

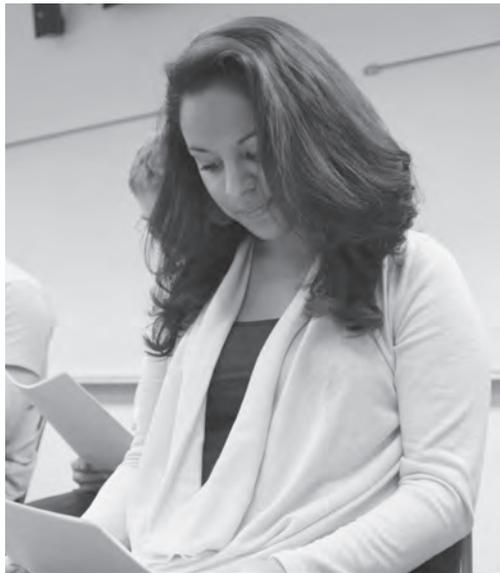


THE HARPER ANTHOLOGY

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



Volume XXIV
2012



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Michael Pumo

Mike Russo

Ben Sandholm

Kelly Schloss

Briana Shemroske

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Anthony Strissel

Agnes Strojewska

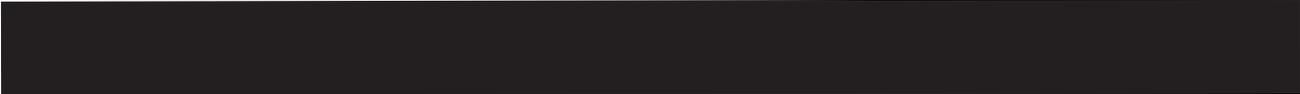
Gregory Taylor

Nicole Thomas

Maxine Weinman

Christopher West

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The Harper Anthology Volume XXIV

2012

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

Prepared by
The Harper Anthology Committee:

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Submission Information

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Send manuscripts electronically by e-mail to kpiepenb@harpercollege.edu, or submit a print copy plus disk to LIB ARTS, Room L203. Please include student contact information (e-mail, phone number, street address) with all submissions

Submission forms are available at the back of this issue; in the Liberal Arts Office (L203); and at the English Department web site: dept.harpercollege.edu/english.

Submissions are read each winter by the members of the *Harper Anthology* Committee.

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Dedication: To Professor Barbara Butler

This volume of *The Harper Anthology* is dedicated to Professor Barbara Butler, who retired from the Harper College English department in the spring of 2012, after a long teaching career at Harper. Barbara's devotion to her students and to the craft of good writing was always evident in the many papers she submitted to *The Harper Anthology* and in the many that were published, year after year. She was also extremely supportive of the *Anthology*, having served on the committee for twenty years, practically from the publication's first volume.

There are three papers written by Barbara's students in this volume of the *Anthology*—two of them, by Kelly Schloss and Katie Witzek, demonstrate Professor Butler's commitment to helping students bring forth perceptive, research-based literary analyses, as they discuss short works by Ambrose Bierce and Ernest Hemingway. The third, an essay by Gregory Taylor—"A Ship to Cross the Sea of Suffering"—is a moving account of the writer's many struggles in life, including his recovery from a stroke that reduced his reading ability to the first-grade level. Mr. Taylor composed this essay in response to an assignment in Professor Butler's English 100/Reading 099 learning community, which Barbara co-taught with Academic Enrichment faculty for many years, first with Chris Poziemski (also now retired), and most recently, with Judy Kulchawik.

It is in Mr. Taylor's essay that Professor Butler's guidance can be sensed most distinctly, as an educator who championed and encouraged those facing personal and academic difficulties. In her teaching career, through her careful, patient guidance and steady devotion to her profession and her students' success, Professor Barbara Butler touched thousands, moving many students over the years toward greater confidence with language and higher levels of academic achievement. Much more cannot be asked of a professional educator. We miss Barbara in the English department and on *The Harper Anthology* committee. We wish her good health and a relaxing retirement.

--The *Harper Anthology* Committee

Foreword: The Beauty of Informed Voices

Kris Piepenburg, Chair
The Harper Anthology Committee

In early December 2012, while driving to work, I was listening to a WBEZ interview with an author whose name I did not catch. The author had written a book about Abraham Lincoln, and he focused heavily on the year 1862 in the book, as being the year in which Lincoln transformed himself, from someone elected with a small percentage of the popular vote, into someone decisive and powerful enough to direct the Union armies while his general at the time, George McClellan, recovered from an illness. He later fired McClellan. The interview continued on, into a discussion of the battle of Shiloh and its role in the Civil War. By then, I was driving into the parking lot, on a cold, rainy day, looking for a parking space on this twenty-first-century college campus.

Here is something odd: while I was driving and listening to this interview, on this dreary day, I had a gradual feeling of warmth, ease, and even happiness settle within me, somewhat like what happened when I took some strong pain medication a year ago, after having undergone a minor surgery. This was a strange sensation to feel, listening to a radio interview, with someone discussing a subject I really wasn't all that passionate about. I identified a couple of reasons for this happiness, as it was happening. The most important of those was the quality of the author's speaking voice on the radio, as he spoke effortlessly, in detail, about events that took place 150 years ago. The man sounded as if he were in his sixties or seventies, with a vaguely southern, southeastern, or southern middle-west accent, and his speech was unhurried, just flowing on rhythmically, pleasantly, not a bunch of stops and starts, but not a hyperactive stream, either. It was as if he were on a rural mid-western porch somewhere, talking with a friend on a sunny summer day, in a much simpler time, over a glass of lemonade. The music of this man's voice was making me happy.

This man's knowledge base was also pleasant to encounter. I've relayed some of the facts I remember, in the opening paragraph, but there are other details: people who were pushing McClellan to attack the White House instead of the South; McClellan's run for President, after

he was fired; the effect of telegraphy on the Civil War; how Lincoln telegraphed his generals in the various war theaters, in 1862, to say "we move on Washington's birthday"; and some details about General Grant's leadership, when he assumed command of the Union army. The author's ease with the details of the subject was as pleasing as his relaxed way of speaking. The whole experience, of listening for less than ten minutes, was one of growing happiness. This happiness stemmed from this man's language, his confident but calm manner of speaking, and his ability to continue informing, in detail, in an unhurried but organized way.

In Professor Nancy Davis' *Afterword* to this *Anthology*, on pages 183-184, she comments on what makes language flow, and swing, and sing, reminding us that if a student can find a way to take ownership of the subject of a writing assignment, "a way to make it theirs," that "the journey becomes themselves, and they find their groove." I have to admit, when I read Professor Davis' *Afterword* reminding students of the importance of the musical qualities of language, my first response was bemusement. I had just spent another 16 weeks helping students with writing that wasn't really swinging too well, at all. However, when I heard that radio broadcast and felt that very natural happiness, and realized its origins—the rhythm of the language, and the depth of information—and when I had nearly completed the copy editing and page layouts of these papers for the *Anthology*—I remembered what Nancy was talking about. It is pleasing to hear someone who speaks well on a subject and knows its details, and it is just as pleasant to encounter this in writing. I have often told my students that research papers are not the most exciting kind of writing to do—it isn't poetry, or writing song lyrics, or fiction—but I believe I am going to say that differently, now. There is a definite rhythm to the language in a well-written academic paper, as pleasant as the rhythm of someone who speaks well, on a subject they know something about.

Agnes Strojewska, in her "Student Reflections on Writing" piece on page 157 of this collection, states the following:

Precious few disinterested people produce writing of great value, regardless of technical prowess or sense of taste. For this reason I am compelled to communicate to you. . . first and foremost, write earnestly.

She is correct. Disinterest will not result in good writing. How often, as college professors, have we seen that

Foreword: The Beauty of Informed Voices

problem? As Professor Davis reminds us, if we can find a way to help students make writing assignments their own, and find an interest in the subject, then, “they find their groove.” Authenticity results. The voice will come from a “wellspring of truth,” Nancy says. This is the authenticity I was hearing in that radio broadcast.

