in Japan,” Launey discusses Western musicians’ visits to Japan during the 1960’s as influential, not because of their style, though surely that may have had an influence on the Japanese groups that were started, but due to the need for local musicians who could be relied upon to be in Japan at all times, or much of the time. However, these new “Group Sounds” were basically pretty boys with long hair playing British style music; not ground breaking music by any means, but the appeal was the visual of pretty boys (Launey 207).

This changed in 1982 when a metal/rock band called X Japan, (originally X), burst into the scene (J Rock Ink). Although, Shigeo Maruyama started Epic/Sony Records, and sought to develop Japanese rock (Launey), it was not until X Japan’s rise to fame that a combination of rock and visually appealing musicians took hold. Initially not met with good reception, X Japan’s violent onstage antics, heart-breaking ballads, and stunning good looks helped them rise to fame. Yoshiki, the leader and drummer of the band, started his own record label, Extasy Records in 1986, proving the band did not need external support.

As previously stated, not only was their music good, the band’s look was visually appealing. X Japan began the phenomenon known as Visual Kei, which is basically attaching great importance to the visual appearance of a band as well as the music. Koizumi defines it as, popular Japanese music in which the male band members put on theatrical make-up and dress (Koizumi 110). He goes on to list X Japan, Malice Mizer, and L’Arc~en~Ciel as typical visual kei bands, though it must be noted L’Arc~en~Ciel never defined themselves as Visual Kei and have since shed that image for a more toned-down “pretty.” However, X Japan and the rise of Visual Kei influenced more than music. Fans of X Japan began dressing like the band members, an action dubbed “costume play.” Female fans dominated the costume play in an attempt, according to Koizumi, to recognize their own femininity and due to their longing for gender-free bodies after a history of oppression (122).

As an extension of that, female desires and preferences began influencing male domains of fashion and music (Miller 2004, 90). Popular bands such as X Japan, L’Arc~en~Ciel, and Gackt have embodied the “pretty look,” a rather feminine aesthetic to the Western eye, due to this female preference. In fact, this “*bishounen*,” or pretty boy syndrome is itself influenced by *manga*, or comic books for women.

Although *bishounen* are more commonly associated with Boy’s Love comics, which portray “unrealistically pretty” men in homosexual relationships, the image has become synonymous with a desirable boyfriend to women (Jung 2009). In “The Shared Imagination of Bishōnen, Pan-East Asian Soft Masculinity” Jung labels this aesthetic “soft masculinity,” which probably originated from the aforementioned Boys’ Love comics (Jung 2009). Boys’ Love manga is targeted to women, not homosexual men, with two visually appealing men in a

relationship. However, the concept of being more well-groomed, including body hair, eyebrows, etc (Ono 1999) is not immediately thought to have a correlation with the individual actually being homosexual.

Returning briefly to Visual Kei, during the highest point of popularity in the genre, there was an upsurge of cosmetic usage of cosmetics among men. Not only bands such as Gackt, X Japan, and L'Arc~en~Ciel were using cosmetics, the trend trickled down to young men who were not celebrities and in turn became more preoccupied with their appearance. The trend continued long after Visual Kei dropped in popularity as bands took on a more toned-down, yet still physically beautiful appearance. In fact during 2005, a survey by Times Asia found Japanese ladies have a preference for prettier men. This caused an increase in cosmetics sales to men who believe that by being beautiful they will experience better, improved relationships (Tanaka 2003). Recently, this does not seem to be the case, with men having a disinterest in relationships and Japan's alarming decrease in birthrate. However, in regards to how products are marketed to men, the prospect of having more success with women is always a factor in advertising (Miller 2006, 53).

According to Miller, Japanese men's well-groomed appearance is directly opposing the icon of masculinity—the salaryman. This idea of revolutionizing men's image is an “ideology of heterosexual bonding” by supporting female desire. Miller also makes a point about gay culture having little influence in women's pretty boy ideology. Gay culture in Japanese pop culture and media portrays over the top masculinity (See Figure 1), which is precisely the traits women are rejecting by preferring a softer image for men. Women are not rejecting masculinity, they are rejecting aggression (Miller 2003, 52).

Furthermore, according to Miller, the Western notion that beauty is equal to femininity is extremely polarized and even patriarchal. As aforementioned, women do not seek effeminate men. Rather, when faced with an extreme contrast, the “grey salaryman drabness, men like Hyde, lead vocalist for L'Arc~en~Ciel” may seem feminized to the Western eye (Miller 2003, 52). However, to women, they are merely a combination of masculinity and physical attractiveness, summarized as having their cake and eating it too. In a Japanese magazine, *AnAn*, in 1997 a woman said about Hyde: “He's not vulgar and seems like he'd be calm and steady in bed.” Clearly, she was thinking of this particular “pretty” man as sexually desirable for herself. To her, he was not overly effeminate, but a balance between physical beauty and enough masculinity to remain a sexual interest, if only in fantasy (Figure 2; Hyde on Right).

It was only natural that Visual Kei (X Japan, Malice Mizer) would influence bands with other genres (L'Arc~en~Ciel), and it could almost be said, give birth to Japanese boy bands such as SMAP. SMAP's ideals of physical appearance, such as extreme androgyny, hairless

bodies, and occasional cross-dressing can be generalized towards most pop, most rock, and some metal bands in Japan. Often their physical appearances are surprising to the Western audience, but even more surprising is the fact that often the most androgynous members of these bands are perceived as most sexually appealing. Along with that point, Fabienne Darling-Wolf reminds us that androgynous males are a long standing tradition in Japanese history and culture, and that one must pay close attention to the current socio-cultural environment to understand why androgyny as a subtext to gender ideology, has returned as sexually appealing.

Darling-Wolf's article would have been incomplete without mention of homoeroticism and often the pretend romantic involvement of the band members. Often onstage, and sometimes off it, members of these bands, whether boy band SMAP, or rock bands L'Arc~en~Ciel and GacktJob, will come up with antics that have suggestions, hints, subtext of homosexual involvement between members (Figure 3). This could be anything from onstage kissing or dancing, to double entendres while being interviewed. Some analysts say these fantasies are created for female fans to live out their desires of a loving relationship between equals, which would be difficult if the romance was between a man and a woman (Lamb and Veith). Miller goes on to state that these musicians challenge the "heterosexist constructions of masculinity" and embody the new man ideal: sensitive and caring, while remaining, of course, masculine (2003, 53). Much like Boys Love manga, these images, movies, and music videos or live performances featuring homo eroticism between band members provides a safe and pleasurable fantasy for women to enjoy, contrasting the male-dominated culture's emphasis of focusing on heterosexual male enjoyment.

The very fact that these bands are successful, and their homoerotic acts as well as their pretty boy looks celebrated may be representative of a new generation of young Japanese men and women who question traditional gender roles. R.W Connell argues that different cultures and different time periods in history construct masculinity differently (2000). In fact, the definition and thus embodiment of masculinity does not exist before social behavior defines it. Much like Fausto-Sterling questions the connection between culture and gender, and whether all cultures need gender at a cultural level, we can likewise question masculinity in the same way (55). Fausto-Sterling argues for a continues classification system for gender. Is this what the Japanese youth is doing: questioning the clear classifications of men needing to be a certain definition of masculine? Society defines gender according to Fausto-Sterling, and thus conceptions of masculinity. Can this new Japanese conception of masculinity, including an acceptance of "pretty boy" looks, be accepted as the norm if more and more of the society desires and integrates it?

However, though few scholars would argue for the Japanese youth to stop questioning traditional gender roles of overworked salaryman and full-time housewife, there are some less than rosy effects of this pretty-boy phenomenon.

A contrast to the phrase “pretty boy” many scholars and Japanese social critics call this new generation of Japanese men “grass-eaters,” no offense to vegetarians, I’m sure. Coined by columnist Maki Fukasawa, and defined as herbivorous, thus uncompetitive, disillusioned, and not committed to work.

Some like market researcher Ushikubo and philosopher Masahiro Morioka attempt to find a cause for this trend: a disillusionment with labor producing nothing and lack of conflict since World War 2 that has stopped the demand for “masculine” men. However, others critique these *grass-eaters* for, as social critic Morinaga states, “turning into women.” Both Morioka and Moringa somehow look down on these grasseaters for being too feminine or not masculine enough. Is this a reflection of a change that is too sudden or too extreme? Or it it a reflection of a society that is afraid of shifting from traditional view of genders.

Others like sociologist Kawanishi state that this phenomenon may have some positives including less macho and sexist men, and less neglect for their wives. She goes on to say that these grass-eater men embrace their feminine side and cooperate more. This would be wonderful for Japanese women, if “grass-eater” pretty men were remotely interested in engaging in relationships.

Market researched Ushikubo states that most of these “grass-eater” men remain at home, living with their parents as parasite singles. They see no need to find a partner, with all their personal hobbies, not to mention pornography, that is available to them. Ushikubo goes on to say that they are not interested in sex at all and that two-thirds of twenty-year old Japanese men are grass-eaters (Willacy). Furthermore, a recent survey also showed one third of Japanese men aged 20 to 34 have never had a girlfriend. Condom consumption has been steadily falling for a decade, but so has birthrate.

Though to the Western eye these men, both onstage or off, may seem effeminate, this is simply not the case in Japan. “Pretty boys” are not immediately labeled as gay because of their looks. In fact, heterosexual men take care of their looks to appeal to women, at least onstage. Women prefer these pretty boys as opposed to the icon of Japanese masculinity—the salaryman. However, in the “real world” often times these pretty boys are not interested in women at all, causing a decrease in birthrate in Japan (Figure 4). Whether or not visual kei, or the “pretty boy” syndrome is to blame remains to be seen. However, there may also be underlying social problems that contribute to the grass-eater men's lack of interest in women over these past two decades.

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Réme Bohlin - Milton's Hell: A Land of Punishment for the Misuse of Free Will and Hope

In *Milton's Places of Hope*, Mary C. Fenton connects a powerful abstract, hope, to physical land. As Fenton demonstrates, hope is powerful in *Paradise Lost* because it is an indicator of a character's faith, and is reflected in that character's orientation towards the land. She shows how a distortion and dislocation of hope can be destructive to the land and to the one that hopes. In *Paradise Lost*, Satan is the character who demonstrates the consequences of dislocating hope. Satan's "false presumptuous hope" (Milton, 2.521) not only indicates his lack of connection to God, but also his lack of connection to land. In some sense, a connection to land *is* a connection to God. In Book XI Michael will comfort Adam in his loss of Paradise by reminding him that God's "omnipresence fills/ Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives" (11.336-337). Fenton also argues that hope is a medium for connection to God (and land). The presence of true hope indicates faith, but it also facilitates "spiritual and intellectual 'tilling'" (Fenton, 14). Through an analysis of emblem books popular during Milton's time, Fenton shows how hope is characterized by a winged female posing with an anchor, plough, or spade (12). This image epitomizes hope's active link between land and Heaven.

In her analysis Fenton links hope to other abstractions, such as liberty. In *Milton's Places of Hope*, I find a strong correspondence between hope and liberty. For example, one can hope for liberty. Satan claims to desire liberty from God's tyranny, but in actuality, he hopes to replace God's fluid kingdom with his own despotism. As Fenton says, "hope can be neither simple wish gratification nor superficial covetousness; it does not mean the license to want anything you want to want, just as freedom does not mean the license to do anything you want to do" (69). As abstractions, hope and liberty also share a connection to the land. An important part of Milton's theodicy is the immutable free wills of the characters. Land is a punishment and a promise based on the characters' use of their free will. As Fenton demonstrates the consequences of Satan's "false presumptuous hope" (Milton, 2.521), so I will explore the relationship between Satan and his punishment, Hell. In my analysis, Hell as land has a more active relationship with Satan's liberty; it both preserves Satan's free will and punishes him for its misuse. Finally, the physical qualities of Hell (its depth, darkness and awful heat) become a way for Satan to measure his own spiritual deterioration.

Returning to Fenton's argument that hope links Earth and Heaven, it is necessary to add that Fenton views hope as a part of "the great Cov'nant" (Fenton, 39). Satan, driven by his dislocated hope, "degrades the notion of 'the great Cov'nant' so that the original acquisition and accumulation of land loses its integrity and function" (39). The Oxford English

Dictionary defines a covenant as “a mutual agreement between two or more persons to do or refrain from doing certain acts” (OED, 1). A covenant is inherent in the idea of liberty. We must refrain from murder or theft in order to preserve the freedoms to life and property. That is a covenant that we make among ourselves. Although the covenant that is most remembered and referred to is “the great Cov’nant” (39) where God grants Moses and his followers the Promised Land, *Paradise Lost* reminds us of at least two others. There is the covenant between God and Adam and Eve that humankind will be redeemed in the Son “as from a second root shall be restored” (3.288). There is also the covenant that exists before humankind: the covenant between God and his angels. God gifts the angels with immortality, love, and free will, and the only expectation in return is gratitude. Satan, spurred by false hope, finds gratitude too onerous and servile, and chooses to break that covenant. Just as God rewards a covenant fulfilled (in the case of Moses and his people it is the Promised Land), the breaking of a covenant comes with consequences. Satan and his cohort too are given land, but their land is “torture without end” (1.67).

God metes out justice by banishing Satan and his rebel angels to Hell. However, God “formed them [Satan, Adam and Eve] free, and free they must remain” (3.124). How can Hell be “a dungeon horrible” (1.61) and still preserve Satan and the rebel angels’ freedom? Hell seems to have been created on the same principles as human prisons: restriction of freedom through confining space. However, Hell is more terrible, and more just, than any human prison. It is more terrible because it is “fraught with fire/ Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain (6.876-877); it is more just because there are still choices, and so there is still liberty. During the council in Hell Moloch, Belial, Mammon, and Beelzebub collectively present four different choices. In addition, God’s omniscience rather proves the free will of the fallen angels. The council in Hell cannot be a secret meeting; God knows and sees their scheming and does not prevent it. In his address to the angel horde, smooth tongued Belial says that “He from Heavn’n’s highth/ All these our motions vain, sees and derides” (2.190-191). Whether or not God “derides” (191) the fallen angels’ schemes, he does not forbid them.

Not only God’s omniscience proves the free will of the fallen angels. The organization of Hell suggests that, if he chooses, Satan must be able to leave Hell. At the end of the council, the angel horde chooses Satan’s plan: to leave Hell and wreck God’s newest creation. God gives the key to the gates of Hell to Sin, and commands Death to guard against all comers. However, Sin’s obedience to God is complicated by her relationship to Satan as daughter and lover. As Sin says to Satan, “Thou art my father, thou my author, thou/ My being gav’st me; whom should I obey/ but Thee, whom follow?” (2.864-866). Can we imagine a world where Sin does not open the gate? Sin too has choices. Her question “whom

should I obey/ but Thee, whom follow?" (865-866) is not rhetorical, but can be read as Sin weighing her options. God could have given the key to the angels Abdiel, Michael, Uriel, or Raphael; all of whom have chosen again and again to remain faithful to God. Thus the organization of Hell, its one entrance and exit, suggests that God intends Satan's free will to be preserved.

However, in *Paradise Lost* it is impossible to escape the consequences of free will. Hell is Satan's just punishment for raising "impious war in Heav'n and battle proud/ With vain attempt" (1.43-44). Spurred by his false hope and ambition, Satan misuses his free will. He breaks his covenant with God and is justly thrown into Hell. Belial relates that at the time of their fall "this Hell then seemed/ A refuge from those wounds" (2.167-168) delivered by God the Son. In *Milton's Places of Hope*, Fenton studies the etymological roots of hope which connect it to land. She writes that "The Old English 'hop' designates a 'side valley opening off a main valley, a secluded valley, a remote enclosed place'" (Fenton, 5). It is possible to conclude that the etymological roots of hope connect the word to a physical place of refuge. Can Hell, as Belial suggests, be a "refuge" (Milton, 2.168), a physical place of hope? This is an important question because the existence of "true hope" (Fenton, 14) as it is defined by Fenton would negate the effectiveness of Hell as a land of punishment. For his transgression, Satan must suffer in Hell forever with no hope for a different, easier habitat.

Fenton's analysis and the narrator's moderating voice suggest that Satan's hope is false and fruitless. Although he remains "free" (3.124), Satan is tied to Hell. Any escape is only temporary. Fenton notes that "Satan is called 'the Proud/ Aspirer' (6.89-90), for he goes beyond where one ought to be" (Fenton, 130). First in Heaven then on Earth, Satan will go "beyond" (130) where God has placed him. Satan's excuse for his rebellion is that he is unwilling "to bow and sue for grace/ With suppliant knee, and deify his [God's] power" (Milton, 1.111-112). Clearly Satan does not consider that God's fluid hierarchy is meant to preserve each angel's liberty. Satan's hopes and aspirations are not about liberty, but about uprooting the place of the Son, and therefore compromising the Son's liberty. Without this consideration of place and liberty, Satan's hopes and aspirations are false and ultimately self-destructive.

The narrator confirms Fenton's argument that "true hope" (Fenton, 14) does not exist in Hell when he says that it is a place "where peace/And rest can never dwell, hope never comes/ That comes to all" (Milton, 1.65-67). Fenton also argues that hope must be cultivated through "spiritual... 'tilling'" (Fenton, 14). This cultivation is perhaps reflected in a physical and real cultivation of the land, such as Adam and Eve's cultivation of Eden. According to Fenton, Adam and Eve "hope for the ability to steward the land which they recognize as a reflection

and manifestation of God's bounty and goodness" (108). In Hell, a physical cultivation is impossible. It is a "waste and wild" (1.59). The OED defines "waste" as "uncultivated and uninhabited or sparsely inhabited. Sometimes with stronger implication: Incapable of habitation or cultivation; producing little or no vegetation; barren, desert" (OED, 2). Hell repulses cultivation. There is no hope for physical or spiritual regeneration. Hell is an effective punishment because it does not allow the peace and rest that come with true hope. The landscape permits only perversions of hope and liberty, dislocated from God and land.

Interestingly, Satan's first assessment of Hell is a farmer's assessment. Having risen from the "Stygian flood" (Milton, 1.239) Satan asks:

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
...this the seat
That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? (1.242-245)

Satan asks about the climate, the soil, and the region—all details of place and land that a farmer would want to know. In *Paradise Lost*, "celestial light" (245) is used to refer to God, to creation, to wisdom (3.3). Also, plants need energy from the sun to grow. In this plaint, we see Satan mourn the loss of God and his creativity. "Mournful gloom" (1.244) is that which is not God, creation and wisdom. No hope, no spring green leaf, will grow in Hell without the creative radiation from that "celestial light" (245). Satan's assessment suggests knowledge of cultivation and land; it is, perhaps, the dying spasm of pre-fallen habits and knowledge of an existence where cultivation, spiritual and actual, is everyday work. However, Satan's mourning is short. He moves quickly to an attitude of domination when he says "profoundest Hell/ receive thy new possessor" (251-252).

Satan's materialistic and dominating attitude towards the land of Hell reveals his lack of understanding of God. Satan continually underestimates God. He challenges His omnipotence by warring in Heaven; he challenges His omnipresence by assuming that Hell is only waiting for a "possessor" (252), as opposed to being a land created to punish those who have broken covenant. Satan attempts to deny the power of Hell as a punishment when he says, "The mind is its own place, and in itself/ Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. / What matter where, if I be still the same" (Milton, 1.254-256). Satan's refusal to acknowledge the physical characteristics of Hell is futile and reminiscent of a fantasy escape. In fact, his efforts to close his mind to the physical experience of Hell only trap him in the Hell within. Satan's spiritual deterioration mirrors the dark and volatile landscape of Hell.

In Book IV, Satan discovers that his attempt to disconnect his mind from the physical reality of Hell has been futile. As Satan enters Eden he “begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth/ Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast” (4.15-16). “Boils” (16) recalls Hell “whose combustible/ And fueled entrails thence conceiving fire” are like the volcano Etna (1.233-234). Within himself Satan sees “the lowest deep a lower deep/ Still threat’ning to devour” (4.76-77) which echoes the “profoundest Hell”⁸ (1.251) that he sought to possess in Book I. The narrator confirms that “within him [Satan] Hell/ He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell/ One step no more than from himself can fly/ By change of place” (4.20-23). By disconnecting himself from land, even the awful land of his punishment, Satan disconnects from reality. His rejection of God, cultivation, and true hope ultimately results in a rejection of physical place. Instead, Satan comes to resemble Hell, and finds that he cannot escape his punishment.

In Satan’s flight to Eden we see his misunderstanding of God extend to misunderstanding liberty. Satan believes that freedom is escape. In his address to the council of fallen angels, Satan says “this infernal pit shall never hold/ Celestial spirits in bondage” (657-658). He believes that he is free in Hell because he has the power to escape it. Also, Satan’s efforts to make “the mind...its own place” (254) is another example of his mistaken liberty. If he can escape into the Heaven in his mind, then he can escape Hell. However, as I have previously demonstrated, God preserves Satan’s free will by allowing choice in Hell. Satan is not free because he can escape; he is free because he can choose to escape. Satan’s lack of understanding of God results in an underestimation of Hell, its purpose and its power.

On his return to Hell after the fall of Adam and Eve, Satan experiences God’s omnipresence and omnipotence. Fenton accurately predicts the consequences of Satan’s actions: “although land is a source of power and liberty, reducing hope to self-serving, acquisitive materialism leads both to despair and destitution” (Fenton, 39). Satan’s dislocation from true hope and land—and thus liberty—result in a dreadful adjustment of Hell’s landscape. Finally, God proves his presence in Hell, and his knowledge of Satan’s crime. Satan and the angel horde are transformed into serpents, and from the soil of Hell spring unnatural trees with forbidden fruit. Experiencing “scalding thirst and hunger fierce” (Milton, 10.556), the demons snake their scaly selves around the trees and attempt to eat. Instead, they “chewed bitter ashes” (566), but driven by their perpetual appetite, they are unable to stop consuming and then spitting out “th’offended taste” (566). The change in Hell’s landscape is a

⁸ The OED defines the noun “profound” as that “that has great downward or inward extent; very deep.” (OED, 3)

farcical perversion of actual cultivation and growth, much like Satan's perversions of hope and liberty.

In *Paradise Lost*, Hell as land proves to be a powerful punishment. While preserving liberty, it also serves to punish the misuse of that liberty. The physical characteristics of Hell become important as a yardstick to measure spiritual deterioration. They are also an antithetical image to contrast the true fruits of creation on Earth which are results of "tilling" (Fenton, 14), spiritual and actual. Finally, Hell is the consequence when hope and liberty are misused, and connection to land and God lost.

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Bryce Holewinski - Harmony to Behold in Wedded Pair: Viewing Marriage through Milton's Paradise Lost

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:27, NKJV)

As Moses recounts, through divine instruction, man and woman are created in the image and similitude of God. Since humanity possesses the likeness of God, they are inherently perfect and lacking nothing, both sexes. Although people lack nothing, God instills in them a desire for companionship, first and foremost with Him, and secondarily with one another. Thus, God instills marriage as the medium whereby two equals can find harmony when not directly in communion with Him. In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton takes up the challenge of depicting the ideal marriage between man and woman before the fall. The prelapsarian marriage rests upon the foundation of mutual respect. There is no fixed hierarchy in the relationship between Adam and Eve; they are in a state of constant flux driven by reciprocity. Milton illustrates perfect union through Adam and Eve's conversations with one another, and through abstract commentary provided by several characters' pondering. The fall also highlights the importance of mutuality in Adam and Eve's marriage by showing the discord sown by its absence.

The first main segment where Adam and Eve demonstrate their mutual respect for one another comes from their conversation that springs up after Eve's nightmare. Satan takes the form of a toad and whispers into Eve's ear his devious desires while she sleeps. The disruption to her rest causes Eve to sleep in longer than usual, which then prompts Adam to waken her: "Awake/ My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,/ Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight,/ Awake, the morning shines, and the fresh field/ calls us" (*Paradise Lost* V. l. 17-21). Adam calmly urges her to rise by showering her with lovely praises. His extolment of Eve shows his inner comprehension of her--especially in noting that she is "Heav'n's last best gift" which makes her out to be his equal since he too was God's last creation. Another point of interest comes from his request for her to work with him in the fields, since the fields call to them both they share a unity of purpose.

After Adam wakes Eve they converse as equals, trying to reason out the terrible dream that afflicts Eve. Once Eve realizes Adam is comforting her she feels relief and divulges her plight to him: "O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,/ My glory, my perfection, glad I see/ Thy face, and morn returned, for I this night,/...But of offense and trouble, which my mind/ Knew never till this irksome night" (*Paradise Lost* V. l. 28-30, 34-35). Eve praises Adam's character in the same way that he does for her. Eve's view of Adam parallels his

view of her, as can be seen by her calling him “my glory, my perfection” which demonstrates that she respects him as an equal. She then goes on to describe the events that unfolded in her dream in order to obtain Adam’s opinion of the matter. To which he replies: “Best image of myself and dearer half,/ The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep/ Affects me equally” (*Paradise Lost* V. l. 95-97). Adam once again reinforces the synthesis of their relationship by relating to Eve as his “dearer half.” Along with these views of Eve, Adam goes further to recognize that their similarity also implies that their weaknesses are akin. After relating to Eve on an even level, Adam begins to reason out this problem, and as he does so, they grow together. They both feel a measure of relief and begin to pray in unison to dispel their remaining anxiety: “So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts/ Firm peace recovered soon and wonted calm” (*Paradise Lost* V. l. 209-210). They come before God who rewards them for seeking each other’s guidance along with His.

The other prime example of Adam and Eve’s mutual respect for one another through conversation comes right before the fall when they argue for the first time. Sometime after Raphael’s visit to the couple and his long discourse with Adam, Eve proposes that the two of them ought to split up their work in order to be more efficient. Rather than going out and beginning this immediately, she seeks Adam’s opinion: “Thou therefore now advise/ Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present;/ Let us divide our labors, thou where choice/ Leads thee, or where most needs” (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 212-215). Eve has the ability to go off and do as she pleases, but she decides that she wants Adam’s input or at least for him to hear her “first thoughts present.” By presenting this proposition to Adam, Eve confirms her deep respect for him by showing that she values his advice. Likewise, Adam’s reply reinforces his esteem of her: “Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond/ Compare above all living creatures dear,/ Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed/ How we might best fulfill the work which here/ God hath assigned us” (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 227-231). Adam shows several levels of respect; first, he relates to Eve as his equal by calling her his “associate sole.” Her reasoning matches Adam’s and far surpasses any other earthly creature, which instills awe. As in their previous conversation that Milton depicts, Adam and Eve treat one another as two equals worthy of one another’s full respect.

Milton demonstrates that arguing, even passionately, does not involve any sin, nor does it degrade anyone involved. Immediately following Adam’s respect of Eve’s ideas, he begins to make a case against her position: “But other doubt possesses me, lest harm/ Befall thee severed from me; for thou know’st/ What hath been warned us, what malicious foe” (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 251-253). At first glance this might seem to be a clearly masculine argument; however, Adam and Eve have shown many times in previous conversations that they regard

each other as equals. Another point to consider comes from both of their lack of knowledge regarding Satan. Only Raphael has warned them of Satan and his deviousness, but they lack any knowledge beyond that. Thus, Adam's argument comes out of uncertainty with the knowledge that they possess, not as a slight to Eve's abilities. Eve does not perceive this in the moment, and admonishes Adam for his apparent distrust of her: "But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt...His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers/ Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love/ Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced" (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 279, 285-287). Eve seems to lash back at Adam for his doubt of her "firmness" but she does so in an acceptable manner as shown by her tone: "As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,/ With sweet austere composure thus replied" (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 272-273). Eve does not get angry with Adam, even though what he says strikes a serious note within her. Rather Eve replies in a perfectly calm manner and argues back point for point. Beyond displaying the great reasoning skills of the pair, Milton illustrates that misunderstanding and argument are completely natural. It does not involve sin because Adam and Eve maintain composure and respect for one another.

The argument continues on to its conclusion when Adam concedes to Eve's reasoning and the pair reconcile. After Adam hears Eve's previous retort he tries to explain his intended meaning: "To whom with healing words Adam replied...Not diffident of thee do I dissuade/ Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid/ Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe" (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 290, 293-295). As with Eve, Adam maintains a mild demeanor in order to articulate his views to Eve. He then goes on to cast away the misinterpretation that Eve discerned from him. He does not doubt her firmness; he merely wants to do everything in his power to avoid confrontation with their enemy by staying united. Eve continues to find trouble in Adam's argument and presses the point to him:

And what is faith, love, virtue unassayed
Alone, without exterior help sustained?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combined.
Frail is our happiness if this be so
And Eden were no Eden thus exposed. (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 335-341)

In this section Eve recalls the basic principle of their existence: that they are created in the similitude of God and therefore perfect. They possess all that they need to resist Satan on their own and do not necessarily need one another. Upon hearing this final reasoning by Eve,

Adam yields his position. Milton portrays various conversations between humanity's first wedded couple which have a commonality: a profound respect founded by equality.

Another method in which Milton details the pinnacle of human matrimony is through the contemplations of many characters including Milton himself. Eve's tale of coming to consciousness depicts one of the first examples of a character reasoning the nature of marriage. After she relates how the Spirit led her to Adam, she comes to realize the significance of their relationship: "Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim/ My other half.' With that gentle hand/ Seized mine, I yielded, and from that time see/ How beauty is excelled by manly grace/ And wisdom, which alone is truly fair'" (*Paradise Lost* IV. ll. 487-491). Eve comes to comprehend her relation to Adam is not identical but equal. They each have their specific strengths, as she notes beauty for her and manly grace for him. These attributes are not mutually exclusive either; both contain them in one degree and together they are a harmonious combination. Another aspect of Eve's description of becoming aware involves her "yielding" to Adam. She feels no force driving her into the relationship; rather, she willingly melds with him because she desires to. Eve perceives their relationship as give and take, where one's strengths compliment the other and form a perfect union.

At certain points in the epic Milton comes right out as the narrator and gives his direct opinion on matters, and the issue of marriage is one such case. In the fourth book Adam and Eve finish praying to God when Milton begins to comment on their marriage: "Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source/ Of human offspring, sole propriety,/ In Paradise of all things common else...by thee/ Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,/ Relations dear, and all the charities/ Of father, son, and brother first were known" (*Paradise Lost* IV. ll. 750-754, 755-757). Marriage is one of God's greatest gifts to humanity and reserved exclusively for people. The reason it holds such a high position relies on its main tenets of "reason, loyal, just, and pure;" and reason, especially, separates it from all other earthly gifts. Thomas Luxon narrows in on the point that Milton asserts in this section: "marriage is essentially and principally a conjunction of minds, hearts and souls" (*Single Imperfection* p.124). The foundation of marriage comes from equality between the partners in terms of their mind, heart, and soul. This essential piece allows for the two to work in harmony with one another and grow in unison.

The final chunk of commentary on the nature of marriage before the fall comes from Adam's discourse with Raphael. In this section Adam relates to Raphael the process by which he came to consciousness and his first encounters with Eve. Adam recalls talking with God and desiring a companion who equals him:

Among equals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Giv'n and received; but in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike: of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight (*Paradise Lost* VIII. ll. 383-391).

Adam realizes that the beasts of the field which God has created pale in comparison to him, which discomforts him. He wants to be in a harmonious relationship with another, but he knows that it “must be mutual, in proportion due” in order to maintain integrity. For if one side has leverage over the other it will “soon prove tedious [to both] alike.” Even the one in power would quickly grow weary of the monotony of the relationship, for there cannot be any growth without equality. The purpose by which this relationship ought to be founded, according to Adam, is for participation in “all rational delight.”

After God hears of Adam's noble request God decides to grant it: “What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,/ Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,/ Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire” (*Paradise Lost* VIII. ll. 449-451). In this section Milton's god fulfills God's creation in Genesis 1:27 by creating both male and female in His image. Eve possess three main characteristics that God lays out in this passage. First, she is in Adam's likeness, which also alludes to God's likeness. Secondly, God creates Eve to be Adam's fit help, which underscores their unity of purpose. God does not mean that she should be subservient to Adam in that statement; rather thy have an equal role in life, above the animals. Finally, she is his other self, by which God implies her key faculties of the mind, heart, and soul. Thus, we see that marriage, as originally intended, promotes a relationship whereby two equals exist in harmony towards a common end.

Sadly, humanity's disobedience leads to a severe degradation of the state of marriage, which Milton portrays in order to reinforce the importance of marriage prior to the fall. Eve's corruption by sin begins almost immediately after consuming the apple when she thinks of how best to approach Adam. She fears that her state will cause God to create another woman for Adam, and thus resolves to have Adam share her fate: “Confirmed then I resolve;/ Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:/ So dear I love him, that with him all deaths/ I could endure, without him live no life” (*Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 830-834). Her we see a corruption in the mutuality and reciprocity that enters into the mind of fallen Eve. She recognizes her fallen state and wants the same equality that they shared before and thus devises to try and bring Adam down into mutual debasement. Her motives are no longer love of the other, but

primary love of the self. Adam does concede to sin and betrays God in order to share the same fate as Eve. He then goes on to act in a similar manner of selfishness:

I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy...
But confidence then bore thee on...
Perhaps I also erred in overmuch admiring
What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. (*Paradise Lost* 1171-1172, 1175-1182)

Adam starts off by lying about his previous actions and then berating Eve for her actions. He goes on to insult her self-confidence by subtly calling it pride. Once he finishes doing this Adam sets Eve up in such a way that her actions portray her as weak and inferior to him. She becomes the sole cause of all their problems, despite the evidence to the contrary. The fall creates a schism between man and woman that destroys the equality and mutuality that they once enjoyed.

In Milton's *Paradise Lost* marriage is a gift from God which unites two equal souls in harmony. Adam and Eve demonstrate the ideal functioning of a couple rests upon a foundation of mutual respect. From this position a couple enters into union with one another as God intends. Unfortunately this perfect relationship does not come naturally due to the fall and the gap that sin creates. Yet, there remains hope because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, humanity may once again regain a measure of harmony within marriage. The schism may be overcome by mutual servitude akin to Christ's service for the Church.

Shannon Jaime - This Side of the Womb: Conceptions of Innocence in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Winter's Tale*

When we think of two Shakespeare plays that have something significant in common with one another, it might seem odd to immediately bring *Titus Andronicus* and *The Winter's Tale* to mind. Undoubtedly, the two plays were written during very different points in Shakespeare's dramatic career. One of his early attempts at tragedy, *Titus Andronicus* recalls the popular Senecan tradition. Characterized by fast pacing, political overtones, long rhetoric, and all manner of violence, bloodshed, and horrors, it does not exhibit the same psychological depth of his later works, yet is still noteworthy for its emblematic characters, sensational action, and tweaking of theatrical convention. *The Winter's Tale*, which is now classified as a romance, illustrates the development of Shakespeare's prose and poetic style. It includes complex imagery, a mixture of tragic and comedic elements, clever wit and stage direction, a story self-consciously told across multiple times and settings, and an unexpected ending that surprises its main players and its audience. Despite the obvious structural and narrative dissimilarities between the plays, however, it is interesting to discover that both works explore the meaning of innocence and its role in a larger thematic context. But while each play involves some restoration of order—and while this restoration comes at a high price—the distinct underlying nature of the worlds we see in *Titus* and *Winter's Tale* is what determines whether innocence is lost forever or if it can ultimately be regained.

By the time we reach the end of *Titus Andronicus*, it feels as though we have just witnessed the inner-workings of a post-fallen realm. Considering that almost all major and many minor characters are either maimed and/or killed in the space of five acts, we acquire a general idea of the way individuals operate in this kind of society. Needless to say, the innocence and perfection of Paradise—as well as the redemptive quality of the Green World, so central to the comedies—is a far-off ideal in this play. This is the Dark Land, a country still recovering from a bloody war. It is a place where skewed notions of honor and sacrifice are perpetuated through myth and passed down to the younger generations, where “heroic” actions and vengeance outweigh mercy and compassion. Although Bassianus, in the beginning of the play, says that the people of Rome should “suffer not dishonor to approach / the imperial seat, to virtue consecrate / to justice, continence, and nobility” (1.1.13-15), we later learn that this ideology is not truly followed by those in power. Again and again, we see that hypocrisy and malice, practiced openly and in the shadows, are the normative methods of law. Tamora, the infamous Queen of the Goths, gives, when she speaks to Chiron and

Demetrius of the forest outside of Rome, what is one of the best descriptions of the world of *Titus* itself:

A barren detested vale you see it is;
The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
Overcome with moss and baleful mistletoe;
Here never shines the sun, here nothing breeds,
Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven... (2.3.93-97)

Shakespeare evidently meant us to view the numerous instances of intrigue and betrayal in *Titus* with an ironic awareness of the sensationalism of the Senecan plot. Yet we cannot help but imagine how disturbing it would be to actually be complicit in the crimes described in this play, or wonder what this value system means for the citizens who have no choice but to live under its oppressive influence.

Lavinia, one of the few female characters in *Titus*, represents both the literal and metaphorical loss of innocence that results from the “eye for an eye” mindset. After she is raped and mutilated by Tamora’s sons—an incident which would be even more shocking in its cruelty if we were not distanced from it—she becomes a symbol of a corrupt community of individuals who deal out retribution without considering the moral consequences of their decisions. When the terrible deed is done, Demetrius mocks Lavinia and says, “So now go tell, and if thy tongue can speak, / Who ’twas that cut thy tongue and ravish’d thee” (2.4.1-2). This implies that innocence itself has lost its voice. Rash violence comes to be the best and only means of resolving conflict and responding to complicated situations, and such narrow-mindedness only leads to suffering. A grieving Titus echoes Tamora’s assessment of the brutal, self-interested nature of their world when Lucius proposes that they rescue his brothers, who have been falsely accused of Bassianus’ murder:

Why, foolish Lucius, dost thou not perceive
That Rome is but a wilderness of tigers?
Tigers must prey, and Rome affords no prey
But me and mine. (3.1.53-56)

Throughout *Titus Andronicus*, people frequently swear their loyalty and claim that they will uphold honor and dignity, but in the end become blinded by their emotions and turn on one another in the blink of an eye. The outwardly noble emperor, Saturninus, initially promises to reward Titus for his service in the war, but eventually executes two of Titus’ sons. When Bassianus claims that he will marry Lavinia, Saturninus changes his mind and chooses Tamora as his empress, ignorant of the fact that she is resentful and untrustworthy and is plotting to betray him. While he temporarily pardons his subjects, Saturninus intends to later punish them for their offenses. Even Titus, who has lost over twenty of his sons in battles

against the Goths, is quick to call his own son a traitor and kills him simply for being in the way. In Act V, Titus slays Lavinia, another one of his children, believing it would be a mercy to spare them both from despair: “Die, die, Lavinia, and thy shame with thee, / And with thy shame thy father’s sorrow die!” (5.3.46-47). These supposed arbiters of justice are eerily similar to Aaron, Tamora, and the other “villains,” as they utilize the same punitive methods. They do not take responsibility for their own guilt; instead, they focus on leveling the scales according to their own standards and repaying evils in full. Marcus offers a brief but effective summation of this view: “*Suum cuique* [to each his own] is our Roman justice” (1.1.280).

In *Titus*, loss of innocence clearly affects the fates of the adults, yet it also casts an ominous shadow over the futures of the children in the play. Initially, young Lucius, Titus’ grandson, feels like a breath of fresh air, as he has not been involved in the plotting and treachery. In his naïveté, he cannot fully understand why, after Marcus finds a ravished Lavinia near the forest and brings her home, everyone around him is so wretched, so grim. At one point, he asks Titus to somehow ease Lavinia’s misery: “Good grandsire, leave these bitter deep laments, / Make my aunt merry with some pleasing tale” (3.2.46-47). Such a childish attempt to lighten the mood offers a welcome respite from the play’s horrors, suggesting that the boy might have the potential to make amends for the sins of past generations. Yet as *Titus* progresses, the adults instruct him in the ways of “honor” and continue to expose him to the wrong types of stories—stories that promote harsh retaliation, not pity or forgiveness. When we foresee the consequences of this kind of education, Marcus’ words to young Lucius seem like a sentence of doom:

And kneel, sweet boy, the Roman Hector’s hope,
And swear with me, as with the woeful fere
And father of that chaste dishonored dame,
Lord Junius Brutus sware for Lucrece’ rape,
That we will prosecute by good advice
Mortal revenge upon these traitorous Goths
And see their blood or die with this reproach. (4.1.88-94)

Since innocence is irrevocably connected to our perceptions of youth and childhood, the implications of this “initiation ceremony” are indeed troubling. Furthermore, Marcus’ speech illustrates how the adult characters subscribe so fully to their skewed notions of justice that they eventually destroy whatever chances they may have had to awaken their consciences and recover their dignity.

It is both surprising and disturbing to realize that Aaron, the worst kind of villain in *Titus Andronicus*, shows perhaps the most compassion when he saves his own child from

Chiron and Demetrius, and pleads with Titus' remaining son to spare the baby and raise it as a Roman citizen: "nourish and bring him up, / or else I will discover naught to thee" (5.1.84-85). Even if we doubt Aaron's motives, certainly it is telling that he chooses to protect his child while Titus, Rome's proclaimed hero, has no qualms about killing his own offspring. But by the end of the play, the child is used only as a visible sign of Aaron's diabolical schemes and part in the dire events. The living reminder of innocence and humanity is quickly cast aside and forgotten. As with young Lucius, we can imagine what sort of future the infant has in store. Even when Lucius senior becomes emperor and some measure of order is restored, we have the distinct sense that something important has been irretrievably lost, especially when young Lucius grieves over the death of Titus: "O grandsire, grandsire, ev'n with all my heart / Would I were dead, so you did live again! / O Lord, I cannot speak to him for weeping" (5.3.172-174). Like many other Shakespeare tragedies, the great tragedy of this play is that those not responsible for the crimes of the key conspirators must bear the most heartache and blame. As Titus observes in the famous scene where Marcus kills the fly, this needless suffering is truly "a deed of death done on the innocent" (3.2.56).