I hear that same passion, authenticity, and music in many of the papers in this *Anthology*. Jackie Cooney’s paper on the newspaper industry’s “circulation wars” in Chicago, written for Professor Wayne Johnson’s course in organized crime, was composed after review of a myriad of archival documents, many of them 100 years old and very obscure. In the paper, she reconstructs the intimidation practices of rival Chicago newspapers, 100 years ago, and links them to the organized crime wave that swept over Chicago during Prohibition. A reader of this paper will not be bored—she has studied her subject and written about it in a way that transmits her passion for it. Jackie says, in her reflection on writing, that she gets “a buzz from factual discovery,” and that after completing the paper, she still can’t stop thinking about it, that it is “on a continuous loop” in her mind. Anyone who has researched something extensively and written about it can recognize these feelings. Jackie is as informed—and as professional a researcher and writer—as that authority on Lincoln that I listened to.

The “wellspring of truth” is also accessed by Agnes Strojewska in her 17-page essay “Seek Not in the World to Find Home,” (pp 145-162), written in response to a study abroad experience in Argentina. This paper should be required reading for any instructor planning a study abroad course and for any student enrolling in one. Agnes’ chronicle of this trip, chaperoned by Professor Antonio Iacopino (sadly, now departed from Harper), is truly a narrative of discovery—not only of another country and of another culture, but of other selves—the writer’s and those of her fellow travelers. Especially moving is the point about two-thirds through, when Agnes suddenly becomes lonely in the van they are traveling in, across an Argentinian desert at night, so she writes in her journal. That writing, reproduced on pages 156 - 158, captures the writer’s thoughts cinematically, clearly and truthfully revealing the reality of the trip. One can hear and see Antonio as he calls out to Agnes, from up front in the van, “You’re in the wilderness right now!” The writing in this section struck me with its clarity and honesty, and the moment struck me as emblematic of something a study

abroad experience stimulates—personal reflection. That journal entry was a turning point for Agnes. When this essay was submitted to the *Anthology*, it was *fifty* typed pages, and it required very little editing for publication. Professors leading study abroad experiences might take note of the learning and reflection that result when students write while traveling.

All of the papers in this volume certainly were composed by interested writers, about things that mattered to them, about truth—even Veronica Eklund’s paper for organic chemistry, on the truth of what happens to carbons when subject to radical chlorination. Some are focused on the truth of experience, some on the truth of history, some on the truth of literature. In a few, the focus of interest is toward a significant current problem, rather than on something more historically fixed. I would not say that researching the present is more difficult than researching the past—but there is something about the constant shifting of the present, and about the overwhelming volume of information that is available, that makes this job difficult. How can we reconstruct the facts of something that is happening right now? How can we be sure of a position on something that is in progress? There are meaningful attempts at this in the work of Raluca Procopiu (on the current conflict in Syria), Ginny Hanson (on imprisoned Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo), and Michael Clayton (on the Occupy movement of 2011). The paper by Michael Clayton, in particular, has a definite personal authenticity to it, in its passion and rhythm. It is a pleasure to read. Yet, that was not Michael’s purpose, to make us feel happy, to have the rhythm of his prose wash over us and make us feel good. His writing is a serious commentary, designed to make readers think about serious problems affecting our lives today. The rhythm of his language is secondary; his earnestness, as Agnes Strojewska reminds us in her commentary about writing, comes first. His message is where the value lies, and his rhythm happens naturally, getting the message across.

Overall, on behalf of *The Harper Anthology* committee, I thank all readers for their interest in reading these comments, and in reading these excellent essays; all Harper faculty, for submitting papers for publication and being patient with the publication process; and the students of Harper College, for sharing their voices and interests with us, and helping all of us who teach writing to rediscover what makes writing work, again and again, in every which way.

The Power of the Human Conscience

Gabriela Bazan

Course: ESL 073 (Reading V)

Instructor: Julie Ponce

Assignment: *Students were to write about how Atticus Finch of To Kill a Mockingbird epitomizes the following quotation of Voltaire's: "Every man is the creature of the age in which he lives; very few are able to raise themselves above the ideas of the time."*

The challenge for human beings is living in a society. In fact, the majority of people desire to live in peace and harmony with the rest of humanity to share the same society. Additionally, we have always been told to respect society's rules to be allowed to live there. However, problems occur when individuals challenge the ideas of a given society. Voltaire observed, "Every man is the creature of the age in which he lives; very few are able to raise themselves above the ideas of the time." In other words, Voltaire means that most people abide by the ideas and rules of society. Thus, they do it in order to do what is right and acceptable according to society. Nevertheless, there are other people who say and do things that go against the ideas and norms, and their actions also contribute to the welfare of the whole society. In the same way, the character Atticus Finch, in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, epitomizes Voltaire's quote, highlighting the importance of conscience in people's daily lives. In fact, our human conscience must guide our actions and ideas to understand the coexistence of good and evil, to discern between the morally right and the morally wrong, and to discuss the equality of races and social classes.

Atticus shows that in the same human being, good and evil can coexist, since our conscience leads us to choose between them. Furthermore, in several scenes throughout the book, Atticus remarks about the importance of trying to do good, even though in the past we could have done bad things or obtained bad results. For

instance, when Scout asks Atticus if they are going to win the trial, he answers, "Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started, it is no reason for us not to try to win" (Lee 87). At that point, Atticus shows Jem that his words are materialized in Mrs. Dubose's actions, who used her courage, obviously led by her conscience, to obtain good results in spite of bad actions in her past. Atticus tells Jem,

"She had her own views about things, a lot different from mine, maybe...I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do. Mrs. Dubose won." (Lee 128)

In addition, Atticus mentions a powerful phrase about judging people because they have done good or bad things from our point of view: "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view" (Lee 33). He went on to add, "—until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it" (Lee 33). An instance of this is mentioned by Atticus when he speaks about Walter Cunningham in the jail: "That proves something—that a gang of wild animals *can* be stopped, simply because they're still human...you children last night made Walter Cunningham stand in my shoes for a minute. That was enough" (Lee 179). Of course, Walter Cunningham Sr. could have fought. However, he was guided by his conscience. He understood Atticus' side and decided not to fight. In contrast to these examples, we find Bob Ewell, who is carried away by a grudge and is angry, and in some ways he is supported by his society. Consequently, he is not guided by his conscience, so he is not able to consider the point of view of others. This can be seen when Atticus asks Scout to attend school: "You, Miss Scout Finch, are the common folk. You must obey the law" (Lee 34). He went on to explain that "the Ewells were members of an exclusive society made up of Ewells. In certain circumstances the common folk judiciously allowed them certain privileges by the simple method of becoming blind to some of the Ewells' activities" (Lee 34). Moreover, Atticus says to Scout about Bob Ewell, "...

Student Reflections on Writing: Gabriela Bazan

Conveying ideas accurately, just as I'd like they were understood by readers, is difficult for me. Even when I try to do it through my first language (Spanish), it's too challenging. Since a few years ago, I have been striving to communicate my ideas and to find the exact words. They are floating in my mind, not like words, but they are like clouds that many times I'm unable to decipher, even in Spanish. However, I believe writing is the best way to communicate and interrelate with other people. Do you realize people fight a bit less when they write each other than when they speak face to face? Also, have you noticed that most of the people who use a social network appear to be very nice and friendly? However, many of them are not so nice or so friendly when you meet them or when you talk to them face to face. Sometimes, I think we act with double personalities, and perhaps, the world would be better if our means of communication were only writing. In fact, through this medium, we have the opportunity of thinking carefully before transmitting our ideas and feelings to other people. I'm very grateful because *The Harper Anthology* is giving me an opportunity to transmit my ideas. Through my essay on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a dream I have had all my life is coming true: I'm being published, and I'm encouraged to improve my writing more and more.

when a man spends his relief checks on green whiskey his children have a way of crying from hunger pains” (Lee 34). In addition, Bob Ewell is not able to consider Tom’s and Atticus’s side; this means he doesn’t consider Tom’s innocence nor Atticus’s duty to defend Tom. Instead, Ewell reacts with revenge and anger. At this point, Atticus says, “Jem, see if you can stand in Bob Ewell’s shoes a minute. I destroyed his last shred of credibility at that trial, if he had any to begin with. The man had to have some kind of comeback....So, if spitting in my face and threatening me saved Mayella Ewell one extra beating, that’s something I’ll gladly take” (Lee 249). In short, in every human being can coexist a good and an evil side, but it is the conscience that leads to choose the good,

since the individual considers the opinions of others.