Leaving for a while this bleak train of thought and the stifling atmosphere of the Dark Land, we may now examine *The Winter's Tale*, which embraces a decidedly more optimistic outlook on the possibility of redemption. Similar to *Titus*, the first part of this play involves a great deal of conflict, suspicion, and loss, but we witness a miraculous transformation in the last two acts and see personal restoration become a reality. The work starts with a discussion of childhood, a theme that reappears more than once throughout the play. When we first hear of Leontes' son, Mamillius, in Act I, Camillo describes him as "a gallant child; one that, indeed, physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh" (1.1.38-39), and it is clear that he believes in the power of this living symbol to instill energy and youth back into the Sicilian kingdom. This idea is very reminiscent of Sonnet 2, which essentially claims that offspring provide countless opportunities for self-preservation and renewal. Even when Leontes is caught in the web of his own suspicion, he studies Mamillius and remembers himself as he once was:

Looking on the lines
Of my boy's face, methoughts I did recoil
Twenty-three years, and saw myself unbreech'd
In my green velvet coat... (1.2.153-156)

Polixenes echoes this nostalgic sentiment when he remembers the joy and succor that his son, Florizel, brings him: "He makes a July's day short as December, / And with his varying childness cures in me / Thoughts that would thicken my blood" (1.2.169-171).

In the beginning of the play, innocence is also represented in the friendship between Leontes and Polixenes. While speaking with a Bohemian lord, Camillo recalls how the two kings “train’d together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt them such an affection, which cannot choose but branch now” (1.1.22-24). After reaching maturity and assuming political responsibilities, they have remained close, and it seems as though their bond will continue to grow stronger. Hermione playfully asks Polixenes what he and her husband were like as boys, and the king presents her with what is an idealistic, now-traditional view of childhood:

We were as twinn’d lambs that did frisk i’ th’ sun,
And bleat the one at th’ other. What we chang’d
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not
The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream’d
That any did. Had we pursu’d that life,
And our weak spirit’s ne’er been higher rear’d
With stronger blood, we should have answered
Boldly, “Not guilty.” (1.2.67-74)

Long ago, he and Leontes existed in an Edenic state of purity. Their hearts were simple and whole and good, they were free to trust, and they possessed no knowledge of evil. Despite his underlying air of amusement, Polixenes still conveys in this account a sense of wistfulness for something that has been lost. The Bohemian king acknowledges that time and experience have inevitably changed him and Leontes, altering their overall perceptions of the world and possibly making them more susceptible to their hidden doubts and insecurities.

While Leontes’ partly fallen nature may shed some light on his sudden, irrational jealousy, it does not fully explain why he chooses this moment in his life to abandon reason and make false assumptions about Polixenes and Hermione’s relationship. Unlike the world of *Titus*, unfounded accusations are very much displaced in the context of this society. The people have great respect for the decency of their rulers, as we see when members of the court repeatedly defend Hermione’s honor. “I dare lay my life down—and will do’t, sir,” one of many lords tells Leontes, “please you t’ accept it—that the Queen is spotless / I’ th’ eyes of heaven and to you” (2.1.130-132). Hermione realizes, however, that words alone will not convince her husband to change his mind; some outside intervention must bring him to his senses. When that happens, she believes, truth will prevail and justice will at last be served. Paulina agrees with the queen that “the silence often of pure innocence / Persuades when speaking fails” (2.2.38-39), though she does not believe in simply weathering Leontes’ fury. She actively sets out to uphold Hermione’s virtue and retrieves the queen’s newborn baby, placing it in front of Leontes in order to open his eyes. But the king, so consumed with anger and paranoia, condemns his child and his wife to death:

...This brat is none of mine,
It is the issue of Polixenes.
Hence with it, and together with the dam
Commit them to the fire! (2.3.93-96)

Like the offending characters in *Titus*, Leontes is willing to destroy innocent people without a second thought. He even denies the infallible judgment of the oracle and immediately suffers the consequences of his actions when Mamillius, and then Hermione, are pronounced dead. In *Winter's Tale*, it is not only the blameless that pay the price for doing wrong, but also the individuals who actually commit and are complicit in those crimes. At the end of Act III, after losing everyone he loves, Leontes finally takes responsibility for his grave misdeeds and accepts his rightful punishment: "Come," he says to Paulina, "and lead me / To these sorrows" (3.2.242-243). Compared to *Titus Andronicus*, which depicts an imperfect form of human justice, *The Winter's Tale* paints a picture of divine retribution. In this play, only the godly forces that lie beyond human control have the power to redeem the characters' flaws and transform suffering into a greater good.

Before Time intervenes and tells us that sixteen years have passed since the somber events described in the first three acts, the shepherd who finds Perdita as a helpless infant says thoughtfully to his son: "Thou met'st with things dying, I with things new-born" (3.3.113-114). This statement marks the thematic transition from a cold, bleak winter into a fresh and luminous spring. As such, the second part of the play is filled with music, festivals, dancing, and, of course, a romance between Perdita and Florizel, the children of the two estranged kings. Additionally, at this point in the narrative, the once-condemned princess has blossomed into a lovely woman, just like her mother. After Polixenes sees and speaks with her, he marvels at her innate graciousness: "Nothing she does, or seems, / But smacks of something greater than herself, / Too noble for this place" (4.4.157-159). If Lavinia represents the pain and sorrow of lost innocence, then Perdita is a symbol of rejuvenation and restored nobility. Her vibrancy becomes even more evident when she bestows fragrant garlands upon Polixenes and Camillo: "These are flow'rs / Of middle summer, and I think they are given / To men of middle age" (4.4.106-108). Such bright and colorful emblems, gifts from the younger generation, are what will provide the older generation with hope for a better future.

At this stage in *The Winter's Tale*, we might not expect to see a parallel to *Titus*. But in Act IV, pride, rashness, and anger almost threaten the possibility of redemption. Considering his intimate connection to Leontes, it is not altogether surprising that Polixenes overreacts to his son's marriage and nearly destroys a love based on genuine understanding and affection. Florizel would sooner relinquish his royal title than break his vow to Perdita, and so plans to leave the country and escape his father's stormy indignation. A wise Camillo,

however, sends Perdita and Florizel to Sicilia, where Leontes waits for some respite from his crushing guilt and grief. Their return ultimately leads to the reconciliation of all parties—and, in a miraculous turn of events, to Hermione’s “resurrection.” Perhaps when “the oracle is fulfill’d” (5.2.22), Leontes not only recovers the people he thought were lost forever, but also the missing part of himself. Yet when he still laments his foolish actions, Camillo tells the king that he has suffered long enough:

My lord, your sorrow was too sore laid on,
Which sixteen winters cannot blow away,
So many summers dry. Scarce any joy
Did ever so long live; no sorrow
But kill’d itself much sooner. (5.3.49-53)

While Leontes cannot erase the past, the time has come to move on and embrace the joy of the present. Although the ending of *The Winter’s Tale* is bittersweet in nature, as it acknowledges wasted opportunities and instances of irreversible loss and death, it nonetheless illustrates that events have finally come full circle. Unlike the people left behind in *Titus*, the characters in this play have a chance to change for the better, to overcome their deep grief and regrets, to both atone for their own sins and forgive the sins of others.

Even after looking so closely at the different ways the theme of innocence is treated in the two plays, we may still wonder why in *Titus Andronicus* innocence is destroyed, while in *The Winter’s Tale* innocence is lost and found again. This could be due to the fact that one play is a tragedy and the other a romance, yet it seems the question cannot be answered merely by appealing to dramatic genre or stylistic technique. The respective worlds portrayed in the plays are based on radically dissimilar value systems and notions of justice. They are worlds the characters have created through their thoughts, words, stories, choices, and actions; worlds that determine the fates of the guilty and innocent, the young and old, alike. Throughout *Titus*, characters act primarily out of self-interest and invest in vengeance without considering the damaging effects of their decisions. Yet in *Winter’s Tale*, the characters come to accept accountability for their actions and are ultimately restored to a state of grace. No matter what kind of universe they live in, however, we still feel sympathy for the characters in both works and everything they have suffered, perhaps because we recognize in them our own strengths and flaws, some common element of our own humanity.

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Nicholas Dante - Snow's Two Cultures and Whittier College

In C.P. Snow's lecture "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution", Snow presents the argument that the "intellectual life" of the western world is divided into two groups: scientists and literary "intellectuals". Snow outlines in the lecture that in the scholarship and research of the Western world there has been, from the end of the nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century, a distinct gap growing between the two schools of thought. Many of the reasons for this gap seem to come from both social and political influences on the conscience of mainstream culture. Essentially Snow believes, however, that scientific minds and literary minds now have different attitudes concerning the world and the role of a twentieth-century intellectual.

One of the points Snow makes is the misinterpreted perception each group has of the other. For instance, he states that literary minds or "...non-scientists have a rooted impression that the scientists are shallowly optimistic, unaware of man's condition". While in contrast "...the scientists believe that the literary intellectuals are totally lacking in foresight, peculiarly unconcerned with their brother men, in a deep sense anti-intellectual, anxious to restrict both art and thought to the existential moment". The problem with this back and forth animosity is that it is destructive and not conducive to any real progress. Snow believes that a resolution or at least a compromise needs to be formed between the two in order to ensure the advancement of society and culture as a whole.

Snow certainly has the credibility to make this argument because he was at the time of the lecture's original publication (1959) both a physicist and a novelist. Because of the duality of C.P. Snow's intellectual life, he has a unique insight into both cultures. While Snow does interact with individuals from both groups, the reader is still left to wonder if these persons are representative of the groups as a whole. The larger question then becomes whether these two groups are actually even cultures at all. Is this metaphor Snow uses accurate, and if so is it fair to view these two groups as two separate cultures? Snow himself even had trouble applying this metaphor.

Ultimately, Snow's metaphor is a concrete comparison though because it goes beyond superficial aspects of the two groups like "religion or politics or class". Snow defines culture in terms of each group's "...common attitudes, common standards, and patterns of behavior, common approaches and assumptions". Snow argues that these cultures are not

inherent but are learned through training (or in some instances lack of training) at the academic level. This all begins with the separation at the formal education level and is only perpetuated there on. These attitudes are learned behaviors compounded over time and as so should be able to be unlearned.

Despite being written over fifty years ago and mainly in regards to the English educational system, “The Two Cultures” definitely has relevance to a higher-learning institution, like Whittier College, today. Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the “two cultures” metaphor present at Whittier College is the belief that literary “intellectuals” dominate the traditional culture of academia. This is apparent when considering that Whittier is by definition a liberal arts institution. This does not however mean that the science department at the school is by any means lacking in capable faculty or resources.

Whittier is unique it seems in that in its educational system’s design, it does lean heavily towards the humanities, however, there is not a strong divide between the scientific and non-scientific minds. In fact, it is a part of the Whittier College educational system that its students are well rounded and required to take courses in a variety of different disciplines. Whether this may just be an aspect of the American educational system’s design at large, is irrelevant, because it is certainly put into full practice at Whittier College. The extent to which the two cultures “talk” to one another at Whittier College is also strong as well. For example, it would not be uncommon to have an English professor recommend a student to go speak with an Environmental Sciences professor to gain more insight and context about a topic the student was studying. It would be quite reasonable to argue that Whittier College possesses one large academic culture that is an amalgamation of two sub-cultures of science and literature that work in heavy communication with each other.

Kyrah Leal - Dan Graham's *Past Future Split Attention*: The Question of 'Who am I?'

In 2009, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles set up a retrospective of the works of Dan Graham. This exhibit incorporated many different types of mediums. Within the exhibit one can see conceptual art, architecture, and most importantly, performance videos. One such video was entitled *Past Future Split Attention*, created by Dan Graham in March 1972. Within this seventeen minute black and white video, we see two men walking in what seems to be a white room, holding microphones. The men are continuously speaking, but not to each other, one of the men is predicting the other's future actions while the other is recounting by memory the other's past actions. The message Graham sends to his audience through this piece is the idea of self. Through this work, he urges the viewer to ask the question "Who am I?"

Three key aspects of this video piece are: the space in which the two men are interacting, the interaction itself, and finally the medium itself; all of these aspects when combined make for a more engaging piece. These ideas of interactions affecting those around us are not as modern as we would like to think. Graham is exhibiting a very avant-garde mentality by continuously provoking the public while trying to demonstrate a particular point of view. From Hugo Ball and the Dadaists through the Surrealists and Breton, one can see the avant-garde influence within Dan Graham's monumental piece.

Dada first began with the Cabaret Voltaire, in 1916, when Hugo Ball opened this variety show house in Zurich. Within the Cabaret Voltaire, performances were staged in which players spoke at the same time. These gatherings would have been complete chaos to the modern day observer, there would have been no traditional plot or anything recognizable, and so it would have seemed irrational. This sense of chaos and deviation from reason is something that the Dadaists strove for; they wanted to provoke their audience, to make them angry, to drive them to action. Dan Graham uses these provocation techniques the same way the Dadaists did, he has the two men speaking continuously over each other so it is hard for the viewer to distinguish who is saying what. While observing this piece at the museum I noticed that spectators watched the video with the headphones on for at most a minute, they did not know how to interpret what they saw. It is hard to take in so much information at one time, this is what it would have been like for outside viewers watching performances at the Cabaret Voltaire.

Within Dan Graham's piece, one can see liberation from reason. This too is a dada goal; Dadaists sought to free their audience's mind from all that was perceived as 'normal' or reasonable. One dada artist who did this both in art and poetry was Jean Arp. Within both his geometric collages and his poem "Manifesto of the Dada Crocodarium," Arp is consciously trying to not allow his own reason into the work, thereby allowing the viewer to discern his own meaning. Arp accomplishes this in his collages by pasting the pieces where they fell. One can see much the same thing in Graham's video, if one is not really listening to the two men speaking, it seems as if they are just making random noises, which make no sense and defies traditional artistic expectations. As soon as one really listens to the dialogue and reads the provided museum notes, one understands that they are in fact demonstrating the self.

According to the provided wall notes, "The first performers 'self' in relation to the other ... must be maintained by each other performer"⁹ meaning, more generally, that one person's sense of who they are must be constantly reaffirmed by those around them. This theme of "Who am I?" was utilized by the Dadaists but it was cultivated supremely by the Surrealists.

The surrealist movement was not primarily an artistic movement. Surrealism really was a philosophical movement interested in uncovering the 'real' world, which was the unconscious world found in dreams and hallucinations. Surrealism was begun by Andre Breton after World War I, in 1924, and had a strong literary component, not only in magazines but also in literature, such as Breton's famous novel *Nadja*.

One of the major themes found in much of surrealist painting and writing is the idea of time. This theme of time can also be seen in Salvador Dali's paintings such as his *Persistence of Memory*, in which he depicts limp clocks, emphasizing that time itself has gone limp, it is more fluid than non-surrealists think it is. Time is a huge component in Dan Graham's video art piece as well. Within the piece both of the men are in the same space at the same time, which enables the whole piece to work, but the most important time aspect is the fact that it is recorded on videotape which can continuously replay as if on a continuum. Graham states that in his piece:

⁹ Wall Notes provided by MOCA

The memory of the past (in the present) depends on each unstable moment of the projected future. This future is neither sure nor established; it's just a group of developing probabilities. The present moment is nothing other than a series of broken past memories that make sense because of their projection into a potential future.¹⁰

From the title of Graham's monumental work one can see evidence of the surrealist ideals of time. The surrealists would have identified with Graham's concepts of time, because it was just like they perceived notions of time, fragmented and nonsensical.

The surrealist idea of time can be seen also in the 1927-1928 short film: *Vormittagsspuk* (*Ghosts Before Breakfast*) made by Hans Richter. This nine-minute film begins with a standard clock ticking fast and continuously. Then the short continues to show floating bowler hats, after about two minutes we see the man in the film seem to split apart. This is reminiscent of the title of Dan Graham's video piece *Past Future Split Attention*; the man whose head is floating from his torso represents the second half of Graham's title. About four minutes further in Hans Richter's short film the viewer sees a man going up a ladder, then down the ladder and up again. Again we see a lapse in time, it would appear that time sped up then rewound, and this too is an illusion. This incident is not something we see in Graham's actual video, but it can be seen, again, within his title.

While the previous episode represented the latter half of his title, this illustration seems to represent the first half of his title. The past future action of climbing up and down the ladder is much like the two men in Graham's video constantly repeating the other man's past action with the other continuously predicts the others future actions. At the end of the Richter's film we again see the clock moving continuously, but once it makes a full rotation it breaks in half and the word "Ende"¹¹ appears from the middle. This corresponds to the surrealist ideas of conventional time being ridiculous and inconsequential. The breaking of the clock and the word 'end' in the middle is symbolic of the breaking with conventional time. Dan Graham incorporates these surrealist ideas of time not only within his actual piece, as

¹⁰ Garrigues, Dominique. "Dan Graham / Past Future Split Attention." [Nouveaux Media | New Media | Neue Medien](http://www.newmedia-art.org/cgi-bin/show-oeu.asp?ID=I0150658&lg=GBR). 09 May 2009 <<http://www.newmedia-art.org/cgi-bin/show-oeu.asp?ID=I0150658&lg=GBR>>.

¹¹ *Vormittagsspuk (Ghosts Before Breakfast)*. Dir. Hans Richter. DVD. Kino Video, 1927.

previously mentioned, but also in his title as we have seen through exploring Hans Richter's short film.

The question of 'Who am I?' was very important to writers like Breton. Within *Nadja*, Breton begins the story with asking this very question, "Who am I?"¹² But it is most striking when he first meets Nadja and he asks, "Who are you?" and she replies "I am the soul in limbo".¹³ This instance exemplifies how the surrealists saw the idea of self, to them who they were was not defined by the outside world; for them their real self, like the real world, was found in the subconscious plane. The real self could only be accessed when they were in their dreams or they were hallucinating, which is why Breton is struck by Nadja. She knows who she really is beyond the social conventions and beyond this world unlike most other people she is always aware of her unconscious self—her real self. Within Dan Graham's video piece *Past Future Split Attention* one can also see reference to the self. In the piece one person's idea of 'self' must continuously be maintained by the other in order for the piece to work. As previously mentioned, Graham is asking the broader question of "Who am I?" in relation to others we live within society. By juxtaposing these two men in the same space he is forcing them to rely on the others reactions of their actions, thereby forcing them to judge themselves by how the other man reacts to them and their behavior.

When comparing the character of Nadja and Dan Graham's video it is important to note that Nadja, like a true Surrealist, made her art in a napkin while Graham makes his for museums and galleries. Today Nadja would be on a public forum such as YouTube while Graham's work can only be seen in collections. Thus, one can see the influences of the avant-garde within Dan Graham's work but his pieces are now considered conventional because they can only be seen in galleries and museums.

¹² Breton, Andre. *Nadja*. New York: Grove P, 1994. 11.

¹³ *Ibid.*,. 71.

Patrick Norton – Dada Is Not Quiet

Both Hannah Hoch, with her *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany* & Remarque, with chapter ten of his *All Quiet on The Western Front*, present similar political commentaries about how war is nonsense. As she outlines in her “*Dada Photo Montage*,” where she says, “The Dada photo monteur set out to give to something entirely unreal all the appearances of something real that had actually been photographed,” Hoch uses her new photomontage technique to reconstruct the status quo of both art and society, and create a new vision of reality, where the aggressive nature of the nationalistic German state is satirized and communism and women’s rights are romanticized. (Chipp pp. 396)

In fact, Hannah Hoch uses her newly created visual environment of photomontage to satirize and challenge the violence, nationalism, and corruption associated with the Weimar Republic, when for example, she arranges a cut out of the head of its leader, Friedrich Ebert, its general, Paul von Hindenburg, and its Minister of Defense, Gustav Noske, so that they lie atop cut outs of topless female dancers.¹⁴ And Hoch’s title, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany*, reflects her desire to break down the greed and corruption of the Weimar Republic. Remarque uses his title, *All Quiet on The Western Front*, in the same way, expressing his frustration with the never-ending and violent nature of war. In fact, the original title was *There is Nothing New To Report On Western Front*, which implies that the war is ongoing and that any hope for a positive change is bleak.¹⁵

However, unlike Remarque, Hoch envisions a new and optimistic future by highlighting and championing such communist leaders as Karl Marx and Karl Radek, as well as such Dadaist leaders as George Grosz, Wieland Herzfelde, and Raoul Hausmann. In fact, Hoch enthusiastically expresses her hope for a successful Dadaist future, when she self-referentially displays several cut outs of the word “Dada,” even going so far as to display a cut out that reads, “Invest your money in Dada.”¹⁶ She also proudly displays a map of the countries where women have the right to vote, thereby highlighting the optimistic future of women’s equality.¹⁷ Remarque similarly comments on women’s equality, when he contradicts the notion that women are fragile and delicate, by presenting nurses who are not

¹⁴ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/32535532@N07/3179940950/>

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_Quiet_on_the_Western_Front

¹⁶ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/32535532@N07/3179940950/>

¹⁷ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/32535532@N07/3179940950/>

surprised by the fact that soldiers crave alcohol and sex, and by presenting nuns who are unfazed by mangled and dead bodies. (Remarque, 249 & 256)

Hoch again challenges the status quo, by going against the Futurist ideals of aggression and violence.¹⁸ However, she does use the Futurist technique of provoking viewers to change their perspective, which is ironic, considering the fact that Dada is a movement centered around going against mimesis.¹⁹ And although Hoch's use of photomontage does echo the Cubists use of collage, the idea behind the material, where a new and senseless reality is created is inherently against the idea of mimesis. Similarly, Remarque challenges previous authors' romanticized depictions of violence, by presenting a horrifically sobering account of World War I, when he presents such things as "Death Rooms," where "Day after day goes by with pain and fear, groans and death gurgles." (Remarque, 261)

Not only does Remarque present scenes of intensely violent trench warfare, but he also lets out his thoughts about its psychological effects, its ability to take hold of people, and its corrupt and hierarchical nature, by assigning his own voice to his protagonist and first-person narrator, Paul Bäumer. For example, he has Paul say, "I know nothing of life but despair, death, fear, and fatuous superficiality cast over an abyss of sorrow. I see how peoples are set against one another, and in silence, unknowingly, foolishly, obediently, innocently slay one another." (Remarque, pp. 263) Remarque comments on the corrupting nature of war and the hierarchical nature of military, where "top men" blindly give assassination orders that run down to the bottom of a chain where young privates actually have to carry them out. Hannah Hoch similarly puts her own voice into her work, when she literally places a cut out of herself in *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of German*. Like Remarque, she expresses her frustration with war, when she satirically depicts such German government officials as Friedrich Ebert, Paul von Hindenburg, and Gustav Noske.