Atticus remarks, throughout the book, that the conscience is the most important tool to discern between what is morally right and morally wrong. Atticus shows this idea to the jury when he says, “...Gentlemen, a court is no better than each man of you sitting before me on this jury. A court is only as sound as its jury, and a jury is only as sound as the men who make it up” (Lee 233). This statement means that a court is not something *inert*; it is not something without life or just a name, but it is a group of men with a conscience, who decide what is right and what is wrong. For that reason, Atticus explains to Scout when he is defending Tom Robinson, that the most important thing to be able to live is being in peace with his own conscience: “...If I didn’t I couldn’t hold up my head in town, I couldn’t represent this county in the legislature, I couldn’t even tell you or Jem not to do something again” (Lee 86). Moreover, he says, “... This case, Tom Robinson’s case, is something that goes to the essence of a man’s conscience—Scout, I couldn’t go to church and worship God if I didn’t try to help that man” (Lee 120). He went on to add, “but before I can live with other folks I’ve got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn’t abide by majority rule is a person’s conscience” (Lee 120). In addition to these ideas, Atticus mentions and does things morally right, since he doesn’t act with a double-sided morality. This can be seen when Miss Maudie says about Atticus to Scout: “...Atticus Finch is the same in his house as he is on the public streets” (Lee 51). Next, Atticus acts the same way in the court, which is explained by Scout, when she tries to repeat Miss Maudie’s words to Dill: “He’s the same in the courtroom as he is on the public streets” (Lee 226). Finally, Atticus sums up the idea of going against double-sided morals when he says to the sheriff, “...I can’t live one way in town and another way in my home” (Lee 314). Consequently, Atticus lived the same way in his home, in public streets, in the court, or anywhere. On the other side, the strongest challenge for Atticus’ conscience occurs when he and the sheriff speculate about Bob Ewell’s murder. His moral values were threatened, even more when he could have blamed his own son for the murder of Bob Ewell. Atticus explains to the sheriff, “I don’t want my boy starting out with something like this over his head. Best way to clear the air is to have it all out in the open....I don’t want him growing up with a whisper

about him, I don't want anybody saying, 'Jem Finch... his daddy paid a mint to get him out of that. Sooner we get this over with the better'" (Lee 314). This dilemma was resolved by blaming Bob Ewell for his own murder, instead of Boo Radley, who made an impossible choice to save the children. At this point, Scout shows to Atticus her understanding about what is morally right and what is morally wrong, when she says, "'Well, it'd be sort of like shootin' a mockingbird, wouldn't it?'" (Lee 317). In other words, human beings not only must obey the rules but also our conscience must be quiet to live in peace.

Equality is determined by our conscience, which leads us to understand the hierarchy and the races of our society. The powerful conscience of Atticus raises him "above the ideas of the time", as Voltaire says. Atticus begins with respect for all people living in his house: "'First, apologize to your aunt'...'Let's get this clear: you do as Calpurnia tells you, you do as I tell you, and as long as your aunt's in this house, you will do as she tells you'" (Lee 154). As it is said in the book, Atticus wanted Scout respect to everyone as member of the family, even Calpurnia, who was a black person and the Finch's cook. After teaching to respect equality in his family, he teaches respect for everyone who comes to his home, even ignorant or poor people. This can be seen when Walter Cunningham Jr., who was the son of a poor and ignorant family, was eating in the Finch's house: "While Walter piled food on his plate, he and Atticus talked together like two men, to the wonderment of Jem and me. Atticus was expounding upon farm problems" (Lee 27). Accordingly, after teaching equality in his house, Atticus was able to talk about equality with other people in his society. For that reason, he says in the court, "'Thomas Jefferson once said that all men are created equal'" (Lee 233). He went on to explain, "'We know all men are not created equal in the sense some people would have us believe—some people are smarter than others, some people have more opportunity because they're born with it, some men make money than others, some ladies make better cakes than others—some people are born gifted beyond the normal scope of most men'" (Lee 233). At this point, Atticus means that people should be treated with the same ways, despite of the weaknesses and strengths that each human being has; however, that idea is unrealistic in his and in our society. Actually, the conscience must determine the difference not only due our physical attributes but also

due our actions. This is seen in the court when Atticus was speaking to the jury about Tom Robinson:

"...the truth is this: some Negroes lie, some Negroes are immoral, some Negro men are not be trusted around women—black or white. But this is a truth that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men. There is not a person in this courtroom who has never told a lie, who has never done an immoral thing, and there is no man living who has never looked upon a woman without desire." (Lee 232)

In addition, he says: "'But there is one way in this country in which all men are created equal—there is one human institution...That institution, gentlemen, is a court...Our courts have their faults, as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are the great levelers, and in our courts all men are created equal'" (Lee 233). In other words, the most reliable institution to obtain equality in that time was the court. For all that, the conscience is what leads us to treat human beings equally.

All in all, human beings always will be between good and evil, right and wrong, rich and poor, white and black, and between others' dilemmas, since the human being is imperfect. For that reason the human being will be always looking for answers for the emotional balance in the society. As a result, the Voltaire quote will continue transcending time, since it is possible to be applied to any time. In short, Atticus Finch raised himself above the ideas of his town because he acted according to his conscience and his ability to understand the points of view of other people. In consequence, I hope more people can be able to raise themselves to avoid war, discrimination, poverty, diseases without cure, and too many international conflicts.

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Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. 1960. New York: Harper Perennial-Modern Classics, 2002. Print.

Evaluation: *Gaby was an outstanding student and very deep-thinking in her analysis of our novels and readings. She loves writing and wants to change from being an engineer to a journalist.*

The Feminist Next Door (You Can See Her through the Kitchen Window)

Kelsey Brod

Course: Literature 208 (non-Western Literature)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *One option for writing a paper on African literature was to prepare a gender studies analysis of Nigerian author Sefi Atta's Everything Good Will Come, published in 2005.*

Nigeria became independent from British rule in 1960. Afflicted with corruption from the beginning, the Nigerian government endured back-to-back military coups, a civil war, and a dependence on oil revenue. Home to three distinct ethnic groups balancing tradition and Western influence, the most populous country in Africa precariously staggered on the highest precipice: democracy. This is the setting of *Everything Good Will Come*, by Sefi Atta, published in 2005. Atta narrates the life of Enitan Taiwo, a Yoruban girl growing up with an uncommonly liberal father, an exceedingly pious mother, and the memory of her best friend's rape. Enitan struggles to fit into Nigeria's patriarchal society, and she is consistently frustrated by its expectations from her as a woman. In comparison, Enitan's mother and best friend submit to their womanly duties, but we must not be fooled by their apathy. Sefi Atta introduces a peculiar resistance in her novel: passive-aggressive feminism. Feminists are omnipresent in *Everything Good Will Come*, and Atta uses her characters to reveal both a vocal and silent crusade for equality.

The novel begins with Enitan's recollections of her childhood. When she is seven years old, the Igbo in east Nigeria want to secede and create the Republic of Biafra. Her father and mother fight over Enitan, her mother's religion, and her father's fidelity. Her brother had died

from sickle cell anemia, and she is left curiously alone to play and figure out the nature of the world, until she meets her friend Sheri Bakare, at the age of eleven.