In fact, there is a clear parallel between Remarque's character Corporal Himmelstoss, and the German Minister of Defense, Gustav Noske; both of them come into the war from modest backgrounds, only to become corrupted by technology and consumed by the power associated with their newfound positions.²⁰ (Remarque, pp.25) Hoch highlights the fact that Gustav Noske imprisoned German Communist Party leaders Karl Liebknecht and

¹⁸ <http://my.whittier.edu/cp/groupools/filesshare/9448/10318/overview%2520pages%25201-29.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://my.whittier.edu/cp/groupools/filesshare/9448/10318/overview%2520pages%25201-29.pdf>

²⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Noske

Rosa Luxembour; Hoch even places a sign saying, “Liebknecht says: Join Dada,” again representing Hoch’s faith in the Dada movement.^{21 22}

Hoch also expresses optimism in technology when she says, “Our whole purpose was to integrate objects from the world of machines and industry in the world of art.” (Chipp, 396) However, unlike Hoch, Remarque expresses extreme anxiety about the future of technology, when he says, “I see that the keenest brains of the world invent weapons and words to make it yet more refined and enduring.” As opposed to Remarque, Hoch expresses optimism about what great and artistic minds can do with technology, when she says, “Our typographical collages or montages set out to achieve this by imposing, on something which could only be produced by hand, the appearances of something that had been entirely composed by machine; in an imaginative composition, . . . in an arrangement that no machine could yet compose.” (Chipp, 396) This statement also reflects the ideas that Dada is both original and representative of the future.

And as a Dadaist work, Hannah Hoch’s *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany* is by nature an anti-art work of art; in the same way, Remarque’s *All Quiet on The Western Front* is war novel that is anti-war. For example, when Hoch places a cut out that reads “He he, young man . . . Dada is not an art trend, she makes the statement that unlike art, Dada is a unique and long lasting attitude rather than an impermanent thing. And although Hoch and Remarque present different views about whether the future will be bright or bleak, they both present works that satirically comment on the nonsensical and horrific nature of war.

²¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Noske

²² <http://www.flickr.com/photos/32535532@N07/3179940950/>

Boryana Tsenkova - The Importance of the Protagonist as a Political Tool in *Germinal*, *Mary Barton*, and *Hunger*

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century changed the political and economic atmosphere across Europe. The rise of industrialism and the progress of capitalism led to broad social and economic changes in England and France, which were felt most strongly by the industrial workers. Socialism was seen as a revolt against capitalism and was gaining support because of the dissatisfaction of the working class with its living and working conditions. There was little governmental control over factories and mines, and people were working long-hours in appalling conditions for minimum wages. The labor process was reorganized and workers now worked under supervisors and had starting and finishing time. As a result of the reorganization of labor, the personal relationship between workers and masters was seized and there was increased lack of communication between the two classes (Sage March 1). The appalling conditions in which industrial laborers worked in England and the dangerous conditions in the mines in Northern France encouraged artists to use art to inform the public and to provoke it to analyze the condition of the working class. Affected by the politics of the time, writers used their novels as an artistic way to criticize politics and initiate a political and social change. They focused their attention on the revolutionary socialist ideals and problems that socialism as a movement would face. *Mary Barton*, *Germinal* and *Hunger* explore the individual's experiences and feelings in order to describe the state of society at the peak of industrialization in three European countries-England, France and Norway. The three novels serve not only to inform the mass public of social issues but also to critique the effects of industrialism on the individual in society. These novels were affected by the politics of the time but also affected society because of the political meaning attached to each of them.

In *Mary Barton*, Elizabeth Gaskell describes a "state of feeling" (Gaskell Introduction) among industrial workers in Manchester and in this way explains why these workers are attracted to the Chartist movement. By describing the "state of feeling" of the industrial workers in Manchester, Gaskell succeeds in making the reader sympathetic to the working class and its problems. She depicts not the condition of the working class as a whole, but of individuals among the working class. The working class people as described by Gaskell are not lazy and dirty, but are people whose hard work does not provide enough for them and their families. She also uses different accents in order to point out the differences between the people in the middle and in the working class as well as to individualize the characters. By

pointing out the differences between the working class and the middle class, Gaskell explores the question of social injustice and implies that it is natural for the working class to be attracted to a socialist movement such as the Chartist movement.

At the beginning of the novel, John Barton is described as an intelligent working class man who is aware of the social inequality between the working class and the middle class as well as the inequality of the wealth distribution between those two classes. However, by telling the personal story of John Barton the reader sympathizes with him and understands the reasons behind his later conversion from supporting moderate to supporting radical political ideas. John Barton first loses “his mother who died from absolute want of the necessities of life” (Gaskell, Chapter 3), and his child Tom “with his white wan lips quivering, for want of better food than [John Barton] could give him” (Gaskell, Chapter 1). However, the death of his wife Mary is the turning point for his political beliefs: “One of the good influences over John Barton’s life had departed that night. One of the ties which bound him down to the gentle humanities of earth was loosened, and henceforward the neighbors all remarked he was a changed man.” (Gaskell, Chapter 4). Disillusioned with his personal life, John Barton becomes a member of the Trade’s Union and thus supports the Chartist movement. The Chartist movement is described through the eyes of the working class and their hopes and not solely as a political movement. The working class people are naïve in their understanding of politics because they believe that the solution is to tell the government about their misfortunes and sufferings. However, after his return from London John Barton becomes even more radical because he learns that communication is not enough.

Elizabeth Gaskell understood that as art is affected by politics, politics are also affected by art: although she introduces a lot of strong political messages at the beginning of *Mary Barton*, halfway through the book she reduces the political meaning attached to the novel by emphasizing the romantic plot. Gaskell’s initial intention was to name the book *John Barton*; however, it was suggested by her publisher to change the name to *Mary Barton*. By doing this, Gaskell switched the focus of the book from John Barton and his radical ideas to his daughter Mary Barton and her romantic experience. Gaskell feared that the radical ideas and actions of John Barton could be misinterpreted by the desperate working class people as a solution to their problems. In addition, Gaskell was concerned that by describing the “state of feeling” of John Barton she might be accused of being too sympathetic with him and to support his radical political ideas. To prevent herself from such accusations, the book was published anonymously. Furthermore, she tried to reduce the political impact of the murder plot by

making John murder Harry and not his father Henry. By murdering Harry, Gaskell implied that Harry may have been killed because he was involved with Mary. However, it is never revealed in the book whether John Barton knew about the relationship between Harry and Mary. If John killed Henry, the real representation of capitalism, this would be misunderstood by working class people who might resort to this violent approach in real life. In addition, murdering Harry, the heir of Henry, is like putting an end to the system of capitalism itself. Furthermore, the reader is aware of the personal reasons behind John Barton's despair with the political and economical system and the reader remains sympathetic to John even after he kills Harry.

Emile Zola follows a similar approach by building an image of the individuals within the working class rather than building a generalized image of the working class. By creating memorable characters like Etienne, Souvarine and Rasseneur, Zola introduces three solutions to how the problem of social injustice can be solved- through radical, anarchist or reformist actions. In *Germinal*, Zola describes the ghastly living and working conditions of the miners in Montsou and critiques the system that allows for such exploitation. He creates vivid characters which display various political ideas on how the social injustice should end. Rasseneur is an ex-miner who understands that the living and working conditions of the miners are unacceptable and he organizes a strike: "A very good workman, he could speak well, put himself at the head of every opposition. And had at least become the chief of the discontented" (*Germinal* Part 1, Chapter 6). However, the strike fails and as a result he is dismissed from work. His political views change from radical to reformist. His character introduces the idea that change is necessary, but strikes are not the right way to go about enforcing change. Instead, society could be changed by peaceful reforms. Rasseneur and the main protagonist of the novel, Etienne, often discuss the conditions in the mine and argue about how the system could be changed.

Etienne is the character who is attracted to socialism and carries the more radical political ideas in the book. He comes as an outsider to Montsou and is soon terrified by the living and working conditions of the miners. In the first chapter of the novel when Etienne comes to Montsou, Zola uses repetitive words like "dark", "blackened wood", "black soil" (*Germinal* Part 1, Chapter 1) to describe how Etienne sees Montsou as well as to introduce the reader to the life of the miners. A lot of the miners do not understand how horrible their conditions are because that is the way they and their ancestors have lived for generations. Soon after Etienne comes, he realizes that a system that allows for such a great social injustice should be

changed. He starts reading social class movement literature and corresponding with Pluchart who is the organizer for the Communist International Workingmen's Association. The seeds of socialism are soon germinated in him. Although Etienne is open to the ideas of socialism, he does not fully understand the socialist readings at the beginning. In addition, he is young and inexperienced, and has a very simplistic and immature understanding of the socialistic ideology. He is easily fooled to believe the theory he has read, and does not listen to Rasseneur's advice that leading a strike is not the solution. However, the great theory is not enough to organize and lead a strike. As Etienne becomes more radical, he starts to desire power and his good intentions give way to his personal anxieties. The reader can see Zola's critique on the socialist movement and how hard it is to think of the future of the socialist movement and your comrades when you are blinded by your own ambitions. Furthermore, it is impossible to work for the welfare of others if one is consumed by personal anxieties. As the strike progresses we see this idea develop. Although Etienne has read the theory and is leading the strike, it turns out that neither the theory nor he has accounted for the personality differences among the workers that lead the strike to the unexpected burst of violence and the murder of the greedy town's storekeeper- Maigrat. As the strike goes out of his control, Etienne realizes that it is not easy to lead people, and that people often turn against their leader and blame him for the failure of the strike. However, the failure of the strike does not eliminate his trust in socialism as a system or in the people as power for social change. Furthermore, Etienne matures and understands that theory is not enough; he learns that there is a lot more he needs to learn before he takes action. One year after Etienne has initially come to Montsou, he is on his way to Paris to join Pluchart and to better understand socialism.

Souvarine is a friend of Etienne's in whose character Zola introduces the anarchist ideal as a solution to the social problem. Souvarine is a Russian anarchist, fanatic, political immigrant, who believes that society should be destroyed and then built again. He does not believe in moderate actions and reforms. According to him the strike is a "foolery" (Zola, Part 3 Chapter 1) and he sees violence and destruction as the only way to change the system. At the end of the book he sabotages the entrance shaft of one of the pits and leaves evidence that this has been intentionally done. Souvarine does not succeed with his futile act. The mines continue to function and the miners continue to work in the pits. Souvarine's sabotage of the entrance pit reveals the nonsensicality of anarchist actions.

At the end of the book, it is left to the reader to decide how to see socialism- as a potentially successful or already failed political movement. Throughout the novel, Zola develops the idea that it is hard to make socialism successful when socialism does not account for the differences between individuals. Zola also notes that it is impossible to dedicate oneself completely to a political movement when every person has his own desires. Etienne learns that theory is not enough and goes to join Pluchart and develop further understanding of socialistic ideas by using his practical experience. This ending suggests that socialism may not be the right movement as of now but it has the potential to solve the problem of social injustice if it only finds a way for the theory to work.

The name of the novel, *Germinal*, suggests the revolutionary character of the events described in the novel. Germinal is the seventh month in the French Revolutionary Calendar, the month of germination (Sage, February 24). This is symbolic within the novel because Etienne comes to Montsou as an outsider, goes under the ground and opens the eyes of the miners for the intolerable conditions in which they live and work. The revolutionary ideas of socialism and social equality are germinated in him and he feels the need to grow and develop these ideas. In addition, germination is a symbol of a new beginning. A year after Etienne has come to Montsou, he leaves Montsou in order to start a new life with Pluchart and to develop his understanding of socialism. This time he will develop his knowledge not only on theory but on his experience as well. Although at the beginning of the novel Etienne can be seen as the young Rasseneur, at the end Rasseneur remains a static character while Etienne develops. While Rasseneur does not take any radical actions and becomes a reformist, Etienne's beliefs do not change. The failure of the strike does not discourage him, but inspires him to continue his way and start again working toward the success of socialism as a political movement.

Knut Hamsun's revolutionary psychological novel, *Hunger*, takes off on a different road: it focuses not primarily on the physiological feeling of hunger, but on its effect on one's mind. In addition, he does not focus on individuals among a certain class but focuses on the effect of one person's physiological hunger on his psychological state. Emile Zola and Elizabeth Gaskell vividly described physiological hunger in their novels in an attempt to criticize the political and social system that allow for it. In both *Germinal* and *Mary Barton*, hunger was a physiological feeling described visually in the background of the story in order to make the reader more sympathetic to the sufferings of the working class and to serve as an explanation for the support of the working class to socialism. Knut Hamsun, however, takes the physiological hunger out of the background and develops it as a plot in his novel. He is not

interested in the physiological feeling of hunger but is interested in its effect on one's psychological state. The protagonist of the novel is a writer who often has nothing to eat, but who refuses to become a part of the system. On multiple occasions he is offered a relief to his hunger but because of his ego, he refuses it. He uses hunger as his inspiration for work but his almost constant feeling of hunger starts to affect his mental state. As the unnamed protagonist continues to experience physiological hunger, he becomes disoriented and less concentrated; his thoughts become more irrational and find it impossible to write: "...now I couldn't write anything. My head grew light as soon as I ever attempted [writing]." (Hamsun, Part 3) His physiological hunger becomes a hunger for artistic ideas and a hunger to be noticed by society.

The protagonist in *Hunger* does not have a name. This is a problem because having a name is way to introduce oneself, to become part of society and to be noticed by others. His refusal to become part of the social system is actually an attempt to become independent in his thoughts and actions. At the time of the novel's publication in 1890, Norway is under Swedish influence and is struggling for its independence. However, since political independence cannot be achieved, Hamsun tries to give the unnamed protagonist independence in his art and his thoughts. The protagonist does not want to make art for the mass public but is exploring meaningful art even if this means he will be starving. He finds happiness when his work is rejected because it is not for the public: "I understand that my article has been rejected, and yet I could not have received a prettier refusal" (Hunger, Part 3). In this way, he does not allow to be affected by the political system or by society

In *Hunger*, unlike *Germinal* or *Mary Barton*, the protagonist blames God for the injustice and not the government or politics. In this way Hamsun's criticism is directed on the overall picture of humanity, not only on a particular country or social class. He focuses on the individual's sufferings of the protagonist, not on the class sufferings which are seen by Marx. In a time when Norway is not politically independent, Hamsun implies that political independence is not important. It is the independence of the individual in his thoughts that are essential to humanity. In addition, he develops this idea by creating a revolutionary psychological novel in this way gaining independence in his art. Since Hamsun is not interested in politics he neither describes the political situation in Norway nor gives any background information. He even tries to diminish the significance of such an important historical event as the French Revolution in 1848 by having the protagonist write 1848 on the four corners of his job application. When asked to explain his actions, his answer is simple:

“Yes, that was rather a mistake” (Hamsun, Part I). With this act, Hamsun rejects the importance of the French revolution in 1848 which set the beginning of the Second French Republic. Political movements are not important; it is the individual who is important.

Art and politics are interrelated: art is affected by politics and art affect politics. It is impossible for an artist to remain unaffected by the politics of his time and place. In a period of revolutionary changes throughout Europe, writers such as Elizabeth Gaskell in England and Emile Zola in France explore the individual in the context of industrialism in order to bring awareness of the social problem to the mass public and provoke it to take a stand and reevaluate the state of society and the political system. In this way, the authors criticize the industrialism and the political system.

However, both Gaskell and Zola live in independent countries which main problems are rapid industrialization and social inequality. On the other hand, Knut Hamsun lives in a country which is not politically independent, and he uses *Hunger* to gain intellectual and artistic independence by rejecting the present political system. Hamsun focuses on the feelings of one individual and his mental sufferings as a way to emphasize the independence and importance of the individual. Although these novels were written more than a century ago, the ideas presented in them apply to nowadays society. Many socialist governments have failed but socialism as a political movement has remained and there are politicians still adapt socialist ideology to present-day capitalism. The working conditions of the miners not only in France but throughout the world remain the same as the conditions described by Zola in the late nineteenth century. In addition, factory workers are still exploited in countries around the world most apparently in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, and even in the United States. A century later, the conditions described in *Mary Barton*, *Germinal* and *Hunger* still have not significantly improved and these novels continue to serve as an artistic tool to provoke social and political change as well as horrific evidence that the system has not changed.

Carlee Shults - Portland's Zoobombers

Once a week in America's most bike-friendly city, mobs of "dirty hipster" 20-Somethings race down hills adjacent to the Oregon Zoo. These "Zoobombers" have succeeded in creating both an all-inclusive event for those looking for good, free fun and at the same time, an exclusive subculture. This "cool" happening has not yet been commodified, perhaps due to the way it has become a subcultural normality or maybe because that is just the way the hipsters want it to be.

I discovered zoobombing through a reliable hipster source: my good friend Anthony Hernandez, a freshman at Portland State University. We attended high school together in the Avondale, Arizona, where Anthony began his hipster reign. Always a trendsetter, Anthony repopularized the rattail, ska music, and grandpa-style glasses on a minority-dominated campus that cared most about Pitbull's newest club-banger and how low one could sag his pants. Now at PSU, Anthony continues to conquer new cools, such as learning to play the ukulele and most interestingly, zoobombing. When I asked him what sorts of things his subculture was involved in, he was most excited to talk about this new venture.

Most attracted to zoobombing are those like Anthony, people who try their hardest to forge a unique path, without making it look like they give a damn. These "hipsters" roam college campuses, unknown band's concerts and Urban Outfitters. Unlike the men discussed in William Oliver's essay "The Streets," who are enticed by anything that can be used as an "alternative... to pursu[ing] personal and social significance", hipsters are all about the personal and social journey to meaning (2006:921). They search for oneness with the universe and their environment, and although they may not like to admit it, a hipster is one surrounded by a community of those very similar to him or her. While attempting to project an original aura, a hipster often appears to be jumping on whatever indie bandwagon is popular at the time.

Portland's distinct breed of hipster is attracted to zoobombing for varied reasons. It is a city that has been praised for its large bicycling community, and the town contains a large university within the metropolis. Combined with the hills surrounding the Oregon Zoo, the perfect recipe for hipster excitement has been concocted. It gives them a chance to join as an organized group, or institution, and do whatever they want, all the while riding a bike down a massive hill. The zoobombers often dress in costume and decorate their bikes, which include mini bikes, tall bikes, and everything in between. This gives the subculture a chance to distinguish themselves from each other, and those who attend the event often enough in

creative garb gain a celebrity-like status, like “Handsome” Dave, zoobombing’s rumored creator.

This “cool” acts as a creative outlet for the subculture, and it is a cultural practice complete with social rules and unspoken but necessary situational nuances. By participating in a zoobomb, these people feel a connection to a group identity, and as they learn the ways of a true zoobomber, they gain a level of cool not attainable to outsiders. Some of the group’s practices (such as the zoobomb pile and the sought-after zoobomb vest) have become so ingrained in member’s minds that no one recalls the origin or reason behind the cultural norms. Pierre Bourdieu defines this phenomenon as *habitus* in sociologist Charles Lemert’s book, *Social Things*. Lemert describes how in “virtually every social group, even those of great size and complexity, people tend to obey the rules” (2008:36). This theory is reflected perfectly by Portland’s zoobombers. Although no precise list of laws and social cues exists, there is a distinct way of going about this venture; this includes knowing such insider information as how to get free metro fare, what kind of music to blast from your speakers, and what level of public drunkenness is deemed appropriate.

Although zoobombing has been around for over eight years, there are a few factors that help it maintain its underground qualities. First and foremost, bicycling is free. In a city that is so health conscious and bike-friendly, along with containing a university filled with unemployed students, riding one’s bike is often a no-brainer. The event itself has not been commodified; although it has been around for a relatively long time, the event’s highest recorded number of participants is only 120 people. This could be due to the rather exclusive nature of the event and the nature of the true zoobombers themselves. As defined above, a hipster likes to be considered trendsetting, but does not want to try too hard. They also enjoy the exclusivity and socially acceptable constraints of being a zoobomber. They may not want others to gain access to this event because then it would lose its hipster legitimacy.

Attending a zoobomb, held almost every Sunday night, is free. This is another sign the event is not commodified. It is only lightly advertised; its main source of recruitment is word of mouth. People who hear about zoobombing are told about it by the events “true” members, and therefore they have been invited into the exclusive world. Another reason zoobombing has not been commodified is because it is not fully supported by the community. Its antagonists argue that the event is not safe, especially for children, too loud, and just not “socially acceptable” by everyone in the town.

Although zoobombing has not been berated by media attention or attended by gaggles of screaming preteens, it is cool. To the hipsters of Portland, Oregon, it is a chance to get together, be original and enjoy a wild ride. Belonging to this group is unique, trendsetting,

and part of a hipster's socialization; with or without the support of the entire city, zoobombing has made its mark in Portland's world of biking, and it will continue to grow as the subculture surrounding it does as well.

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Apollonia Galvan - The Domestic Sphere- A Guide to the Inner Workings of Gothic Characters

Gothic literature has always enticed past and contemporary readers based on its stunning imagery. From lush descriptions of rolling landscapes to intricate and explicit illustrations of ungodly beasts, Gothic fiction imprisons the mind of the reader in a world of depravation. One of the prevalent images relentlessly practiced within the Gothic tradition is the ominous haunted house or castle. Although the home is often recognized as a place of refuge and tranquility in most literary works, the Gothic genre constructs the home as the nucleus for supernatural events and monstrous characters. Along with the home's tormenting ambience, Gothic authors compare its physical presence to its inhabitants. Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* skillfully play with the motif of the haunted home as a way of demonstrating the wicked inwardness of their main characters, Heathcliff and Count Dracula. Through bountiful depictions, Brontë and Stoker highlight how the home reflects the dark mannerisms and psyche of their antagonists.

Brontë's haunting novel magnificently exhibits two strikingly different residences, *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange*, and reveals how the physical persona of these estates discloses the personalities and attitudes that dwell inside. Firstly, Brontë tackles the spatial relationship of the two homes by detailing the tremendous isolation between them. Brontë evokes this at the very beginning of her work as Mr. Lockwood ventures into, what appears to him as untrodden territory. Mr. Lockwood, deeply enchanted, proclaims, "This is certainly a beautiful country! In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society. A perfect misanthropist's Heaven" (1). This sole phrase uncovers the different world he has entered in comparison to the rest of England. Lockwood has penetrated a world detached from the morals and principles of the city where in it lies two conflicting realms: The Earnshaws' *Wuthering Heights* and the Lintons' *Thrushcross Grange*. Through this line, Brontë prepares to introduce to Mr. Lockwood, and most importantly, to the reader the external appearances of the homes and the internal workings inside.

Brontë captures the tangible essence of *Wuthering Heights* as a wild and unkempt property through Mr. Lockwood's elaborate description of its appearance. Brontë, through the ventriloquism of Lockwood, illuminates the physicality of the estate when he observes: Pure bracing ventilation they must have up there, at all times...blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few, stunted firs at the end of the house; and by range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun. (2) This detailed description of

the decay of the surrounding vegetation, from the trees to the shrubbery, highlights how the residents themselves are degenerate. The ungovernable growth of the firs and thorns shows the disorder that the owner Mr. Heathcliff personifies and emits to all those around him. The estate upholds a menacing nature with its deeply embedded windows and rugged stones, much like the energy Heathcliff gives off to those he encounters. Heathcliff's intimidating and disruptive personality is mirrored through the crumbling nature of his home.

The decrepit physicality of his home insinuates his mental perversion and his psychological instability. Brontë makes it evident that the residence's outward nature does not imitate Heathcliff's physical character but more sinisterly his cognitive status. Heathcliff attempts to develop a façade by clothing himself in gentleman's attire and bearing social graces as Brontë writes: But Mr. Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gypsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman—that is, as much a gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss in his negligence, because he was an erect and handsome figure—and rather morose—possibly some people might suspect him of a degree of under-bred pride. (3) Although Heathcliff adheres to the image of the gentleman, in reality his hideous temperament lingers within his soul. It is for this reason that *Wuthering Heights* resembles Heathcliff's character.

Even though the property has an air of deterioration and is visibly withered like Heathcliff's mentality, both entities radiate a mysterious exquisiteness and beauty. The home's rustic and unsavory exterior and interior expose its past glory. It holds within it a splendor and prestige that is haunting which is quintessentially Gothic. This allusion is evident as Mr. Lockwood discerns, "The floor was of smooth, white stone: the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade" (3). Regardless of the antiquated furnishings, Brontë is proving that there are remnants of foregoing grandeur and elegance much like Heathcliff's own past. At the start of the novel, Heathcliff enters the estate as a young, innocent and pure spirit. But with time and increasing acts of mental abuse, Heathcliff develops a spiteful and vicious comportment. Similar to the home, Heathcliff once exhibited beauty, both physically and spiritually, but has now become a grotesque and mutilated shell of who he once was.

Both Heathcliff and *Wuthering Heights* are objects that parallel each other based on their decline from past distinction. The home symbolizes Heathcliff's struggle with his adoptive family and those in the outside world who don't understand him. The exterior of the house reflects the deformed and vile person Heathcliff has ultimately chosen to be, forever implanting him as an outsider. In essence, Heathcliff and the estate are one being. Without *Wuthering Heights*, there is no Heathcliff and vice versa. Fundamentally, Brontë

demonstrates how the residence's physical identity communicates Heathcliff's internal evil and psychological degradation; thus giving the reader a better understanding of Heathcliff's mind and the ability to humanize him.

Brontë's in-depth portrayal of the home's correlation with the characters is also witnessed in her description of Thrushcross Grange. She effectively juxtaposes Thrushcross Grange and *Wuthering Heights* to expose the contrasting lifestyles and behaviors of the individuals. Specifically, Brontë first shows this when young Heathcliff and Catherine set out to enter the distinguished estate entitled Thrushcross Grange. The children are engrossed by the magnificence of the residence as Heathcliff recalls to Nelly: It was beautiful—a splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson-covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass drops hanging in silver chains from the centre, and shimmering with little soft tapers... We should have thought ourselves in heaven! (41-42) From this precise illustration, the reader is able to notice the stark contrast between Brontë's evaluation of *Wuthering Heights*. The home's luxurious furnishings and extravagant personality reflect the interiority of the Lintons who value stylish attire, artificiality and embellishments. They symbolize the insincerity and haughtiness that can be attributed to high society people. Essentially, the residents of Thrushcross Grange garner an entirely different mentality than the Earnshaws and Heathcliff. Marked by superficiality and materialist ideology, the Lintons symbolize the majority of England, those who conform to what it means to be the ideal elegant and capitalist citizen. Whereas, the Earnshaws, and most noticeably, Heathcliff represent the rawness of humanity; driven by their desires and feelings but ultimately doomed characters. It is evident that Brontë alludes to the Lintons and their principles as insignificant since they fall victim to Heathcliff's wrath at the end of the novel. They become consumed by the horrifying and violent whirlwind that *Wuthering Heights* embodies. Thus, Brontë puts together these two staunchly opposing households in order to show the terrifying clash that erupts between them. Overall, the two homes expose the differing frames of mind of the Lintons and the Earnshaws and serve as a purpose to foreshadow the ominous dynamics among the two families.

Stoker's *Dracula* also utilizes the infamous castle as a way of attaining insight into the character of Count Dracula. The physical presence of Dracula's fortification oozes an air of otherworldliness and majesty in the times of yore. The reader is given access to this old world atmosphere when Jonathan Harker first enters the castle, with the assistance of the Count as he remarks:

He insisted on carrying my traps along the passage, and then up a great winding stair, and along another great passage, on whose stone floor our steps rang heavily... and I rejoiced to

see within a well-lit room in which a table was spread for supper, and on whose mighty hearth a great fire of logs, freshly replenished, flamed and flared. (17)

The grand interior of the castle brings to light the discreet and mystifying nature and energy that lingers within it, which is very similar to what Dracula comes to represent. The Count epitomizes the mysterious but also elegant mood that his abode embodies. Like his castle, Dracula's physicality is distinctive, filled with old world sophistication. Stoker makes a point of creating this parallel between Dracula and his home when Harker takes note of Dracula's visage: His face was ... aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; ... The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. (18)

This vivid description highlights Dracula's pronounced features by using some architectural terminology. For example, the words "arched" and "domed" imply the topic of design and structure, which greatly suggest Dracula's facial features resemble the layout of his castle. His queer physical features not only mirror the peculiar inner setting of the castle (the mysterious passages) but also offer a questioning of Dracula's inner motives. His uncanny looks transcend into what obsesses his thoughts, leaving Harker wondering what this obscure figure is contemplating. Generally, Stoker is indicating that Dracula's ample castle, filled with enigmatic tunnels, considerably reflects his physical charisma and psychological inner workings. Like the wavering passages, twisting at every corner within the castle, Dracula's mind can be taken in that same light. The reader, along with Jonathan Harker, has no idea what persists in Dracula's psyche. It is for this reason that Stoker's focus on the Count's home is so vital to grasping a rare, first piece of who Dracula is, before the novel begins to unravel.

Both Brontë and Stoker's works emphasize the significance of the Gothic setting in terms of getting to know the characters on a deeper level. The concept of the physicality of the haunted dwelling accentuates the "terrors of the soul" within the characters, specifically Heathcliff and Count Dracula. Heathcliff and Dracula's psychological mutability and demented nature are projected compellingly through the concrete manifestation of their homes. The image of the home spews all the horrid and unspeakable traits that these nefarious individuals possess, making it a notable literary tool in Gothic fiction.

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Marcus Arman - Maria Sharapova: Tennis Champion, International Icon, Marketing Superstar

Maria Sharapova is a unique blend of athletic ability, model-esque looks and youthful energy that makes her an ideal target for companies seeking benefits from star endorsements and sponsorships. Sharapova's marketing potential was apparent since adolescence with her literally and figuratively towering over competition. However, talent, beauty and mass appeal do not always translate into lucrative and respectable careers. Learning from the relatively under-achieving career of Anna Kournikova, Sharapova and agent, Max Eisenbud, made it clear that "becoming the best" was top priority.²³ While Kournikova garnered more attention off the court than on it, Sharapova and Eisenbud were aware that marketing a champion is easier and more profitable than marketing potential with the possibility of being a bust. Following her 2004 Wimbledon victory, Sharapova's exposure and allure grew substantially, garnering attention and offers from hundreds of companies. In addition, tennis is recognized as one of the only true global sports, allowing more opportunities on an international level. Sharapova's clean image, high Q Score and champion level skills make her an ideal sponsor for brands seeking to portray a respectable but "winning" image.²⁴ Although Sharapova became a prime target for company endorsements after her victory in Wimbledon, "team Sharapova" must selectively choose which short and long term deals accommodate her schedule, personal brand and professional image.²⁵

Maria Sharapova's endorsement effectiveness is clear from multiple marketing standpoints. Her win at Wimbledon secured her status as one of the premier female athletes in the world at the age of 17. The "champion" label marked Sharapova as a high achiever, which is important due to the "correlation between the effectiveness of an athlete in an endorsement role and what the athlete has achieved throughout his or her career" (Fullerton 327). This signifies that Sharapova and Eisenbud made the right decision regarding early marketing opportunities. Rather than overbearing Sharapova with endorsement deals and appearances, Eisenbud ensured that contracts were "limited to deals with Nike and with Prince Rackets."²⁶ Most of Sharapova's endorsements came after winning Wimbledon, affirming her court presence before establishing her off-the-court brand.

²³ In an early interview with *HBO Real Sports*, Sharapova stated, "I would want to win Wimbledon, because then the millions will come, and it will be \$20 million". This understanding fueled Eisenbud's approach to marketing her.

²⁴ Eisenbud encouraged Sharapova to only take interviews after wins. *HBS 8*

²⁵ Eisenbud referred to the team that worked on projects for Maria Sharapova as "team Sharapova." *HBS 4*.

²⁶ *HBS 9*

Sharapova is known worldwide, with particularly wide fan bases in Russia and the United States. This makes her unique because there is a small amount of women athletes recognized on the global level. With the exceptions of Michelle Kwan, Kristi Yamaguchi, Venus and Serena Williams, and Jennie Finch, few female athletes had captivated the world. Sharapova's unique identity was also aided by striking physical features; 6'2", blonde hair and an attractive face. Marketers widely support the idea that "a more attractive spokesperson contributes to a better perception of the product" (332). Therefore, Sharapova's physical attractiveness adds another dimension to the "winning" image put forth by her team.²⁷ This increases her marketing effectiveness and brand appeal by distinguishing her in a field of female athletes lauded more for their performance than physique. No female athlete before her had possessed the overwhelming combination of youth, innocence, beauty and talent. These four factors contribute to Sharapova's growing Q Score rating, with it ranging from 31 to 25.²⁸

Sharapova's looks also open new opportunities usually reserved for models and entertainment stars instead of athletes.²⁹ Although this proposes obvious financial benefits, Eisenbud and Sharapova had to be cautious about the way they presented Sharapova. Anna Kournikova's earlier example reflected what Sharapova wanted to avoid, being "more renowned for her beauty than her tennis game" (HBS 9). This notion begins to surface some of the possible personal and professional brand liabilities that Sharapova could face in the future. To avoid the pitfalls that Kournikova fell victim too, Sharapova should present herself as an athlete who happens to be attractive instead of a model who happens to be athletic. This demonstrates why Eisenbud should consider a sports drink endorsement over a skin cleanser endorsement, despite higher payments and less time requirements.³⁰ Aligning Sharapova with a company rooted in sports would keep her professional brand more intact. It would also portray Sharapova as a serious athlete rivaling any male or female figure in terms of marketing efficiency on a global scale.

Sharapova is destined to face another professional liability: the short career span of tennis players. At 20 years old, Sharapova thinks she "will be done by playing tennis when [she] is

²⁷ Eisenbud said, "Let's not kid ourselves—she is 6'2", blond, and a very attractive woman, and that is one of the reasons why she generates attention, but above all else she wins." *HBS* 8.

²⁸ Discussing top female sports personalities, scores ranged from 31 to 25. Although Sharapova is not listed in this chart, it's safe to assume her score hovered in this area after she defeated Serena Williams (who was listed) at Wimbledon.

²⁹ See Exhibit 1: Cole Haan advertisement.

³⁰ Eisenbud analyzed some of the trade-offs between the sponsorship options. *HBS(B)* 4.

25.”³¹ Eisenbud is aware he is working within a limited time to fulfill his promise of post-tennis financial security for his client. This signifies how important it is to optimize endorsements and sponsorships at the right time. A missed opportunity could result in the loss of millions while a poor endorsement choice could result in personal brand dilution. Accordingly, Eisenbud and Sharapova have to be sure that they continue to deal with reputable, global companies like Nike, Tag Heuer, Motorola and Pepsi (HBSB 2). Sharapova’s personal liabilities seem limited because of her knack for avoiding controversy and tabloids, but her physique presents another liability aside from masking her on-the-court abilities. At 6’2”, Sharapova is tall, thin and lanky, making her easily susceptible to injuries while playing. While opponents like Serena Williams rely on physical authority, Sharapova maintains a feminine charm on the court that could equally, help and hurt her.

As Sharapova’s agent, Eisenbud is responsible for everything from negotiating contracts to arranging press meetings. However, Eisenbud served as more of a friend and advisor than the typical agent. Sharapova mirrored this sentiment by saying, “I trust him...Max is half family, half agent.”³² Aside from acting as a confidant, Eisenbud is responsible for advancing and promoting the Maria Sharapova brand. His duties include exploring endorsements that appeal to Sharapova’s target market, arranging travel and appearances and negotiating licensing deals (HBS 6). Professor Anita Elberse cited that, “Eisenbud also must effectively use the resources at his disposal within IMG, such as the sales division, which keeps in close contact with the corporate world; IMG’s promotion and event marketing, which may feature Sharapova; and other divisions, like the Fashion group, that are relevant to her career as a celebrity.”³³ Her multi-faceted response demonstrates that Eisenbud should serve as liaison between IMG and this particular client. Essentially, Eisenbud is responsible for everything Sharapova does aside from playing tennis and dating.

Although a career as a sports agent seems rewarding for little work, Eisenbud explains that agents “are humble, work behind the scenes, and do anything for their client.”³⁴ Another one of Eisenbud’s primary responsibilities is maintaining Sharapova’s marketing value. It is important to present Sharapova as the whole package: athletic yet sexy, cool but innocent and

³¹ HBS(B) 4.

³² Eisenbud expressed similar feelings by saying it was more than a business relationship when you put so much effort into one person. HBS 4.

³³ The compiler of the HBS Maria Sharapova case explained essential duties of a sports agent in this interview. <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/5607.html>

³⁴ HBS 6.

a championship performer.³⁵ These prerequisites for Sharapova's marketing success allow Eisenbud and "team Sharapova" to define their target market and outline their marketing goals. Sharapova's target audience can be classified into three primary categories including tennis enthusiasts, young female athletes and age 18 – 35 male admirers. Endorsement deals should be considered with these audiences in mind in order to promote the Sharapova brand as "cool, hip and a champion."³⁶ Looking forward, Eisenbud should seek partnerships with brands that are globally recognizable and currently relevant. Sharapova signed one-year deals with Pepsi and Honda, allowing "team Sharapova" to look for future endorsements. Eisenbud must continue building on sports-dominant endorsements with well-established companies like Gatorade and Power Balance. These two firms respectively produce sports' drinks and performance bands, remaining true to Sharapova's athlete-first persona. However, these companies are enjoyed and known by enough youth to ensure that Sharapova is being marketed towards the "cool-hunter" generation.

Eisenbud and the corporate forces at IMG have carefully crafted Sharapova's personal and professional brand. Branding her as a winner with a "cool" streak, Sharapova's cross-market appeal was tested through her Tag Heuer endorsement. Following the likes of Tiger Woods, Tom Brady and Sebastian Ojier, Sharapova effectively endorsed the brand through a series of ads prominently featuring their watches.³⁷ As a global star, Eisenbud and Sharapova realized that working with an international company in Tag Heuer would appeal to fans worldwide. This, along with the previously mentioned endorsements, reveals IMG's success in marketing the player before the model. Although a skin-care endorsement may help with brand recognition and financial security, Sharapova must continue to cautiously promote her distractingly good looks.

Essentially, Maria Sharapova is a living manifestation of the American dream. Originally migrating from Russia with 700 dollars, Sharapova has built herself into one of the world's premier female athletes.³⁸ In addition to this overwhelming feat, "team Sharapova," headed by agent Max Eisenbud, has transformed the lanky, young starlet into a marketing phenomenon capable of attracting lucrative multi-year deals. Eisenbud's top priority has been maintaining Sharapova's clean, winning image by selecting the most beneficial endorsement deals. "Team Sharapova" has aligning themselves with reputable, global companies including Pepsi, Canon and Land Rover. These choices are meant to protect Sharapova's brand integrity while putting

³⁵ See Exhibit 2. This ad plays on the belief that an attractive woman, like Sharapova, cannot be intimidating. It's a great marketing approach by Nike and Eisenbud.

³⁶ Eisenbud touches on presenting Sharapova as "cool" to international audiences. *HBS(B)2*.

³⁷ See Exhibit 3.

³⁸ Sharapova's humble beginnings are discussed by herself and her agent. *HBS 3*

her name behind quality products with fan-bases on all continents. Thus far, Eisenbud and IMG have demonstrated they know how to properly market Sharapova without turning her into the second coming of Anna Kournikova. This is partly because of Sharapova's wins at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open. However, her off-the-court success can be credited to Eisenbud, who has ensured that Sharapova will be viewed as a star athlete with championship abilities and commercial appeal.

Exhibit 1:



A Cole Haan advertisement featuring Maria Sharapova. Her athletic ability and appearance make her the right representation of a Cole Haan and Nike collaboration.

Exhibit 2:



A still from a Nike ad entitled, "I Feel Pretty." This commercial featured the title-sharing song but ended with Sharapova blasting a fierce serve over the net. This ad symbolizes the balance between sports and style attained by "team Sharapova."

Exhibit 3:



A Tag Heuer ad featuring Maria Sharapova portrayed more as a fashion model than an athlete. Although presenting her as an athlete-first is a primary objective, Tag Heuer has a history of endorsing championship athletes (Super Bowl winner Tom Brady, etc).