Sunny Taiwo, Enitan's father, is the most contemporary man presented in the novel. He is also the first feminist to appear. He received a degree in law from London, and he set up his own private practice near Lagos, the economic capital of Nigeria. After his son's death, he believes that his daughter will continue his practice. He discourages his wife from teaching Enitan to cook, which is a pervading symbol of female inferiority throughout the novel. After a particular day at work, Sunny comes home to find Enitan frying plantains. Offended, Sunny says, "You should tell her young girls don't do this anymore... And if she asks where you learned such nonsense, tell her from your father and he's for the liberation of women" (21). No other man in this novel wants women out of the kitchen. Most men, and even women, see it as a woman's duty. Mama Enitan, Enitan's mother, replies with "All women except your wife" (21). This assertive reply recognizes two things: First, Sunny is ready for the next generation of women to be free, but not the women of his own generation. Second, assuming Mama Enitan is an archetype of Nigerian women, the women of the country are considerably aware of their suppression.

When Enitan is accepted into the Royal College of Lagos, a private school for girls, Sunny tells his daughter, "And join the debating society, not the girl guides. Girl guides are nothing but kitchen martyrs in the making" (40). It is evident that Sunny firmly believes in the education of women, at least of his daughter, as he provides her with the opportunities she needs to get the highest degree of education she wants. It is also evident that Sunny has distaste for women who assume the role of the cook. The use of the word "martyr" is particularly insightful. It suggests that women victimize themselves by choosing to fulfill a domestic role; that women manipulate a household by suffering in the kitchen. If this is what Sunny is recognizing, then he is granting that women have some household control, albeit desperate. He would rather his daughter have complete authority over herself.

Before Enitan leaves for school, she befriends a young girl, Sheri, who lives next door. Sheri is Enitan's age, but her spirit is older. She takes care of the children

of her father's two wives, though neither wife is her mom, and she wears makeup. She is Enitan's first meaningful friend, and they promise to write to each other while Enitan goes away. While on vacation, Enitan and Sheri attend a party, where Sheri is raped by a group of boys. Instructed that women who do not take precaution get what they deserve, Enitan distances herself from Sheri. A while after the tragedy, Mama Enitan tells her, "Your friend is pregnant. She stuck a hanger up herself and nearly killed herself" (68). Sheri's self-abortion would have been a feminist climax in the novel had Atta not written about it so frankly. It is just one of several instances where Sheri exhibits copious courage that is overlooked because Enitan's trepidation is blinding. Nonetheless, Sheri committed an act that is the epitome of women's liberation: the right to choose when to have a child. Although she could not defend herself when a gang of boys took advantage of her, she could defend her chance at a future. Sheri had aspirations, and she was not going to let a helpless event have lifetime consequences. The self-abortion did, however, have a lifetime consequence; Sheri was left barren.

When Enitan returned to Nigeria after receiving a law degree, she was able to admit that Sheri was a victim. She visited Sheri at her home in Lagos, where she was living with a brigadier who took her shopping in Paris and provided for her. He also had two wives. Perhaps surprisingly, the wives were recruiting Sheri to join them. As seen earlier in the novel with Sheri's mothers, wives of the same man can unite. It is a strategy of survival, but Enitan tells us, "Polygamy was considered risqué. Women in our generation who opted for it ended up looking quite the opposite of traditional" (101). Enitan realizes that Sheri uses men as much as they use her. She uses them for travel, food, floral couches, and protection. She does not feel entirely dependent because she has confidence that she could always move onto someone else, and so her relationship with the brigadier is very much mutual. By not marrying him, she is using a typically suppressing situation to her advantage.

Sheri not only uses polygamy to her benefit, but also cooking. The most ironic feminist tool, cooking, emancipated Sheri when she began her own catering business. Immediately, her uncle tried to shut the business

down by claiming ownership of the house, her company's location. Sheri defeated her uncle in court with the help of her two mothers, who gave the property to Sheri's company in agreement. Subsequently, the brigadier tried to stop Sheri. Sheri was cooking okra when he began to verbally and physically abuse her, and Sheri fought back. Sheri knows that the fight really started because the brigadier did not like her freedom. She told Enitan later, "The man is jealous of me. Can you believe it? He's jealous of my success. With all he has. He wants me to have nothing, except what he gives me" (170). This insightful statement provides a great perspective for later when Sunny refuses to sign a living complex over to Mama Enitan after their separation. The Nigerian men in this novel want to be the providers. They want to have someone depend on them. Even liberalists such as Enitan's husband (and earlier, her father) struggle to let the women in their lives have control. As for Sheri, she once again is the ultimate feminist when she uses a symbol of domesticity—a pot of boiling okra—to beat up the man, after he has attacked her.

When Enitan's brother died from sickle cell anemia, Mama Enitan left her Anglican church and joined a mystic Christian church. Her new religion turned her into a devout lunatic. She believed in the healing powers of algae and the fertility bestowed upon someone if their sanitary napkins were burned. Her religious fervor had made her seem crazy, but now Enitan realizes that it was her mom's method of coping. Mama Enitan grieved after her son died, and she was not happy anymore in her marriage. Instead of drinking, gambling, or turning to any other vice, she gave herself to god, mockingly: "Whenever she said amen, I thought she might have well have been saying nyah-nyah. She had tricked us all. Her fixation with religion was nothing but a life-long rebellion" (180). "Nyah-nyah," is a prodigious expression that shows Mama Enitan's internal revolt. To the public, she appeared saintly, but to her, religion was an institution which she could safely mock and quietly rebel against.

Over the years, Sunny's practice defended a liberal and controversial man considered dangerous to the Nigerian government. Sunny is eventually jailed, and Enitan befriends a journalist, Grace Ameh, who wrote an article on Sunny's imprisonment. The two attend a

The Feminist Next Door (You Can See Her through the Kitchen Window)

reading where they are arrested, and Enitan finds herself battling the leader of the jail cell, Mother of Prisons. Frustrated by the injustice that has led her there, Mother of Prisons provokes Enitan and Grace. She mocks their education and trivializes Enitan's pregnancy. Disgusted by Enitan's idealism, Mother of Prisons shares her story: Her husband never got a job that could provide for the family, and she supported everyone through her work as a secretary. Her company paid and treated her well. She told everyone that her husband was the provider, to save his reputation. When the husband died, his family threw her onto the streets and kept the children. She wandered aimlessly until a man assaulted her, and she told him, "I'm not Hey Baby. I'm a secretary typist, qualified 1988" (271). This quote displays the empowerment this woman had by holding a job. She knew she was more than an object, and she knew that she had rights. It shows that being a secretary typist is how Mother of Prisons valued herself, and she was proud. Mother of Prisons killed the man in self-defense, and she has been waiting for trial ever since.

Sheri, Mama Enitan, and Mother of Prisons have all found their independence. Yet Enitan, the most vocal of them all on equality, has never felt free. She married Niyi, a relatively freethinking man, and she still feels suffocated. After seeking inspiration from best friend, mother, and fellow inmate, she realizes that she needs to be alone, otherwise she will never feel free: "Before this, I had opportunities to take action, only to end up behaving in ways I was accustomed, courting the same old frustrations because I was sure of what I would feel: wronged, helpless, stuck in a day when I was fourteen years old. Here it is: changes came after I made them, each one small. I walked up a stair" (332). She packs quietly and simply tells him that she has to leave. Previously, he had said "no" to her when she wanted to spearhead a campaign to get prisoners, including her father, out of jail. She wanted to lead this campaign, and she knows that his "no" is just an indication of the suppression she would feel if she were to stay married to him. She began her fight by walking up a stair, taking off her head tie, and packing her suitcase. She later organizes the women's campaign, and her father is released from jail. She is autonomous.

There are many types of feminists offered in *Everything Good Will Come*. There are the activists, such as Sunny, Enitan, and Grace. There are the silent rebels such as Sheri and Mama Enitan. Then there is Mother of Prisons, whose unwitting feminism may be the most striking of them all. Either explicitly or implicitly, all these characters fight for equality. They educate their daughters, become entrepreneurs, perform self-abortions, kill molesters, mock their priests, and use suppression as a tool of defense. Sefi Atta presents an incredible range of characters who all contribute differently to one righteous movement. In respect to feminism, there is always something unexpected brewing in *Everything Good Will Come's* cooking pot.

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Evaluation: *This essay is a thorough and perceptive discussion of the feminist ideals and strengths that flow through this novel and these characters' lives.*

Personal Technology at Harper

Carlyle Bryant, Doreen Nosek, and Michael Pumo

Course: Computer Information Systems 211 (IT Project Management)

Instructor: David Braunschweig

Assignment: Students were to collaborate on creating a website to document and inform the Harper College community regarding some aspect of technology. This team of students chose to evaluate the use of personal technology by students at the college. The project objective was to critique a variety of personal technology devices and resources and suggest opportunities for improvement.

Evaluation: The website this team developed is outstanding based on its design and the quality of the writing. As with the topic itself, this project demonstrates how technology and education may be combined with a personal touch and individual reflection. It is reproduced in the form of screen shots from the actual website in the following pages.



▼ **Project Overview**

- eBook Readers
- Laptops/Notebooks
- Online Collaboration
- Online Media & Research
- Smart Phones
- Social Networking
- Tablet Computers
- Video Conferencing
- Virtual Learning Environments/Labs

▼ **Project Management**

- Project Team
- Project Charter
- Scope Statement
- Contract
- Change Control
- Project Documents
- Risk Register
- Lessons Learned

Project Overview

As the evolution of technology strives to make our lives easier, it continuously introduces new ways to actively engage in our educational endeavors. As a result, our society has progressed past the era of cumbersome hardware and clunky applications, and onto a future where our lives are enhanced by the experiences that technology has to offer. As students of online courses at Harper College, the CIS 211 Personal Technology Team can vouch for how huge of an impact various technologies have had throughout our studies.

Is the concept of a *computer mega lab* outdated and obsolete? The chances are that the majority of students walking through the doors of Harper College today already own a more powerful laptop or notebook computer than the workstations provided. Check their pockets and you will be sure to find a mobile smart phone with full Internet browsing capabilities and an application ecosystem that rivals the desktop computer. You may find fewer students struggling to carry their over-sized textbooks down the hall, as they can now fit every book they have ever purchased on an *e-reader* or tablet device that is less than an inch thick. Though it may seem like students are becoming less social these days, the fact is they are communicating with their peers more than ever – through online social networking. Study halls and library meet-ups are becoming less common place, as virtual learning environments and video conferencing has become the more accepted means of collaboration. Technology is not distracting us from our studies; it is making us more involved.

The CIS 211 Personal Technology Team has researched many of the technologies used by today's students. Throughout the pages of this report, we will document our findings and highlight the various ways that these technologies have elevated our educational endeavors. Our goal is to assist Harper College in understanding how modern technology is being utilized by today's students, with hopes to contribute to a more optimal learning environment overall.

Subpages (9): [eBook Readers](#) [Laptops/Notebooks](#) [Online Collaboration](#) [Online Media & Research](#) [Smart Phones](#) [Social Networking](#) [Tablet Computers](#) [Video Conferencing](#) [Virtual Learning Environments/Labs](#)



[Project Overview >](#)

eBook Readers

The days of shoulder aches and back pains may soon be a thing of the past, as students ditch their pile of oversized textbooks for a device that fits in their pockets. For the past couple of years, forward thinking companies, as well as consumers, have embraced the digital age by transitioning from paper based reading materials to hand-held *e-book* readers. The competition in this market is getting heavy, as suppliers struggle to keep up with the demand. Clearly, consumers and especially students, consider traditional books to be a thing of the past.

One manner in which electronic books can be consumed is with a device called an *e-book reader*. These devices have introduced a relatively new display technology, called *e-ink*, which closely simulates the feeling of reading an actual book. This helps reduce eye strain during prolonged reading and also results in battery life that lasts multiple days. E-book readers usually have enough internal memory to store a library, and many devices support external memory cards for extra storage. Some e-book readers support a contract-free cellular internet connection, while almost all support traditional 802.11 WiFi. These devices are less than an inch thick and weigh a fraction of a pound.

Along with hardware devices, electronic books can also be read using e-book software that runs on various devices, from personal computers to tablet computers and smartphones. Reputable companies, such as Amazon, Google, and Barnes and Noble, offer software applications that provide access to an online library of books. Apple's iBookstore comes preloaded on every iPad and iPhone sold. Some companies offer versions of the e-book software that runs on a browser, which is suitable for netbook laptops or tablet devices that do not have native application support.

With so many options for consuming electronic books, the possibility of ditching physical textbooks is a very appealing alternative. The prices of dedicated e-book readers have reached the sub-\$100 range, making them very affordable for college students. E-books can be downloaded in a matter of seconds, without ever leaving the couch. With the benefits of digital distribution, the cost of an electronic book can cost a fraction of a traditional textbook. With the advantages of e-books to college students, it would almost be nonsensical for an education institution not to support them.

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Laptops/Notebooks

Most students that go to college own laptops. Students use laptops for different reasons whether they carry them around all the time or use them at home. They are used for gaming, movies, shopping, school, social networking, etc. Harper College professors don't allow laptops inside the classrooms. It is understandable that they believe that students won't pay attention or cause a distraction. They should at least try it out and if students are misusing them, then they shouldn't be allowed.

A popular laptop today is Apple's MacBook, but it is considerably expensive. Other types of laptops are made by companies such as HP, Sony, Dell, and Toshiba. Laptops have different features and operating systems depending what the user is looking for and that is how they are priced. If a high price is paid, then why wouldn't a person want to get the most out of the purchase? This is why students would love to be able to use their laptops not just at home but in the classroom as well.

Some students would love to be able to take notes in the classroom by typing them into their laptops especially those with bad handwriting. Typing notes into a laptop can be a major advantage because then the student can read them because they weren't rushing to write everything down by hand. The notes can be saved into the hard drive and studied later at home. It is more likely that notes on a piece of paper get lost before notes saved on a laptop do. It is much easier when you have all of your notes for every class in one place. The students could also share notes with a friend without even having to see them to give them handwritten notes. They also wouldn't have to worry about pens, pencils, and notebooks.

Sometimes students are in a big classroom where they can't see the board or projector screen. Most teachers have the power point slides or Microsoft Word documents they are lecturing from on blackboard. It would be easier for a student to use their laptop to follow along rather than struggle to try and see the board. Students can also research something the professor is speaking about right there in the class to have a better understanding. These are the advantages if students use laptops in the classroom at Harper College. Every single student might not have a laptop but a good percentage do. They might be a distraction, but the students that are disciplined enough and want to learn won't let them be.

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Online Collaboration

The definition of Collaboration is to work jointly with others in an intellectual endeavor, so Online Collaboration simply means allowing two or more people to share knowledge by working together online using the Internet. Students at Harper College can work together and have a closer learning experience by extending their interaction and sharing their knowledge outside of the classroom.

Online Collaboration will allow Harper College students to connect with each other easily to solve problems and work on projects together. This will encourage participation and set up students for real-world experiences as it encourages them to work with others to solve common challenges. It's great for those students who may get "overshadowed" by more outspoken team members in the classroom, as they can participate on-line without having someone on their team talk over them or take-over the project.

Many students have very busy schedules which can make it difficult for teams to meet together at a specific location and work on their project or study together. When the student has access to the Internet via a laptop or a smart phone, they can meet together at an online collaboration site. These sites allow two or more students to work together on word processing documents, Power Point presentations and even for brainstorming, all without having to be in the same room at the same time. This makes checking in with each other for a quick update much easier than sending an email or posting a note on blackboard because you can provide instant feedback.

As 52% of Harper College students own Smart Phones with email and internet access, they already have the tools needed to collaborate online and do not have to purchase any new technology. If students own a Blackberry and access to Microsoft Outlook, they can collaborate online for no extra charge using Google Apps which supports over-the-air mobile access. Harper College can assist in advising the students that use these websites on how to use them and help them set up their accounts, but other than that the students have control over how they want to use the site.

All the students in our current IT Project Management class are familiar with using online collaboration as we have been using Google Site, which is a form of online collaboration allowing us to share and collaborate on our documents. Google Docs is another online collaboration site where students can create an account, upload documents and create live documents on line. The owner can then shares access to the documents by sending email invites allowing those users to come in and make changes to the document and save back to the secure web site.