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Julia-Ellen Spruill-Smith - A Defense of Epicurean Ethics

Epicurus was a philosopher of the Hellenistic period who developed a philosophy based around the notion that a truly blessed life was one without anxieties or pain. Epicurus wrote that “pleasure is the starting-point and goal of living blessedly” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). Epicurus founded a school that came to be called the Garden in which he taught his philosophy to others and formed a proper philosophic community. The Epicurists were Atomists, believing that all material was made up of very small parts but not that the gods played any role in the creation of atoms or the world. Because Epicurists did not hold strong beliefs about the gods, they consequently did not believe in an afterlife. One of their main objections to gods and philosophies based around the idea of gods as determinants of human fate was that these beliefs instilled fear and anxiety in its followers. It did not seem plausible to the Epicurists that gods could have any control over what happened to humans after life nor that they could play a role in controlling the natural course of atoms. For this, the Epicurists were very worldly philosophers and their ethics grew largely out of their physical beliefs. It is valuable to consider how Epicurean ethics differ from the philosophy of Plato, who was deeply invested in the idea of a divine and pure afterlife for the soul. It will be through the exploration of Epicurean ethics and comparison to Platonic philosophy that we will be able to better grasp and defend the practicality of Epicurean hedonism.

The Epicurists determined that it is through our senses— our abilities to touch, taste, smell, see and hear— that we interact with the world and gain knowledge of reality. They believed that what we perceive through our senses is always real, even in dreams. Epicurus wrote that we judge “every good by the criterion of feeling” which is to say that without the senses we cannot know that which is good i.e. pleasure (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). A later Epicurean philosopher and poet of the Roman philosophical period named Lucretius reiterates this idea in writing, “You will find that our conception of truth is derived ultimately from the senses, and their evidence is unimpugnable” (Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*). So it is clear that this investment in the senses to lead one to an understanding of reality is consistent and central to Epicurean thought.

The Epicurists held an interesting and largely very practical view on death that stems from their investment in worldly sensation. They describe death to be simply the absence of life and therefore the absence of sensation. Without sensation, one cannot feel so one is neither in pain nor in pleasure in death. In accepting this idea, there is nothing to fear about death because when it comes, you will be dead. Epicurus wrote, “So death...is nothing to us; since when we exist, death is not yet present, and when death is present, then we do not exist”

(Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). The Epicurists recognize that all life ends with death but they do not fear it as some do because they do not believe in an after-life judgement of their souls nor do they believe that anything such as fear or sensation can exist in a state of non-existence. This logic seems quite reasonable. By determining that death should not be feared, the Epicurists determine that there is nothing in life that should be feared either. Epicurus wrote, “For there is nothing fearful in life for one who has grasped that there is nothing fearful in the absence of life” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). This Epicurean understanding of death is supported by Epicurean physics centered around Atomism, which dispels false beliefs about the world and how/why it functions. It is from this view of death that one is better able to understand the Epicurean philosophy of pleasure as the “first innate good.”

Epicurean thought maintains that the goal of life is to be free of anxieties and pain, to become as tranquil and reasonable in the mind as possible so as to be adequately able to contemplate all things soberly and rationally. Epicurus wrote that the contemplation of necessary and natural pleasures “enables one to refer to every choice and avoidance to the health of the body and the freedom of the soul from disturbance, since this is the goal of a blessed life. For we do everything for the sake of being neither in pain nor in terror” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). It is important to clarify what is meant by pleasures, as this Epicurean position could be easily misinterpreted to justify a range of superfluous behaviors. Epicurus wrote that, “when we say that pleasure is the goal we do not mean the pleasures of the profligate or the pleasures of consumption...but rather the lack of pain in the body and disturbance in the soul” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). One comes to understand through this that the Epicurean notion of pleasure only extends to the point of satisfying one’s simple and healthy desires; for Epicurus also wrote that “simple flavours provide a pleasure equal to that of an extravagant life-style when all pain from want is removed” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). From this, one learns that pleasure is not about mindlessly indulging oneself, that would be unreasonable and disruptive to the soul, but rather that living a life of pleasure in the Epicurean sense simply means living in moderation and comfort— having just enough to keep oneself free of anxiety, fatigue, hunger and all other discomforts of the world. If we live just enough to rid the self of pain, then pleasure is no longer necessary either because we are content in its most basic fulfillments. It is from this state that our minds and souls are best able to contemplate philosophy.

According to Epicurus living by simple pleasures is the only path to leading a pleasant life, further a life of prudence. He claimed that prudence is “the greatest good” and wrote that “it is impossible to live pleasantly without living prudently, honourably, and justly, and impossible to live prudently, honourably, and justly without living pleasantly” (Epicurus,

Letter to Menoeceus). The two go hand in hand and the logic is quite strong. For how can one exercise their best judgment or adequately contemplate anything if they lead an unpleasant, anxiety-ridden life of struggle? They cannot, this is impossible because the mind and soul cannot possibly be in their best state if the body is disrupted and distracted. It is essential for the Epicurists that the mind and soul are clear and happy for it is only in this state that perspective, reason and wisdom can be gained. Epicurus wrote that the pleasant life is produced through “sober calculation which searches out the reasons for every choice and avoidance and drives out the opinions which are the source of the greatest turmoil for men’s souls” such as drinking, overeating, having sexual relations, or frivolously spending money. It is quite certain that a pleasant life, gained through the fulfillment of simple pleasures, is the only way to achieve a level of prudence within oneself. A pleasant life of prudence is the ultimate aim for an Epicurean for it achieves the highest level of human life that can be sought. Epicurus wrote:

“For who do you believe is better than a man who has pious opinions about the gods, is always fearless about death, has reasoned out the natural goal of life and understands that the limit of good things is easy to achieve completely and easy to provide, and that the limit of bad things either has a short duration or causes little trouble?” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*).

What makes Epicurean ethics so appealing is the undeniable reason and practicality to the ideas. Given what we know as facts about the world, which can only be perceived through the senses, leads one to safely assume that there is nothing after life in the absence of sensation so the best thing anyone can do with their time is live comfortably, enjoy the simple pleasures of life, and study philosophy with a calm soul in humble attempts to consider what it’s all about. There’s not much else one can do. We are all going to die, so accepting this, it seems obvious that one would try to grow and learn as much as they can while they can. Nothing else can be certain but what we have in life through our senses and our eventual satisfaction. If we can’t gain the latter, then it seems life would be just a frivolous and vain waste of time.

Reflecting on Plato’s view of pleasure reveals a stark contrast to Epicurean ethics that seems worth considering. Plato, physically and therefore ethically, was coming from a completely different set of assumptions than the Epicurists. Plato determined that the physical world is merely a reflection of a purely perfect world of forms above. Growing out of Socratic teachings, Plato accepted that no pure knowledge or answers could be gained through human experience on earth. He did, however, strongly believe that pure knowledge could be attained after life when he believed the soul would be released from its confines in the body and, if pure, dwell among the Forms thus acquiring Truth. Plato writes, “if we are ever to have pure

knowledge, we must escape from the body and observe things in themselves with the soul by itself” (*Phaedo* 66e). In a sense, Epicurean thought is in accordance with Platonic thought here. They both assert that the soul must be free from distraction in order to properly contemplate and achieve knowledge. Epicurists thought this could be done in the body, Plato did not. Where the main difference occurs is in the Epicurean denial of an afterlife; they determine that the quest for knowledge can only be done with the body in life. Plato does not care for worldly knowledge because to him it is simply not sufficient to gaining ultimate Truth. He does not settle or accept the human condition in the way that his teacher, Socrates, or the Epicurists do. He believes that his body will never be a sufficient vessel for his soul, void of distraction. For Plato, the soul will only become free after death in another, purer realm. (Perhaps it was the ambition and discipline he learned from being a champion wrestler that gave Plato such determination in the quest for pure knowledge). In this sense the Epicurists were far more practical, basing their ethics off of what could be determined through sensation and their best judgment. Transcendence into another world after death is simply unreasonable— how can one gain ultimate sensation, ultimate knowledge, in a state of non-existence?

Epicurus wrote, and perhaps he was referring to Plato, that “the wise man neither rejects life nor fears death” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). If life is worthless and filled with false perception as Plato determined, then why are we here at all? Surely there is knowledge to be gained on earth through the experiences of the body, because otherwise our time here is utterly meaningless. Grasping that there is likely no afterlife for us drives one to invest themselves in the experiences of life, as a way to generate meaning for oneself so as to not fritter away our only existence. Epicurists sought to do just this, to lead a simple and pleasant life and examine oneself in the context of oneself on earth as a way of bringing meaning to an otherwise meaningless existence. Plato did argue that there was some purpose in life, however, which was to study philosophy and prepare the soul for death. He determined that the preparation for death was, in fact, the aim of philosophy. He, like the Epicurists, did not fear death but perhaps only because he was so heavily invested in the idea of reaching a divine and pure realm after life. He viewed the body and pleasures to be like a deceptive prison for the soul (he famously makes an analogy of life on earth as life in a cave where only shadows of reality can be known). Plato wrote, “For whenever [the soul] attempts to examine anything with the body, it is clearly deceived by it” (*Phaedo* 65b) and “the body confuses the soul and does not allow it to acquire truth and wisdom...” (*Phaedo* 66a). There is consistent overlap, it seems, between Platonic and Epicurean assertions about the body because they both recognize that the body can be a source of much turmoil and disturbance. These

experiences of the body are not conducive to contemplation which for both philosophies is essential. Their reasoning, however, for making these assertions about the body are coming from different places. Plato holds disdain for the body because it is the one thing in his way of attaining pure knowledge which he maintains can be achieved after death. Epicurists, however, accept that the needs of the body can be distracting but instead of rejecting the body as a deceptive vessel altogether they determine that their bodily needs can be satisfied by enjoying simple pleasures and living moderately. This life style eliminates the distraction and disturbance from the soul because the body is calm, having everything it needs. When death comes, their bodies will die along with their souls and all of the atoms that composed them will disperse into the void. The Roman poet, Lucretius wrote, “the mind is born with the body, develops with it, and declines with it” (Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*). Plato would be very troubled by this notion as his entire life’s work—and consequent disdain for the body and pleasure—depends on the idea that the soul will be released from the body and know Truth after life.

While Plato’s philosophy is certainly compelling, it seems rather fantastical compared to Epicurean ethics. Plato was ambitious and did not want to settle with Socratic ideas that we can never gain answers to the big questions of life. Because of this, he rejected the world of the body and deemed it a kind of obstacle to his goals that he was sure could be met in his pure, divine world of Forms. The Epicurists, however, are very worldly. They do not reject the body, they recognize that it is all we know and all we have to guide us through life. Their ethics attempt to acknowledge the limits of the body and work with them rather than rejecting them altogether. For the Epicurists, this life is all we have so we need not waste it in vain pursuits. Like Plato, they determined that philosophy was necessary to leading a meaningful life but to do this properly is to satisfy the needs of the body and live without fear or anxiety. Given what can be reasonably determined about our human condition, Epicurean ethics seems to have figured out the best way to approach life. No excess, no greed, no vanity, no laziness, just simple pleasures, peace and comfort. It is only from this platform and perspective that any productive contemplation can occur. When there are so many unanswerable questions, why rely on anything other than what we can see, hear, taste, touch and smell right in front of us?

Largely, twenty-first century American society could gain a great deal from engaging in Epicurean ethics. We live in a society that shamelessly promotes self-indulgence and mindlessness. No one knows how to do anything for themselves anymore on the most basic of human levels and we happily drench ourselves in this ignorance. Our food is grown and manipulated by scientists, our animals are abused and out of sight, our clothes and shoes and toys are all made off shore by other humans *like ourselves* who are abused and exploited and

who we don't give a passing thought to. We want our SUVs and we want our oil even though we know it will not last. We have headphones, bluetooths, cell phones all shoved in our ears and computers shoved in our faces. We want everything fast, cheap, bigger, better, richer and all the while we don't want any part of the process. Our senseless consumerist nation only cares about the ends and never the means. There is such a vast and disheartening disconnect between our natural humanity and the arrogant operations that guide the dehumanized shop-bots of America today. It is overwhelming. If we could just simplify and remember what it is that makes us human—the ability to *think*, to *reason*— then I doubt society would resemble what it does currently. There is little reason or rationality in the minds of the everyday American robots who are so absent from life and what makes them human that it is scary. Even in our academic institutions where we would hope that students come to advance themselves intellectually and seek opportunities outside of posting on Facebook, we find the same mindlessness. Parents who shop for colleges with their kids just to throw hundreds of thousands of dollars at institutions where their children sit in class and play Tetris, doing everything in their power to resist acknowledging the real world around them or investing themselves, engaging and actually working hard at anything. We have become a culture of convenience and if the product you're selling isn't wrapped up neatly and ready to be consumed without thought, then Americans don't want it— it's too hard.

The Epicurists were onto something significant. We need to put the cell phones down, close the lap tops, turn off the TVs, trade in our cars for some bikes and plant a garden. Of course these matters of declining American consciences are not so easily resolved, because to a large extent your average American isn't in control or aware of what is happening. But we have to start somewhere and actually engaging in our most basic humanity seems like a good place to start. Americans are stressed people, confused people but we seek comfort in all the wrong places: malls, bars, chatrooms, Facebook, and the list goes on but nowhere does it include philosophy and contemplation. Americans have an enormous amount to gain from studying and internalizing Epicurean ethics. It is the arrogance and invincibility that is promoted to the American as integral to their identity that poses the greatest threat to living more reasonably. People don't like to feel that what they're doing is wrong, they want to be justified in all of their actions and desires and by the way the country is run and what is being marketed to us every day, everywhere we go Americans are completely justified in their mindlessness. If we could just slow down and really think about what we are doing then we might recognize that our priorities and efforts are so, so skewed towards insignificance. We could change society, become more responsible to our humanity, but it would take a widespread acknowledgement that something is wrong with the current state of affairs. If we

could take a cue from Epicurean ethic and eliminate the explosive hedonistic mindset of American society today then we would be a much happier, healthier people. Lucretius wrote, “becoming accustomed to simple, not extravagant, ways of life makes one completely healthy, makes man unhesitant in the face of life’s necessary duties, puts us in a better condition for the times of extravagance which occasionally come along, and makes us fearless in the face of chance” (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*). A life of moderation and a life of reason is where humans can thrive. We have spiraled so hysterically away from simplicity that to get to back seems almost impossible— if we were ever even there as humans to begin with. As Epicurean ethic declares, life should be filled with pleasure. Life is an amazing, beautiful opportunity that only comes once. But pleasure must be met with reason. We must understand limits and reach a point where enough is marvelously enough. Until then, Epicurean ethic remains only a theory that one studies in Classical Philosophy and society at large will never live according to its undeniable, practical, and beautiful reason.

Carlee Shults - “You Know I Don’t Speak Mexican!” A Linguistic Look at, like, *Clueless*.

In 1995, Hollywood introduced the world to the Valley Girl, a sassy, intellectually questionable and fashionable Southern Californian. This is thanks to Cher Horowitz, the blonde and brilliant lead in the now cult-classic film, *Clueless*. A linguist’s field day, *Clueless* popularized creative slang, and its characters spoke in a multitude of American dialects, as well as arguably creating a brand new one. The movie created a national linguistic stereotype and sprung about a new and powerful teenage culture. As the promotional catch phrase queried, “Sex. Clothes. Popularity. Is there a problem here?”

Clueless follows Cher, played by Alicia Silverstone, and her best friend Dionne Davenport (actress Stacey Dash) as they journey through high school in Beverley Hills, California. Seen as over-privileged and superficial, the girls decide to ‘adopt’ a homely transfer student, Tai Frasier (played by Brittany Murphy), to prove their humanitarian and selfless ways. The girls makeover plain Tai and set her up with the cutest boys at school. Drama ensues as Tai then overthrows their sacred thrones of popularity. Directed and written by Amy Heckerling, the film is a loosely based adaptation of Jane Austen’s *Emma*, and includes quite a few creative characters such as Cher’s father, Mel, a ferocious litigator, and Dionne’s boyfriend Murray, a brace-faced student with an attitude. All of the characters contribute to the film’s linguistic attributes by perfecting assorted regional American dialects and commanding the camera’s attention by speaking So-Cal slang.

California is known for its “conflicting linguistics stereotypes” ranging from ‘proper’ English and a considerably ‘good’ accent to unintelligible ‘Valley Girl’ or surfer lingo. In Carmen Fought’s studies of students’ perspective on American regional dialects, she found that most classified a Californian dialect as ‘correct’ or ‘best sounding,’ while some of the students noted that the region is known for its slang. They noted that while it may sound most normal, it was still improper English. Fought notes that it is considered a “high prestige region linguistically,” but states that the region has negative connotations surrounding it as well, even naming *Clueless* as a reason for the spread of the popular and stereotyped lingo (Fought 126). These contradictions are clearly illustrated in *Clueless* as well.

Behind her airhead exterior, protagonist and matchmaker Cher Horowitz is thoughtful, witty, and linguistically groundbreaking. Her use of slang catapulted ‘normal’ Southern Californian’s into sassy Valley Girls eager to express themselves in a new way. Thanks to Cher, ‘like,’ ‘as if,’ ‘duh,’ and ‘seriously’ are now staples in a teenage girl’s rapidly spoken vocabulary. These slang words are imperative to the Valley Girl vernacular, albeit

possibly making one sound immature, thoughtless and naïve. To the slang users, however, speaking in slang is a way to include and exclude teens from a group or club. In a world such as the one in *Clueless*, who one hangs out with and is seen with is imperative to the social hierarchy. To hang out with Cher Horowitz implies that one understands her lingo and uses it successfully, just like she does. In this way, slang forms an all-exclusive club. These factors are what most contribute to the negative connotations towards So Cal dialects, and Cher and her posse introduced most of the words and their meanings to the world.

Also known for her ability to chatter, Cher's use of run-on sentences is a tribute to the hurried and excited way all things 'teen' seem to be. When Cher debates in class about whether Haitians should be allowed American citizenship, she gives a wordy but convincing anecdote about a family dinner party, and when describing her eating habits, she goes on to say, "I feel like such a heifer. I had two bowls of Special K, 3 pieces of turkey bacon, a handful of popcorn, 5 peanut butter M&M's and like 3 pieces of licorice." The way her thoughts run on are comparable to a child's stream of consciousness and are mirrored now by many teens in a hurry to say exactly what is on their minds. This adds to the elevation of the So Cal dialect, for it is stereotyped that some consider slower speech to be child-like or too simple. The marker of fast speech is associated with dialects in regions with a lot of technology and movement of people (California, New York); in these areas, their rapid speech reflects their lifestyle.

In Sarah Ann Telley's dissertation, *The Teenage Dialect*, she discusses the history and modern usage of the word 'like,' one of Cher's most-used words. Although it became popularized in 1995 by *Clueless*, the word 'like' has been used as a "hesitancy device" since the 1950's (Telley 13). The word was cited to be used in Scooby Doo comics and was said to be a teenage mannerism of the 1950's in *Time* magazine. It became reintroduced to the world through *Clueless* and was used in the film in a multitude of ways. Telley notes that "besides hesitation, *like* can also be used to maintain conversational contact, soften criticism, provide satire, introduce a quotation, and quantify" (Telley 14). In *Clueless*, Cher maintains conversational contact, "Is this, like, a Noxzema commercial or what?!", quantifies, "...at the end of the day, it was like, the more the merrier!", and softens criticism, "Those shoes are, like, screaming 1990." A natural sentence filler, 'like' is another imperative piece of the Valley Girl vocabulary. Telley explains that this slang is not part of a language in itself, but it is a part of a growing regional dialect (Southern Californian). Also, the word like, is like, still in use today.

Actor Dan Hedaya plays Cher's father Mel Horowitz in the movie, a lawyer with an accent that recalls his upbringing in Eastern New England. Mel's personality is brash and

loud, much like the way he talks. When speaking to his son Josh, he notes that he “looks tallah than [he] did at Eastah.” It is a common trait of New Englanders to drop “r’s” unless the sound is before a vowel, and this trait is illustrated throughout the movie in Mel’s speech. Another interesting feature of his accent is the way he pronounces his “a’s”; they are drawn out and have a broad sound. All the words he uses that are normally pronounced with an [æ] sound, Mel substitutes an [a], such as when he says “ahftanoon” or “fahgit ahbouwts it.” Mel’s strong accent perfectly mirrors his abrasive job and personality, and although he raised Cher on his own (her mother died in a freak liposuction incident), he seems to have passed on only the best of his rough characteristics to Cher.

Cher’s best friend, Dionne Davenport, is romantically involved with Murray Duvall in the movie. A charming and smooth talking high school student, Murray speaks Ebonics, but only when it fits the mood of the conversation, or he is around his friends. He seems to be aware of when Ebonics is unnecessary, such as in class, or when Dionne becomes frustrated with him. Murray has mastered two regional dialects, and is able to use them interchangeably. Murray epitomizes some of Ebonics’ traits; he often deletes final consonants, like when he yells to Dionne, “Woman, lend me fi’ dolla’s!” or “Woman, why don’t you be answerin’ any of my pages?” When he says “Woman,” he emphasizes the first syllable (“WO-man”); it is louder and more defined. This is another trait of Ebonics. Also, Murray is not afraid to express his attitude, as illustrated when he asks Dionne “Is it dat time of da month?” or “You been jeepin’ behind my back?” Often when speaking Ebonics, the “th” sound is substituted for a “d,” like when Murray says “dat” instead of “that” and “da” for “the.” Murray also uses creative slang in the movie, such as “jeepin,” “cake boy” and “phat.”