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There are many websites offering online collaboration, all providing similar tools allowing students to work together in real time, creating and editing documents whether they are in the Harper Classroom on a business trip in New York. The team can work together by uploading and editing documents as well as assigning each other their tasks. Just be sure that the tools are easy to use, are secure and have the features to fit your needs. If you want to have brainstorming discussions, then choose a website like "dabbleboard.com" as their innovative interface lets you draw almost as naturally as you would on a real whiteboard, enabling you to quickly and spontaneously share your ideas. You can choose a tool like "wiki.com", if you want to share important team documents like Project Requirements, Design Documents and testing guides, these can be stored in Zoho Wiki' File cabinets. The documents can then be accessed online by the different teams involved and by maintaining the versions of the documents as old changes can be brought back for viewing.

A few of other highly rated online collaboration sites are Huddle, Wrike and KeepandShare . These online sites provide online calendars, word processing, file storage, photo sharing and to do lists, you can work together with your team in one single workspace by inviting your college partner or team to access it via e-mail. Once the invitation is accepted, all of those in the team can begin uploading and editing documents and also assigning each other tasks.

Although it may seem that this is similar to a previous researched technology, Web Conferencing, it is different. A web conference is more like a face-to-face meeting, to be a part of a discussion whereas online collaboration involves a team working together, often at the same time and on the same documents.



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Online Media & Research

Online media and resources are very popular among college students. What exactly is online media? Online media is digital media that is distributed over the Internet. This media includes photos, videos, music, forums, blogs, etc. The content is either non-copyrighted or copyrighted and it can be either free or provided for cost. You can find just about any type of information on the Internet. This is great for students or people who do not have access to transportation.

Online media and resources present many advantages to the people that use them. It is easier to manage and maintain online information. There are a good amount of websites regarding online media and resources. The online content is available all of the time and it can be accessed at any time a person wants to research. Students don't have to worry about library hours or having to pay a certain amount of money to print information from big encyclopedias. Sometimes pages from books in the library are torn out of the book because students don't want to pay money to print a large amount of pages. They don't have to worry about when certain books are due back to the library. Research can be accomplished from the convenience of the home. Students have encyclopedias, books, newspapers, videos, and photos at their fingertips.

Online media and resources make it easier for a student to find the information they are looking for. They don't have to sit down and pick out information from various books. Students can copy and paste online examples, such as pictures or videos, into their reports or projects. Students can also learn what is going on in the news because online media is one of the top news sources. I believe that students find it better to read current events on the computer, then from a newspaper.

Online media and resources make a student's life much easier. Plenty of students use these resources every day to complete homework assignments, projects, or for personal use. It is a great thing to have the ability to go on the Internet and find information about things going on in the world or in the past. Online media provides access for education and long distance learning. This is why its popularity keeps growing and growing.

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Smart Phones

If it is a safe assumption that every student in a Harper College classroom has a cellphone in their purse or pocket, it is just as safe to assume that one out of every two students has made the leap from a cellphone to a *smartphone*. Soon, it may be difficult to pick out a student that does not own a smartphone, as recent research has shown that adoption is quickly soaring to nearly 50% of all cellphone users. This trend will only continue as both consumers and manufacturers are switching their focus to phones that set the talking aside and allow you to do much more with your handheld device.

What differentiates smartphones from regular cellphones is that a smartphone is more like a computer than a traditional telephone. Smartphones offer the ability to perform many of the same tasks as a PC, such as emailing, document editing, and full web browsing. Smartphones have an advantage over many mobile computers, in that they have *always-on* Internet in the form of a mobile broadband connection. Application support is very strong, as many smartphone operating systems are backed by popular *app store* ecosystems. Most smartphones have high resolution displays, and front and rear facing cameras. The combination of tightly integrated hardware and software provides many opportunities for an educational institution to capitalize on the popularity of smartphone devices.

Examples of how Harper College can take advantage of smartphone technologies in interacting with students include push notifications to serve as reminders for assignment due dates, or importable calendars prepopulated with the student's class schedule. Online students can view live classes being streamed in real time over the Internet, and participate by typing or using the built-in microphone and camera. Students can take quizzes or tests on dedicated websites or applications, and submit their homework via email or mobile upload. The high resolution displays make it safe for students to spend more time reading text on their smartphones, allowing class materials, such as textbooks and reading assignments, to be engineered for portability.

Taking into consideration the growing popularity of smartphones, as well as the opportunities provided by the combination of hardware and software, there is much potential waiting to be tapped from the technology. It would be in both Harper College's and the student's best interests to shift the smartphone from being a classroom distraction tool to a productivity Swiss Army knife.

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Social Networking

Social Networking is very popular in today's society and among college students. Some of the most popular social networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace. Students use Facebook and Myspace to create profiles and communicate with friends and family. Twitter is a little different because people might not know everyone they follow on the site. You can follow celebrities and athletes and read their tweets and respond to them, though that does not mean they will respond back to you. Twitter is kind of like a blog and the people that follow you can see exactly how your day went or what you are doing depending on how often you tweet. People will sometimes receive a real quick response from something they tweet about depending on the subject. Twitter also has trending topics that people share their views on. These topics can include anything from a television show, a new song, a celebrity, etc. Facebook and Myspace are different from Twitter because most likely a person will know most of the people on their friends list. Facebook allows businesses to have pages and people can like them and learn about a specific business.

A good amount of students at Harper College have a Facebook page or another social networking page. It is a given that a good amount of students check these pages at least once a day. They check these pages either in the computer labs, their own personal laptops, tablets, or mobile phones. The students at Harper College use these sites to find current or past classmates and communicate with them. The social networking blow up might not seem like a big deal but students might actually learn valuable skills when they are on these sites.

Students are learning technological skills when they browse social networking sites. They are also learning how to adapt to change because some social networking sites tend to from time to time. They are also learning creativity and communication skills. Students are allowed to interact with people from different cultures. They are allowed to share personal music, poems, videos, etc. The profile they create gives others an opportunity to see what type of person they are. Students are also learning to be open to new and different views on certain situations. People rarely look at social networking in that positive way, but students can learn a few things and these sites don't have to be just about personal use.

Harper College has a profile page on Facebook, and that would be a good way to communicate with students. The college could try posting things that are going on around campus since students are more likely to see it on a social networking site. This would be for students who don't read flyers, attend online classes, or check their school email addresses. They could ask for input on certain matters and students could reply through the social networking site. Another thing the Harper College profile page does is it allows students to see who goes to the college and it allows people that want to learn about the college to do so.

Social networking shouldn't be seen as something just for personal time, but something that is positive and students can learn a few skills from. From the look of things, social networking is only going to get bigger and bigger. Businesses even have profile pages on Facebook that they use as marketing tools to gain customers and exposure. Social networking is a great way to get through to the students and Harper College should try and use it more to communicate with them and gain exposure.



Tablet Computers

Though tablet computers have been around for a decade now, only recently have they become a hot commodity and must-have item for the technology oriented consumer. The tipping point from burdensome, bulky experience to viable PC alternative came when Operating System developers stopped trying to cram a desktop environment behind a touch sensitive display. Today's tablet computers offer hardware and software that are customized specifically for the form factor that it comes bundled in. This tightly integrated experience provides a personal touch that has propelled us into the post-PC era.

Popular tablet computers, such as the Apple iPad and Samsung Galaxy Tab, can provide a productivity environment that almost rivals that of the desktop computer. Most tablet oriented operating systems have a pre-installed *app store* that makes software easily obtainable. The most engaging applications are those that take advantage of the unique features offered by tablets, such as the touch screen displays or motion sensors. Since screen real estate is more restrictive than those of laptop computers, applications built specifically for tablet devices should focus on uni-tasking or fast switching between views. Since hardware keyboards are not always included, typing requirements should be kept to a minimum. For tablets with a built-in microphone, speech recognition appears to be the next rising trend.

As a result of the increasing popularity of tablet computers, fragmentation can become an issue. There are a number of different operating systems available, as well as variants of those OSes. Hardware can also differ from device to device. Despite the differences, one thing that all tablet computers have in common is that they each have a web browser installed. As an alternative to natively installed software, *web apps* can run in the browser and utilize HTML 5 standards that will provide a uniform interface among tablet devices, as well as personal computers. Adhering to these standards will also reduce the dependency on third party browser plug-ins, such as Flash, which tends to drain battery life and provide a buggy user experience.