His use of Ebonics, however, seems to be a façade. After asking his girlfriend Dionne for money, she asks him to stop addressing her by yelling “woman.” Murray then apologizes, calls her Miss Dionne, and states, “street slang is an increasingly valid form of expression. Most of the feminine pronouns do have mocking, but not necessarily misogynistic undertones.” This seems to be a trend in the way most of the lead characters speak. Although they all use slang that may sound immature and thoughtless, they have moments of well-spoken and elevated speech. Cher, for example, is not aware who Pippi Longstocking is, and she yells at her housekeeper that she does not speak Mexican, but she does successfully employ the use of words like unequivocal and existential. This mixture of ‘street smarts’ and ‘book smarts’ is an interesting combination. It makes the characters often seem beyond their supposed years, but they also appear young and fresh. New student Tai notes that “[they] talk like grown-ups!” to which Cher quips that they do go to a good school. This unique linguistic contradiction is echoed by the research done by Carmen Fought. She found that native

Californians consider their home state to have both 'good' dialects and 'bad.' Both types of speech were used in *Clueless*, but often all that is remembered from the film is the "as if's" and the "whatever's."

New to school, Tai Frasier (actress Brittany Murphy's first role) has an accent that makes her stand out in all of the wrong ways. She speaks aggressively and her syntax is much simpler than the girls of Beverley Hills. For example, upon her arrival to her first lunch on campus, Tai asks in disbelief, "No shit, you guys got Coke heyah?" Like Cher's father Mel, Tai seems to have hailed from the East Coast, possibly New York City. As evident in the way she says "here" as "heyah," Tai is demonstrating a New York City dialect flag, specifically the loss of an "r" sound, except before a vowel. However, when Tai says some words that do not include an "r" sound, she adds one at the end. Although hard to hear, a faint "r" finish can be heard on words she says like "all" and "song." She also pluralizes the word "you" peculiarly, like when she asserts that "youse guys talk like grown-ups!"

All of these markers help one assume that Tai transferred to Southern California from New York City, but once she has arrived in Beverley Hills, her dialect begins to transform and meld with the local way of speaking. Tai seems to self-consciously educate herself on the ways of the Valley Girl, for as she gains popularity and attractiveness, her dialect changes as well. By the end of the movie, Tai is using slang just like Cher does, to include "I'm outie!" and "loser!" Her sentences grow longer and the speed of her speech becomes rushed and frantic. She seems to be trying to use her dialect to fit in better with her new home and new friends, which is common for individuals with noticeable accents.

Although *Clueless* came out in 1995, some of the slang trends it started are still around today. As a non-native Californian going to college in a new place, I am surrounded by new terms and slang I have not heard before. As I adopt some surfer lingo ("That's sick!") and add the word "like" to my sentences much too often, I am reminded of Cher, Dionne and Tai. *Clueless* created powerful contradictory linguistic currents in Southern California and helped to classify a new regional dialect.

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Nicole Beauchamp - Language and Loss: The Relationship Between J.P. Patel and Power

“Sure of my life and my death, I observe the ambitious and would like to understand them” is how Kiran Desai opens her novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. This epigraph, “Boast of Quietness” by Jorge Luis Borges, sets up a contrast between “they” and “I,” and one character in the novel at large seems to embody particularly well, the “they” against whom the speaker is comparing himself. Mr. Jemubhai P. Patel, otherwise known as “the judge” is a man whose lofty ambition led him from the relative poverty of his childhood to Cambridge, then the high court, only to end up residing in the rural foothills of Mount Kanchenjunga. It is evident from the start that he yearns for authority and strives mightily to become a man who can control his own life. And in order to achieve that much sought after authority, the judge uses his language as a means to control and manipulate others, and even himself. He equates language—not unjustly—with power, and uses that assumption to propel himself to positions of dominance.

The desire to possess power is a facet of the judge’s personality integral to his character. He spent his life working to obtain as much of it as possible, going to fairly extreme means, e.g. moving thousands of miles away from home to attend school in England (where he refrained from speaking to anyone else) all in the name of deciding the fates of others in a court of law. Without power, the judge becomes merely a shell of himself, even when his inability to control is the only possible option. He hates that rainy, “dingy” season, believing that it “made a mockery of him, his ideals. When he looked about he saw he was not in charge” (Desai 120). Residing in a rural and difficult to access part of West Bengal, suffering through the same disagreeable weather as everyone else, the judge’s lack of influence seems to irk him in a way that nobody else understands. Being unable to travel down the foothills of Mount Kanchenjunga of his own volition, the judge’s unhappiness results more from the impossibility of controlling the situation than the actual physical manifestation of the season. More than the rain, the lack of control, the lack of authority disturbs the once influential judge and he seeks a way of restoring some semblance of power to his now miniscule life.

In an attempt at extinguishing the feeling of disempowerment, the judge wields his speech like a knife in the face of Sai’s new tutor, Gyan. The judge welcomes Gyan, who has just recently finished his schooling, to Cho Oyu for a meal. But Jemubhai has no intention of allowing this young boy to have delusions of grandeur in his house. The judge, while “slicing the meat expertly off the bone” both literally and figuratively, asks the young man, “so, what poets are you reading these days, young man?” He felt a sinister urge to catch the boy off guard” (Desai 120). The judge chooses to reassert his authority through language; but Jemubhai demands of Gyan what he himself cannot deliver, for “[i]t was now forty years

since he had been a student of poetry” (Desai 120). Here, poetry, and therefore language, serves to reinforce the judge’s position of power at the cost of both Gyan’s power and dignity. Whether or not the judge’s own linguistic ability exceeds the tutor’s is irrelevant, really, for the judge is the one asking the questions, thus allowing him the comfort and security of authority. But the authority that the judge wields over Gyan is almost pathetic when considering his former occupation.

Jemubhai’s father dreamed that one day his son would be “in charge of justice,” and “had they aimed lower [...] they would have failed” (Desai 67). But Jemubhai succeed (even if by a technicality), and lived the dream which once thrilled father and son “like a fairy tale” (Desai 67). But the justice system that Mr. J.P. Patel upheld was one plagued by confusion, “contamination and corruption,” where the judge “heard cases in Hindi, but they were recorded in Urdu by the stenographer and translated by the judge into a second record in English” (Desai 70). But “despite the leaf shadow and language confusion,” the judge “acquired a fearsome reputation for his speech that seemed to belong to no language at all” (Desai 70). The ability to transcend language seems here to be the ultimate sign of authority. It’s god-like, “beyond human fallibility” (Desai 70). And it makes sense that when the judge reaches the height of his power that this would also be that time of the height of his control of his own speech. His capacity to control his world through language, more than any other characteristic, defines his identity.

So, years later in the hills of Kalimpong, it is not shocking that the judge turns once again to his speech in order to assert power. When Jemubhai stays out past the army-enforced curfew looking for Mutt, a soldier insists that he must return home. Rather than accepting the authority of the soldier, and by extension, the army, the judge replies, “‘Get out of my way,’ [...] in a British accent to make the man back away, but soldier continued to follow at a safe distance until the judge turned angrily toward home while pretending not to be hurried” (Desai 321). The judge invokes the authority of British English, hoping that it will be enough to dissuade the soldier, but at this late stage in his life, he no longer has the ability to transcend language. The soldier does not recognize the power to which the judge is appealing, reinforcing the idea that, for Mr. J.P. Patel, to lose the power of language is to lose power completely. When Mutt is stolen and the region is descending into chaos, the judge is unable to use language to manipulate or to control. Just as the height of his socio-political authority corresponds to the height of his linguistic prowess, the same is true for his ultimate disempowerment. He is left walking the foothills in an unfamiliar region looking for a spoiled dog and pretending that he still has some influence over others. The question, then, is how

Mr. J.P. Patel went from influential judge of almost mythic proportions to the old man wandering the hills, shouting for his canine companion.

Jemubhai understands that language can be a powerful weapon in many respects; it merely depends on how one deigns to use their speech. It is clear that he learns very early on that, although language can be a means to unify people through communication, it can also be used to maintain distance. Even when he resides in England for school, the to-be judge “had learned to take refuge in the third person and to keep everyone at bay, to keep even himself away from himself like the Queen” (Desai 122). Throughout his stay in England, Jemubhai barely speaks to anyone and begins to use his diction to take refuge from himself. He is uncomfortable with his hybridity and it is manifest in the way he chooses to speak, and in choosing not to speak at all. It seems as if he is at war with himself, torn between Indian and English, past and present, prodigal son and pungent foreigner; so he keeps those feelings at bay through self-imposed silence and the relinquishing of narrative power, burying painful memories away until another time...

A month before Sai’s arrival at Cho Oyu, Jemubhai met with Bose, a man he had not seen in thirty three years. Distanced by both time and a political falling out, they parted with, “‘Good night. Good-bye. So long’—not Indian sentences, English sentences” (Desai 228). In this moment, the judge ponders if “[p]erhaps that’s why they had been so happy to learn a new tongue in the first place: the self-consciousness of it, the effort of it, the grammar of it, pulled you up; a new language provided distance and kept the heart intact” (Desai 228). Just like his self-observations about the use of third person in England, decades later the judge recognizes the same pattern of using language to detach himself from the world. This observation is not merely a self-reflection, however. The judge applies his desires for learning English to English-speaking Indians in general. “He” is no longer the subject of the sentence, but rather “they.” However, it is already clear that the judge sees language as a tool that can be used to create a chasm, so it is unclear whether or not we can believe that other Indians feel the same way, or even if Bose shares the judge’s opinion. It may be a case of the judge projecting his own values onto others as a means of justification. As a man who has made a special effort to separate himself in many ways from India, when he looks at his country, he is holding up a mirror to see himself. Maybe that is one effect of a Western education.

After studying at a mission school for years—a financial tax on Jemubhai’s entire family—he was able to attend “Bishop’s College, on a scholarship” and eventually leave for university at “Cambridge on the *USS Strathnaver*” (Desai 67). Jemubhai succeeded in both the lower and upper forms, demonstrating an “intelligence that seemed modern in its alacrity” (Desai 66). His aptitude for English allowed him to travel to England, permitting him to have

opportunities that many of his cohorts would never have. Underlying the judge's moves both to England, and then to Northern India, rests the power of language. To be able to attend one of the world's most prestigious universities, the judge needed to first master the English language. If the British left any lasting impact in India, it was the propagation of their language. Jemubhai recognizes the residual power left over from colonial England—even if that knowledge is subconscious—and uses his aptitude for this prestige language to advance socially. English, to the judge, equals control, and he seizes the opportunity to further entrench himself in a linguistic tradition that virtually guarantees him a position of power.

The judge's move from England to Uttar Pradesh presented him with a different manifestation of the influence of language, however. He was expected to know not only English, but also the local language, Hindustani. So, “[o]n board the Strathnaver on his way back, the judge sipped beef tea and read *How to Speak Hindustani*, since he had been posted to a part of India where he did not speak the language” (Desai 131). Despite his capability in English—even if it “still had the rhythm and the form of Gujerati” (an accent clearly not favored by Cambridge)—English is not the language of the people (Desai 123). No matter how extensive the socio-economic weight of English remains in England and its former colonies, Hindustani is the language spoken by the majority of the people. The sheer number of Hindi and Urdu speakers requires the judge to expand his linguistic horizons; and his efforts at culturally conforming to the Uttar Pradesh region demonstrate his investment in both his position as judge, as well as the area.

By learning a new language, Mr. J.P. Patel shows that he accepts his placement, for he equates language with dominance and, in this situation, surrenders himself to the power inherent in a language spoken by millions of people. But what he gains by learning Hindustani is the opportunity to control the fates of many men, not to mention to earn serious money in bribes. It is a give and take situation in terms of control, showing that, at this point in the judge's life, he still willingly interacts with the world, unlike years later in Kalimpong, when he hides behind the ignorance of a language.

Learning a new language is not the judge's only means of acquiring power; he also rejects the learning of a new language as a means to reject an entire culture. Mr. J.P. Patel, upon moving to the hills in Kalimpong, rebuffed the idea of learning the local language, Nepali. Not only does he remain stubbornly ignorant of the language, the judge also surrounds himself with people equally as ignorant of Nepali. He socializes with those who speak both speak English and are as equally as enamored with Anglophone culture. The judge lives “here, in this shell, this skull, with the solace of being a foreigner in his own country, for this time he would not learn the language” as he did when moving to Northern India (Desai 32).

The judge clearly considers the act of accepting an area's language as tantamount to accepting the culture, and he is very deliberately rejecting both. In refusing to acculturate himself, the judge utilizes language as a means to distinguish himself from the place where he lives, and once again, from himself. For he is in no way distressed at being a "foreigner in his own country," but rather embraces it like a warm blanket that protects him from reality.

Deliberately learning a new language demonstrates, at least in part, a readiness to adapt socially. But he clings to English, the language of international power and rejects the language of the people. The judge refuses to be associated with the Nepalese, and indeed, it seems, Indians in general, demonstrating a rejection of that fragment of his own identity. And perhaps it is this rejection of self that leads to his loss of power.

Looking at the life of Mr. J.P. Patel through the transformation of his language, we are able to simultaneously see the development of his power: he was gifted in school (in English), tried to hide himself behind the guise of the third person at university, learned Hindustani for his job, transcended the limits of language itself as a judge and finally moved to the mountainside of Kanchenjunga, refusing to learn Nepali. Throughout each of his linguistic developments, we can see the fluctuation in the degree of his authority. At the height of his power as a judge, he is the most skilled linguistically; and conversely, at his lowest point—which happens to be the present in the novel—the judge is left merely pretending that he has a morsel authority to assert. In observing the desires of this ambitious man, we have tried to understand him, much like the speaker in Borges's poem "Boast of Quietness." And it is clear that the judge's ambition, his very identity, manifested itself through his language.

Yamila Perez - Travel as Neocolonialism: The Tourist and Rainmaker as Self-Interested Takers

Both Jamaica Kincaid's essay, "A Small Place" and Salman Rushdie's story, "The Firebird's Nest," although set in two very different places, present travel as an evolved form of colonialism, neocolonialism. Though Kincaid draws the comparison more vividly, presenting images of the quintessential tourists from "North America (or, worse, Europe)" who travel to a place for their own amusement and pleasure, not caring to find out what real life in those countries is like (Kincaid 4). Presumably, they return home no less ignorant of the place they have just lived in for the duration of their vacation. Rushdie provides a more subtle image. In "The Firebird's Nest" the traveler is not merely a tourist, and invests in India, ends up washing away men, and thus the repression and fear the women had lived with. However, those who survive the flood "The American" brings are left to fend for themselves in a destroyed land. The American, however, returns to her own country, bearing a child who is of both elements—fire and water, and bicultural. In this way, the American has gained something; she has gained knowledge and hybridity, though she is only carrying it within her in the form of a child. She leaves behind the place she has rescued and destroyed, while she returns to the safety of her home. In the same way as the tourists of Kincaid's essay have the option of leaving their vacation location behind, so does the American of "Firebird's Nest" once she has done what she thinks is a good deed.

Kincaid begins her essay, "A Small Place" in the same way a tour-guide might begin a tour, or a tourist pamphlet might lay out what should be done once the traveler arrives at his or her destination. She goes on to map out a stereotypical view of a day in a tourist's life, noting that they see themselves doing these things; they see *only* themselves. Therein lies the problem. According to Kincaid, tourists are selfish for leaving their mindless modern existence and traveling to another country to "[visit] heaps of death and ruin and [feel] alive and inspired at the sight of it" (Kincaid 16). A tourist is self-centered, focused entirely on his or her own experience, and not at all worried about the experiences of the people who are native to the location. The traveler is blind to them, seeking to live in a place only to suit his or her purpose. Tourists colonize the vacation spot, if only for a while, get what they want out of it—pleasure, leisure—then leave. There is no need for tourists to care about the actual people when they can get what they want out of the land and then leave it.

Not only does the tourist invade a place that has no desire to be invaded, the tourist does not realize he or she changes the landscape of the vacation spot by the mere action of traveling to it. As Kincaid states so delicately, she feels it better to continue living like

monkeys in trees than “what happened to [her (and this could be anyone, really)], what [she] became after [she] met you” (Kincaid 37). Though, it is unclear who the “you” is, assuming it is the tourist, the subtle colonizer, Kincaid states she would rather remain unknown to the tourist, “ignorant” as the Western notion would call it, of the world, in comparison to what Antigua has become—a tourist attraction. Because tourists are self-centered and travel only to find whatever is missing from their sad modern lives, they fail to recognize the changes they cause. If there were no tourists, there would be no tourist attractions, no hotel resorts that are owned by corporations outside the tourist location.

Not only is the landscape changed, the people are also changed. The landscape becomes more industrialized, as is the case with Antigua due to the demand for tourist accommodations—because a tourist can't be expected to stay in a room not furnished with the comforts of the very home they sought to escape, yet can't live without. Kincaid describes the beauty of Antigua as a prison, “as if, then, the beauty ... were a prison, and as if everything and everyone inside it were locked in and everything and everyone that is not inside it were locked out” (Kincaid 79). The place, Antigua, has become a tourist attraction, and there are certain expectations that must be met. These expectations are set, of course, by the tourist, the colonizer, who expects a paradise with clear blue skies, the sea, the quaint people that surround but don't really matter to the tourist. Yet, he expects that paradise to come with showers and room service. All this is packaged and presented to the tourist, and those who pay the price are, naturally, the people native to the location. The beauty, the expectation of this unchanged paradise—just like one sees in the postcards—becomes a prison for those who have to live there for more than the duration of a vacation. It should also be noted that Kincaid states that those inside it are locked in, and those outside, locked out. The tourist cannot be fully immersed in the environment, whether by choice because they do not *want* to be immersed in the reality of Antigua, or wherever they are vacationing, or because Kincaid sees tourists as somehow unable to immerse themselves due to their roots in a modern world, and the fact that they will always return to it.

However, the native people are also locked in. We see the colonial distinction more clearly when we think about what Kincaid means when she states the Antiguan people are:

Too poor to go anywhere. They are too poor to escape the reality of their lives; and they are too poor to live properly in the place where they live, which is the very place you, the tourist, want to go ... they envy your ability to leave your own banality and boredom. They envy your ability to turn their own banality and boredom into a source of pleasure for yourself. (Kincaid 19)

Though they ridicule the tourist, Kincaid admits the native people envy how easy it is for the tourist to come and go, to vacation in their country, turn their native “banality and boredom” of an impoverished situation and being in one place for too long, and gain pleasure from it. What they criticize in the tourist is a universal human quality—the boredom of a constant life. But more importantly, they envy the tourists' money. This is a clear example of the difference in power. The tourist is the colonizer, the one with the money, power, and means to travel to another country and take—take pleasure, take pictures, take away from the Antiguan peoples' power. The tourist sets the price; the tourist creates need for resorts that are unavailable to the native people. The tourist takes over the land, though temporarily. But then, there will always be tourists in want of an exotic place to travel, thus perpetuating the Neocolonization that is in place.

Salman Rushdie's “The Firebird's Nest” both supports the notion of travel and tourism as Neocolonialism, yet also brings up different questions about monetary investment and motive. None of the characters have names, and the main characters seem to be called according to their “occupations” or a distinguishing fact. The King who is no longer a King—everything he knows has been turned into a fiction by colonialism—is known as Mr. Maharaj, while the American is simply “The American.” At the beginning of the story, while Mr. Maharaj is attempting to seduce her, he brings up the fact that India and America had the same masters, but because America defeated them first, they have more money than India (Rushdie 51). This statement from Mr. Maharaj is the first hint to what is later blatantly said: The American is the rainmaker, the bringer of aid to help them in the drought, as well as realistically speaking, bringer of financial aid.

The traveler, The American, goes to a foreign country not only for pleasure, but to help, and is *expected* to help by the Indian people. Though like the tourists of Kincaid's essay, she is disliked, responsibility is simultaneously put on her. Though The American, like the tourists, has expectations of India, India has expectations of her. In contrast to Kincaid's essay, these expectations are not just to temporarily colonize and take pleasure from the native people's inferior condition, but to help improve it, to actually contribute. Though they may, too, envy her, and gossip about her as the Antiguan do about the tourists, they know they need her “rainmaker” ability.

Along with these expectations, The American is told by her friends at home that Mr. Maharaj isn't good for her and only, “[her] otherness excites him, [her] freedom” (Rushdie 50). She, however, does not mind, perhaps because she like Kincaid's tourists is seeking something new in her life. Mr. Maharaj seduces her initially with telling her about India, a

“place unlike anything she had ever experienced” with foreign languages and customs and an “immensity and mystery [that] would provoke and fulfill her greatest passion and her deepest need” (Rushdie 51). In short, Mr. Maharaj's otherness excites her as well. She, like Kincaid's tourists, seeks a new experience to fulfill her. However, unlike Kincaid's tourists, The American questions, though in jest, the validity of the “magic kingdom” she is presented with on the night of her arrival. She is told by the Indian people “dream only of survival; this Arabian night is an American dream” (Rushdie 55). She realizes then, unlike the tourists in “A Small Place” who choose to remain ignorant or oblivious of the reality of the native Antiguan life, that the exotic illusion is catered to the foreigner. She realizes that the Indian people are putting on a play of extravagance; they live in a fiction for the foreigner's sake. The American does not remain trapped in this fiction, though, unlike Kincaid's tourists.