While certainly not every student of Harper College will own a tablet computer, it is a safe bet that a significant percentage does. This number will only grow over time, as the popularity of these devices has yet to peak. If properly supported, tablet computers can provide an engaging learning environment that can be incredibly beneficial for today's student.

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Video Conferencing

Video Conferencing is a technology that can be used at Harper College to motivate students to participate in class, to build collaboration skills for students allowing them to share knowledge, learning and build successful teams. It is the transmission of video and audio back and forth between two or more separate locations, simulating an exchange as if the participants were actually in the same location. The locations can be the Harper college classroom and a student using their laptop in their home or office. The benefit for the Harper college student is that they don't actually have to travel to the classroom; they can simply sign into a "webinar" and be an active participant in their classroom.

Spur of the moment meetings and face to face interactions can be possible no matter where you are. The cost is much less expensive than traveling to and from the classroom or to meet a classmate for a discussion. Videoconferencing could be useful for our on-line class communication between team members and allow weekly meetings to discuss status of projects; they can view presentations on-line, use a white board or a chalk board for emphasis on homework review or any number of different topics. It would have been great for this IT Project Management class as it would have allowed the team to discuss the project, help each other with understanding the weekly assignments or reviewing the GANTT chart for any changes or modifications that needed to be made.

The Harper College student would need to have access to the following:

- Laptop or Desktop computer; the screen would display video received and the speakers would play audio received
- Microphone to capture and send audio
- Camera to capture and send video. Can use a Webcam or your computer may already have a camera on it
- Broadband connection

The main disadvantage of using video conferencing for Harper College is that it is not one-sided. Not only is the student responsible for making sure that they have the equipment needed to access the video conference, but Harper College has to ensure access to equipment and software to access on-line video conferencing. Harper College could choose to set up a video conferencing classroom, setting up the equipment so it is always available to be used. The required equipment would be a camera(s) pointing at the teacher and the classroom, a document camera, monitor, projectors and Smart Boards. Teachers could wear a microphone or a microphone could be set up in central location.

Harper College would have to be responsible for choosing the software to access online video conferencing, these could be WebEx, Microsoft Live or Mega Meeting and they would provide the students with the pin number to access that conference. Both students inside and outside of the classroom need to be mindful of the noise levels in the room such as opening and closing the doors, clicking your pen, fidgeting, tapping on the desk with your hands or stomping your feet, talking with your classmates as all these will cause your viewer to have problems listening to the presentation. Although there may be costs associated with the use of this technology, allowing on-line students access to the same classroom teaching as students attending classes could increase enrollment for the student base that would not be able to commute to the college for classes.



Virtual Learning Environments/Labs

What is Virtual Learning Environment? VLE creates an environment that allows teachers to provide courses to their students using computer hardware and software and involves distance learning.

How can Harper College students use this personal technology to enhance their educational experience? Harper College already provides their students with a Virtual Learning Environment by allowing access to Blackboard Learn via HarperCollege.edu. Blackboard is a Virtual Learning Environment because students are able to view materials online, check-in with their teacher via emails, use discussion boards and take tests online with instant feedback. All students that take the on-line class as well as students attending traditional classroom teaching can access and use Blackboard. What's nice about using VLE is that a student can access blackboard everyday or once a week to complete their coursework – it's about individualized studying and having the tools available to the student all of the time.

It's amazing how technology has advanced in the past 10 years; Blackboard has only been a choice for colleges since 2005 and as of December 2010, Blackboard software and services are used by over 9300 institutions in more than 60 countries. VLE's allow many students to go back to school and obtain certifications or degrees that they never would have been able to do without being able to access online classes.

Virtual education allows colleges such as University of Phoenix to charge up to \$1000 a class without students every having to attend a classroom and the school saves tons of money by not having to pay rent, purchasing computers, saving on electricity as well as many other fixed costs. They are responsible for providing the virtual learning environment and hiring teachers to teach the courses but they have learned how to eliminate much of the costs.

In addition to Blackboard Learn, there also is another option which is Blackboard Collaborate. This method choice can be for formal virtual classes, informal chat, face-to-face video conferencing, collaborative meetings, mobile learning and voice capture and authoring. Blackboard Collaborate 11 introduces enterprise instant messaging capabilities - for informal collaboration at a moment's need. Users can see who's online and invite them to chat, talk, or share applications with a single click.

MiRTLE is another option that sounds pretty interesting, it is a Mixed-Reality Teaching and Learning Environment which provides online access to your classes, and mixes real and virtual students in a single location. This option allows students to remote into the annex and be a part of the classroom by using a webcam and echo-cancelling microphone mounted in the classroom.

Recommendation: Virtual education allows the classroom teacher to use the computer screen to deliver videos, presentations and can let the students hear their voice. Students can ask questions and get immediate feedback while being logged in to the class as well as talking with other students during the scheduled class time. Colleges will continue to expand on the types of learning environments and students will have more freedom and time by accessing the classroom via the smart phones or laptops.

When You're Strange: Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*

Mario Buonincontro

Course: English 101 (Composition)

Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment: *Write an essay discussing Nietzsche's most important message to the free spirits.*

"Friedrich Nietzsche killed Jim Morrison," states The Doors keyboardist, Ray Manzarek (qtd. in Henke 25). From an early age, Morrison, singer for the band The Doors, was inspired by Nietzsche. The philosopher's beliefs on morality and religion greatly influenced Morrison, and this is very clear in his poetry and lyrics. Nietzsche considered people who take on the daunting challenge of rethinking morality and who choose to be independent of conventional morality as "free spirits." Morrison was a fine example of a free spirit because he lived by his own rules and chose to be a leader of the counterculture. Most people do not challenge morality or popular beliefs like Morrison did. To Nietzsche, most people unconsciously accept the morality of their society, based, usually, on the Judeo-Christian tradition in the United States. They are unable to understand that many of the popular opinions that they believe to be true are actually culturally constructed and are hiding "truths" from them. These people would probably never agree with what Nietzsche wrote. However, Nietzsche did believe that there were people like him, or at least there would be in the future. Unlike many other philosophers before him, Nietzsche did not seek "universal truths." He believed they did not exist. Instead, he chose to emphasize the untruth, which he believed is a part of the human condition, and he questioned traditional values and ideas. He stated that doing so would raise one's thinking to a new level, beyond

good and evil. Nietzsche's ultimate message to the free spirits is to discover their own individual truths, and to abandon conventional morality and create their own.

In Nietzsche's book *Beyond Good and Evil*, he argues that to seek universal truths can be a very dangerous task. In one case, the truth may lead to virtue, while another truth may be unfavorable or painful. He writes, "A thing could be *true*, although it were in the highest degree injurious and dangerous; indeed, the fundamental constitution of existence might be such that one succumbed by a full knowledge of it—so that the strength of a mind might be measured by the amount of 'truth' it could endure..." (36). Nietzsche chose not to seek universal truths because he believed they were created by people, not God, and often based on the ethics of the Judeo-Christian traditions. He believed that Christian ethics enslave people who do not choose to challenge them. Instead, Nietzsche emphasized the practice of evaluating one's own ethics and beliefs. To

Student Reflections on Writing: Mario Buonincontro

I like inspiring quotes. Sharing the greatest expanse of wisdom with the least amount of words can spark revelations in all aspects of life. On the subject of writing, a particular quote from professional athlete Scott Hamilton comes to mind: "The only disability in life is a bad attitude." Looking back on my writing career, I realize that my disposition toward writing assignments was my greatest impairment. Not only did I not like writing, I firmly believed that I was a bad writer. That being said, there is good news and bad news; being a good writer means learning to like writing. This is not as bad as it may sound and is all it takes to be a successful writer. The good news is, from there, writing becomes easy and fun. So, if you find yourself stuck on a writing assignment, remember that you choose a good or bad attitude. By conditioning yourself to stay positive and motivated about writing, over time, you will learn to really appreciate the art of writing.

be a part of a group or follow the crowd, he says, is to be insane.