In fact, at the end of “The Firebird's Nest” she rescues the women from the Firebird who has been burning them. She turns into rain, into water, and “[cleanses] the region of its horrors, of its archaic tragedies, of its men” (Rushdie 65). In a way, she has fulfilled her expectations as rainmaker of saving India from the drought. She also saves the women from their cruel fate. However, she washes away the “archaic tragedies” and thus their history, their culture. Though it is tragic and violent, it is still something that pertains to India and is being washed away, taken from them by a foreigner. She also washes away the men, and though this a very feminist (and extremist) move, she punishes an entire gender in India for the crimes of Mr. Maharaja. Furthermore, by washing away the men, she has essentially extinguished the means of Indian people's survival. How will they reproduce and continue without men? Though The American is satisfied with her actions, we see the Indian women have been left with destruction, and essentially nothing. They “wait to be rescued from the deluge of themselves” and are essentially back at square one, needing some sort of help from the outside (Rushdie 64).

The American rescues the women yet punishes them, and causes just as much destruction as a colonizer, which leads readers to question her motive. Did she, like Kincaid's tourists, not see beyond her own desires? She needed some sort of fulfillment, and through the action, or guise, of helping this country by ravaging it, gains it. She takes something from India and its people. She takes their culture, she takes their survival, and she gains self-fulfillment as well as knowledge and hybridity. She is literally pregnant and will return carrying a life within her. Her body will continue to change, expand; the only one who has gained anything without loss is The American. Furthermore, the child will be born in “her own country, to which she will soon return ... The new life growing within her will be both fire and rain” (64). She will return to her own country after having done both good and bad (more bad, arguably), thus

leaving India incomplete once more. The American, however, feels she has accomplished something because she is returning having done something that is, through her perspective, beneficial to the Indian women. She herself is carrying a life, as well as knowledge, that is both fire and water, bicultural. Like the tourists in "A Small Place" she gains and returns to her own country. The only difference between herself and Kincaid's tourists, is that she attempts to provide help.

Again, we ask why? The Indian people expected her to help, so she fulfilled that expectation as well as her own need. However, it's hardly possible the Indian people had destruction of culture and an entire gender in mind. She didn't ask, she just did, and essentially destroyed India for what she believed was a good cause. And isn't that the quintessential colonizer excuse: It was for their own good. She does not even stay to help rebuild India. She just leaves, much like the British did.

Realistically, we might say The American probably wants the best for her soon-to-be-born child. Here, as in Kincaid's "A Small Place" we see the imbalance of power and opportunity. The fact that American is seen as superior to India and thus The American must return to it is the problem. She does not stay to attempt to make India equal to America in that aspect, much like the tourist leaves after some time of leisure, returning to their "real life."

These two works, though completely different in genre, argue for travel as Neocolonialism, the most subtle form of colonization. Kincaid's essay is more concise in terms of her argument that tourists are self-centered, if temporary colonizers, while Rushdie's fiction provides a complementary view of travel as Neocolonialism, though in a fanciful form. Though the colonizers are different in both works—tourists and Americans—they both embody the self-interested quality of a true colonizer. Kincaid's tourists seek pleasure and fulfillment through taking over Antigua for a while. Rushdie's American finds self-fulfillment through helping India in a way that is most beneficial to her, yet leaves the country in ruins. However, for both of these people, it is the otherness that excites them, that draws them to travel to these places and seek some sort of benefit to their own lives, never mind the consequences of the people who actually live on location. As readers possibly interested in travel, we should ask ourselves: how can we travel to other countries in a way that is not Neocolonialist, and more importantly, is this even possible?

Mary Helen Truglia - Tortuous Language and the Language of Torture: Authority, Allegory, and Ambiguity in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

Waiting for the Barbarians can be partially described as the description of the impact of torture on the life of a man of conscience. This man of conscience, known only as the Magistrate, is the chief administrator of a small village on the frontier between the civilization of the "Empire" and the wastelands inhabited by the nomadic "Barbarians". The novel opens as Colonel Joll, a storm-trooper-esque security man, arrives to investigate the rumored attack of the Barbarians upon the Empire. As Colonel Joll interrogates and tortures Barbarian prisoners, the Magistrate becomes increasingly sympathetic toward the victims. When Colonel Joll leaves the outpost, the Magistrate takes a Barbarian woman, crippled as a result of her torture, into his house and bed. Later, he makes an arduous journey across the desert to restore her to her people. The army arrives to fight the Barbarians in his absence, and he is imprisoned for treason and tortured upon his return. The Empire's army finally abandons the village to its fate and releases the Magistrate. Again under his leadership, the few remaining villagers wait for the Barbarian hordes to descend upon them. The book's allegorical depiction of depravity and the mentality behind brutality and injustice can be read as a drama of representative ways of governing, including but not limited to torture. Simple allegorical meanings are hard to sustain, however, in the face of the novel's pervasive ambiguity.

The "Empire" comes to represent an ambiguity which governs all relationships and dissolves all straightforward moral judgments. Coetzee's unusual combination of allegory, often thought to be a precise technique, and a text full of gaps, absences, and uncertainties might represent in part his solution to the moral issue of how a novelist should treat torture in fiction. Simultaneously, in his allusions to ambiguous and multi-meaning language, Coetzee also points to the moral vacuum that allows torture to exist in the contemporary world. The whole passage where the Magistrate "translates" the writings can be read as an attempt to explain the whole novel. Because of the purposeful ambiguities, each part of the story offers up multiple "solutions" to the problems inherent in imperialism. Because it is narrated by the Magistrate, the novel is full of images of the impotency of trying to puzzle out inner psychology through writing, perhaps in acknowledgment of the pitfalls faced by an author who attempts to portray through words the horrors of the world of torture. The aging bureaucrat parallels his flagging interest in sex to his many struggles to articulate his story: "It seems appropriate that a man who does not know what to do with the woman in his bed should not know what to write" (58). The metaphor works both ways: "There were unsettling occasions when in the middle of the sexual act I felt myself losing my way like a storyteller

losing the thread of his story” (45). Even after he finally consummates his sexual relationship with the Barbarian woman, he is unable to establish its meaning:

No thought that I think, no articulation, however antonymic, of the origin of my desire seems to upset me. “I must be tired,” I think. “Or perhaps whatever can be articulated is falsely put.” My lips move, silently composing and recomposing the words. “Or perhaps it is the case that only that which has not been articulated has to be lived through.” I stare at this last proposition without detecting any answering movement in myself toward assent or dissent. The words grow more and more opaque before me; soon they have lost all meaning. (64-65)

With his combination of sexual and authorial images, his antonymic articulations, and his failure to discover meaning in words, the Magistrate seems to be wandering in the wilderness and confusion of deconstruction. His statement that “whatever can be articulated is falsely put” (64) is in itself an articulation and so, as deconstructionists would understand it, incessantly reconstructs its own destruction. Articulation, creating a text, causes falsehoods to emerge because of the separation between the true idea and the words which muddle it, although they are the only way to describe it.

The Magistrate’s sexual and linguistic failures throughout the novel demonstrate his lack of authority. Even as our protagonist, he is constantly frustrated by his own inability to define his situation, or to decipher the goals or meanings of the other members of the “Empire”. He cannot even read himself in one singular manner – readers never learn his name. He can neither read the text of his world nor create a text that can precisely convey his experiences. Throughout the novel, when the Magistrate searches for meaning, he confronts blankness. When he tries to remember the Barbarian woman as a prisoner, he sees only “a space, a blankness” (47). After the woman has been taken back to her people, he tries in vain to remember her face.

His recurring dream of trudging across an endless, snow-covered plain ends when he looks into the “blank, featureless” face of a hooded child (37). His inconclusive dream demonstrates that the Magistrate cannot even read the text of his own identity: “I try to look into myself but see only a vortex and at the heart of the vortex oblivion” (47). His attempts to locate fixed meanings inevitably fail, just as the novel as a whole does not provide the reader with one specific and final meaning. The novelist must struggle to articulate torture without falsifying it, to understand and to depict oppression without unconsciously aiding the oppressor, to find texts transparent enough to carry some meaning. Coetzee may also be addressing the contradiction of a contemporary author who believes in the obvious indeterminacy of the text, of all texts, even, but who yet is still politically and socially committed, because despite the Magistrate’s doubts about articulation and truth, he does narrate the story, he does give us a text.

Another incident in the novel points even more blatantly to the difficulties of working with the ambiguities inherent in language and meaning. In his amateur archaeological diggings in the desert, the Magistrate has discovered hundreds of white wooden tiles containing mysterious inscriptions. Colonel Joll orders him to translate these inscriptions, but the Magistrate does not know what they say. He tells the reader:

I isolated over four hundred different characters in the script... I have no idea what they stand for. Does each stand for a single thing, a circle for the sun, a triangle for a woman, a wave for a lake; or does a circle merely stand for "circle," a triangle for "triangle," a wave for "wave"? Does each sign represent a different state of the tongue, the lips, the throat, the lungs, as they combine in the uttering of some multifarious unimaginable extinct barbarian language? (110) The Magistrate's musings point to the difficulty of ascertaining the connection between the signifiers and the signifieds, the text and its meaning. The wooden slips form an absence which may be supplemented in an endless number of ways, cut off from responsibility, from authority. However, when demanded by Colonel Joll, the Magistrate picks up a tile and "reads" or "translates" story after story that reveals the Empire's cruelty to the Barbarians. In this way, he gives the language a temporary interpreter.

This incident again suggests the ambiguous nature of texts and the freedom of the reader to interpret such texts, but in the Magistrate's "translation" of the tiles lies the hope that in storytelling, through the act of writing or speaking, - impotent, opaque, and uncertain as those actions might be - oppression and torture may begin to be unveiled. The Magistrate's storytelling can then represent Coetzee's own way of solving the moral dilemma of the author writing about torture. The narrator also comments on the specific technique to be employed when the Magistrate tells Colonel Joll, "Further, each single slip can be read in many ways. Together they can be read as a domestic journal, or they can be read as a plan of war, or they can be turned on their sides and read as a history of the last years of the Empire - the old Empire, I mean" (109-110). The qualification of the meaning of the term "Empire" suggests the multiple interpretations possible for Coetzee's own work as a whole. By setting his novel in an unnamed country at an unnamed time, by terming the two parties the "Empire" and the "Barbarians", and by simplifying the technology and weapons of the people, Coetzee creates an allegorical landscape that loosely suggests the Roman Empire on the verge of collapse, but could also point to his own homeland of South Africa, or perhaps maybe China. *Waiting for the Barbarians* is not about anywhere, and for this reason it is, and can be, about everywhere. The effect of this time and location displacement is to reveal truths about any oppressive society, any society that employs torture as a technique.

By using this kind of setting, Coetzee does not ignore the obscene acts performed by various governments under the pretext of national security, and yet neither does he produce

representational depictions of these acts. Instead, he insists on his own authority, tentative as it might be, and imagines death and torture on his own terms. In suggesting universal truths about torture and oppression, Coetzee also implicitly condemns countries that participate and have participated in this type of torture. The Magistrate's own reading of the tiles is in a sense a correct reading, in that it points to the Empire's barbarism. The fact that the slips do not hold a single meaning does not mean that they are without meaning. Although Coetzee does recognize the problems of ambiguity and authority that plague the creator of a text, neither he nor the Magistrate give up using this uncertain medium to advance moral truths.

The solution to another of Coetzee's dilemmas - how to depict the person of the torturer - is a bit more complicated. The Magistrate seems unable to comprehend the torturers. He speculates about Colonel Joll:

I wonder how he felt the very first time: did he, invited as an apprentice to twist the pincers or turn the screw or whatever it is they do, shudder even a little to know that at that instant he was trespassing into the forbidden? I find myself wondering too whether he has a private ritual of purification, carried out behind closed doors, to enable him to return and break bread with other men. Does he wash his hands very carefully, perhaps, or change all his clothes; or has the Bureau created new men who can pass without disquiet between the unclean and the clean? (12)

He asks Mandel, the man who tortures him, "Do you find it easy to take food afterwards? I have imagined that one would want to wash one's hands. But no ordinary washing would be enough, one would require priestly intervention, a ceremonial of cleansing, don't you think?" (126). The Magistrate sees both Joll and Mandel as Pilate-type figures, who must somehow absolve themselves of the responsibility for their dreadful acts.

Both men represent some kind of moral vacuum, an absence that is reflected in their eyes. Colonel Joll wears dark glasses, in what might appear to be one of the clichés of the torturer, except that the "two little discs of glass suspended in front of his eyes in loops of wire" are a new phenomenon to the frontier people, a modern curiosity of civilization (1). "Is he blind?" the Magistrate wonders in the opening lines of the novel (1). The eyes of Mandel are uncovered, but as hidden as Joll's: "I look into his clear blue eyes, as clear as if there were crystal lenses slipped over his eyeballs. He looks back at me. I have no idea what he sees. Thinking of him, I have said the words torture ... torturer to myself, but they are strange words, and the more I repeat them the more strange they grow, till they lie like stones on my tongue" (118). Again, words fail the Magistrate and are inadequate to depict the reality.

Perhaps the Magistrate's failure represents the author's own struggle, for by centering his novel in the narration of the Magistrate, Coetzee avoids having to depict the zone of the torturer. So, in one sense, Coetzee solves this dilemma by posing it: how can the mind of a torturer even exist? Yet in another sense Coetzee does enter the zone of the torturer,

the oppressor, in his rendition of the Magistrate himself. When he takes in the Barbarian woman after the security police have left, the Magistrate acts like an obsessed man. He continually asks her about her experience of being tortured, probing for every last detail. He stands in the room in which the torture took place and tries to imagine the act. But most perversely, he nightly strips the woman and, in his own ritual of purification, washes her, always beginning with her maimed feet. He seems to be trying to absolve himself of the guilt he feels for having allowed the torture to take place. But he also is attempting to penetrate her secret being, to find her most hidden feelings. In frustration at his inability to enter her psychologically or physically, he wonders, "What do I have to do to move you?" (44).

Although the Magistrate ends his narrative "feeling stupid, like a man who lost his way long ago but presses on along a road that may lead nowhere" (156), his moments of self-recognition and his changes in behavior in the last section of the novel suggest that he may have found the right road after all. When the Army brings back a new set of Barbarian prisoners, he escapes from his prison to denounce publicly the cruel beating of the captives. In his dream, he now sees the face of the child to be that of the Barbarian woman, and in one dream she gives him a piece of bread in an apparent peace offering. Even though his torture and imprisonment have physically reduced him to the level of an animal (might we say to the level of a "Barbarian"?), these experiences also have elevated his moral awareness not only of the Empire's barbarity, but also of his own. Because of his job as Magistrate, he should theoretically know what to do while waiting for the barbarians. Instead, as soon as Colonel Joll begins to torture the Barbarian prisoners, the magistrate's psyche begins to change. Through the figure of the Magistrate, Coetzee identifies the universal tendency to acquiesce, to have complicity, to wait for the Barbarians to act and to wait on the acts of the Barbarians. Those who passively allow torture and oppression to take place are just as much "Barbarians" as the torturers themselves.

In a world that seems to exist without a moral center, in a world where barbarity hides behind all the faces of society, the author can only struggle to provide authority and meaning. Coetzee's novel is full of gaps and absences, yet he nonetheless suggests that temporary presences, especially the presence of the storyteller, can at least approximate a moral and linguistic center. In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Coetzee demonstrates that the final impact of torture upon people of conscience is paradoxical: they realize the need to write and proclaim the truth about this kind of oppression, but they also realize their own inability to do so completely and effectively. When we understand Coetzee's reluctance to depict torture realistically as a moral refusal to endorse the authority of the torturer, his use of the universal takes on greater significance.

*Congratulations to the
graduating members of
Sigma Tau Delta, and to
the entire*

Class of 2011!



No time is this for hands long overworn
to task their strength; and (unto Him be praise
who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain
of years that did the work of centuries
have ceased, and we can draw our breath once more
freely and full. So, as yon harvesters
make glad their nooning underneath the elms
with tale and riddle and old snatch of song,
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn
the leaves of Memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'er
old summer pictures of the quiet hills,
and human life, as quiet, at their feet.

“Among the Hills,” John Greenleaf Whittier

*If you came this way,
taking the route you would be likely to take
from the place you would be likely to come from,
if you came this way in May time, you would find the hedges
white again, in May, with voluptuary sweetness.*

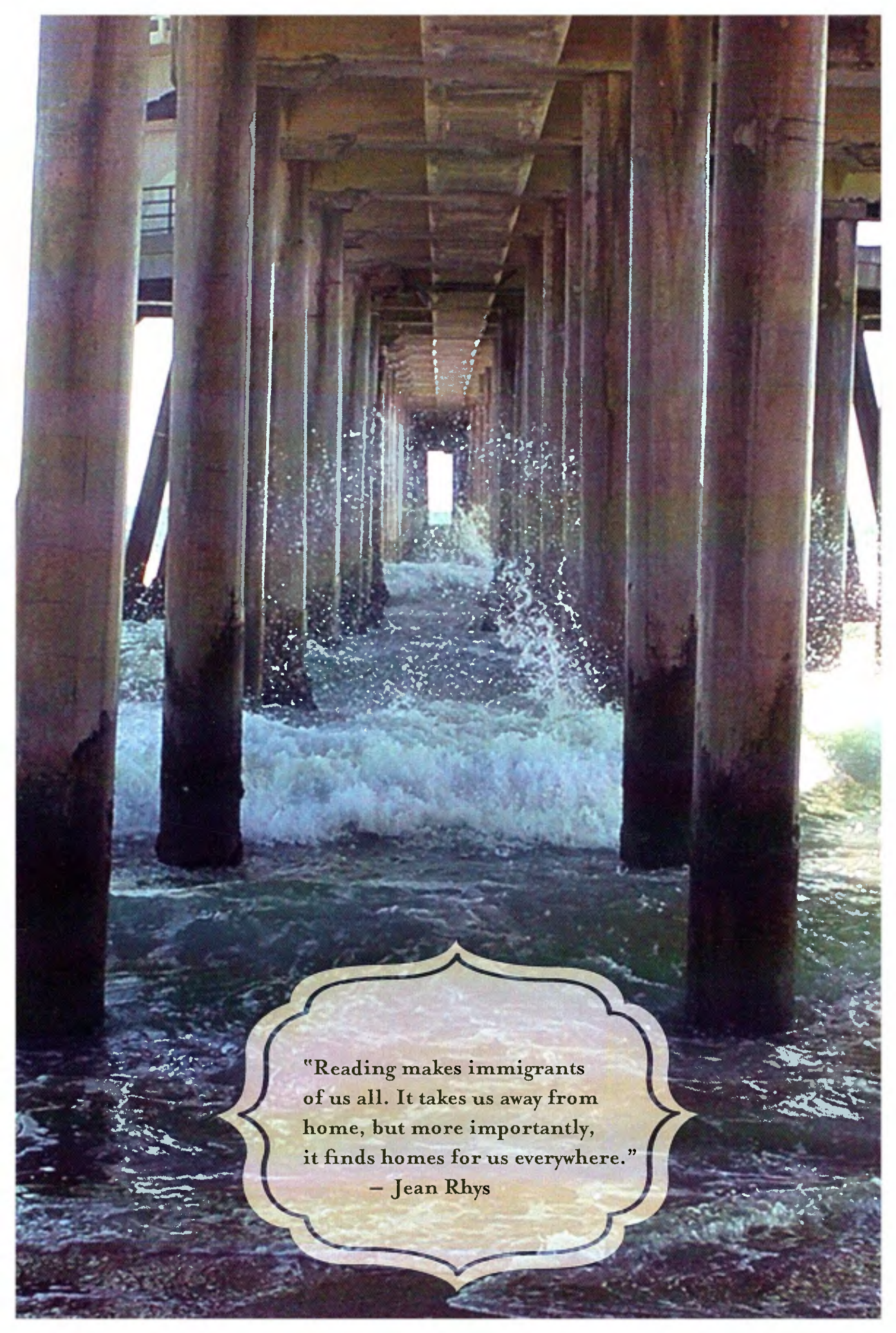
*What we call the beginning is often the end
and to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from. And every phrase
and sentence that is right (where every word is at home,
taking its place to support the others,
the word neither diffident nor ostentatious,
an easy commerce of the old and the new,
the common word exact without vulgarity,
the formal word precise but not pedantic,
the complete consort dancing together)
Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,
Every poem an epitaph. And any action
is a step to the block, to the fire, down the sea's throat
or to an illegible stone: and that is where we start.
We die with the dying:
See, they depart, and we go with them.
We are born with the dead:
See, they return, and bring us with them.
The moment of the rose and the moment of the yew-tree
are of equal duration.*

*We shall not cease from exploration
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time.*

~ T.S. Eliot, "Little Gidding"

Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart.

~William Wordsworth



“Reading makes immigrants
of us all. It takes us away from
home, but more importantly,
it finds homes for us everywhere.”

– Jean Rhys