On the other hand, Nietzsche praised the individual, the leader. He wrote that to be proud was better than being humble. He was raised a Christian and witnessed first-hand the crutch of Christian ethics. To devote one's life to God's will, in his opinion, negates one's life. Those who can rise above Christian morality, Nietzsche believed, would be strong and daring, which were qualities that he valued. He writes in *Beyond Good and Evil* that "it is the business of the very few to be independent: it is the privilege of the strong. And whoever attempts it, even with the best right, but without being *obliged* to do so, proves that he is probably not only strong, but also daring beyond all measure" (29). This independence is a fundamental quality of the free spirit. To be truly free, one must first abandon conventional truths, and then *choose* to be independent of these truths.

However, the most important quality of the free spirit is to rise above the truth and focus on the untruths of life. According to Nietzsche, our most indispensable opinions, of which humankind bases their most important truths, are often actually false. Furthermore, without these false truths, society would cease to function. They are so much a part of society that the majority of people completely ignore their invalidity. He emphasized focusing instead on the fact that these opinions, which society accepts as truth, cannot actually be true. There can only be personal truths and facts based on perspectives. Nietzsche explains that "the renunciation of false opinions would be a renunciation of life, a negation of life. To recognize untruth as a condition of life: that is certainly to impugn the traditional ideas of value in a dangerous manner, and a philosophy which ventures to do so, has thereby alone placed itself beyond good and evil" (5). Blindly accepting society's values can harm the free spirit. In doing so, one gives up the right to choose for oneself one's own opinions. One might argue that "ignorance is bliss." Perhaps it is better not thinking about these ideas. In Nietzsche's opinion, it is crucial to rise above "good and evil" to discover, for one's self, what one truly believes; this is what it means to be a free spirit.

Nietzsche might have agreed that Morrison was a free spirit. Morrison challenged the morals of society not

only in his art but also as a performer and a leader for his fans. The writings of Nietzsche may not have actually been what killed Morrison, as Manzarek suggests. However, Nietzsche's influence on Morrison was substantial and may have indirectly influenced Morrison's choices in life, which eventually led to an early death through substance abuse. Many may see this as a reason to dismiss and even ignore the writings of Nietzsche as causing more harm than good. On the other hand, Morrison rose from a humble childhood to become one of the greatest musical icons to ever live. The influence of Nietzsche cannot be ignored, even if it may upset us. Although some of what he had to say may seem illogical or even insane to some, the great thinkers who were influenced by his works (like Freud, Martin Heidegger, and Albert Camus) may be seen as evidence of his importance in the evolution of the philosopher of the future. The fact that some misunderstood Nietzsche, for example Adolph Hitler, does not negate what he had to say. Nietzsche's writings will continue to inspire free thinkers, from rock stars like Morrison to poststructuralist philosophers like Jacques Derrida, to challenge the ethics of the masses for as long as people continue to read his controversial works.

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Evaluation: *Mario does a nice job of linking an example from the pop world, Jim Morrison, to the controversial ideas of Nietzsche's message to the free spirits, which might cause harm as much as it influences independence.*

Metamorphoses

Emily Chidlow

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Andrew Wilson

Assignment: *Write a literary research paper.*

The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives two definitions for the word *metamorphosis*. The first meaning is “(in an insect or amphibian) the process of transformation from an immature form to an adult form in two or more distinct stages” (675). The second definition is “a change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one, by natural or supernatural means” (675). In Kafka’s short story, “The Metamorphosis,” both types of metamorphoses are represented. The first definition describes the metamorphosis of Gregor Samsa, who literally transforms from a human to an insect. However, the more startling and profound metamorphosis of this story matches the second definition of the word. Grete, Gregor’s little sister, goes through a complete transformation of her inner nature at the deepest spiritual level. Thus, though Gregor’s change is most definitely shocking, Grete’s is also worth noting because it is arguably the more profound and perhaps more sinister metamorphosis of the two.

At the opening of Kafka’s “The Metamorphosis,” Gregor Samsa finds himself transformed from a healthy young man into a gargantuan insect with a hard shell-like body and tiny legs. Though Gregor’s physical metamorphosis is certainly shocking to the reader, when looked at carefully, it is not truly a metamorphosis on the deepest level, because in a spiritual sense, Gregor has always been a sort of insect in the regard of his employer and even his family. As Gregor contemplates what his boss’s reaction to this startling turn of events will be, he contemplates that “It’s incredible the way [the director] has of sitting perched at his reading desk and speaking from on high to employees who, on top of everything, have to draw very near owing to his slight deafness” (Kafka 613). Even though Gregor lacks the chutzpah to change his humdrum life, Gregor does indeed, in his

own mind, have one moment of glory. On the morning of his metamorphosis, when his employer comes to his home to find out why Gregor was late for work, Gregor gives a profound speech from his locked bedroom – even daring to shout, “Just one moment of patience!” (Kafka 617). This moment in most stories would be the crowning moment for the hero, the moment in which he “sticks it to the man,” so to speak, and makes the readers shake their fists in triumph for the underdog. But unfortunately, in Gregor’s case, no one understands his great speech, for his voice is now an animal’s. As Goldfarb notes, “to a certain extent being a bug is just like being a human being for Gregor: he cannot get his needs met in either form” (Goldfarb 200). Everyone – especially his employer – has ignored or discounted Gregor’s need to air his grievances to such a point that in his metamorphosis, they are literally unable to comprehend him, even when there is a desire to do so. Therefore, in his workplace, Gregor has always had to look up to his boss like an insect looking up to a human, pleading for its very life, hoping that it will not be crushed by the devastation of unemployment.

Gregor’s family even seems to realize that his physical change does not indicate some deeper, spiritual change in their boy. It seems that, if placed in the circumstances of awakening one morning to find a bug instead of your son or brother in the house, one might come to the conclusion that some horrible monster had come inside and eaten the young man. However, with the Samsa family, this is not the case. From the very start, they know that it is Gregor who has turned into the insect, as if it has always been something they knew could happen. Grete even chooses to feed the giant bug milk, “which had always been [Gregor’s] favorite drink” (Kafka 622). So, it seems that there was no doubt in Grete’s mind that this bug was, in fact, her brother. It could even be argued that Gregor’s entire existence as a human being was more a dream, and his existence as an insect was his reality. In the opening of the story, Gregor is said to have awoken from “unquiet dreams” (Kafka 612), yet by the time he has made his complete change into a bug, his sleep is described as “deep” and “dreamless” (Kafka 621). Thus, Kafka makes it incredibly clear that Gregor’s bug-like state “wasn’t a dream” (Kafka 612). Gregor has simply become what he has always acted like and was always

treated like – a bug. In fact, the only time the validity of Gregor’s metamorphosis is questioned is when, near the story’s close, he listens to Grete play the violin for the three men boarding in their apartment. “The music gripped him – was he then an animal?” (Kafka 636). “Gregor, listening, deeply moved, to his sister’s violin playing...has reached the highest point in his life which, in its previous form, together with many other human qualities, lacked also interest in music” (Spann 204). There is a certain fulfillment in being one’s true self, and this seems to be the case for Gregor, who could not enjoy the pleasure of music while masquerading as a human, but finds comfort in doing so while embracing his true identity. Thus, even though this event questions whether he is spiritually an insect or a human, the desired conclusion to be made is that he is indeed a spiritual and physical insect.

Moreover, Gregor’s bug-like existence prior to his actual metamorphosis is also evidenced in his reactions to his family’s financial circumstances. Because Gregor’s father had supposedly declared bankruptcy and ruined the Samsa family financially, Gregor took up his dreaded job bringing home all the money while his father, mother, and sister sat quietly at home, doing nothing of consequence. “They simply got used to it – the family, as well as Gregor” (Kafka 625). This passive attitude in Gregor is one of the defining characteristics of his insectile nature. Even when he finds out that his father has, in actuality, hoarded a great sum of money which could have allowed Gregor to work fewer hours, if not quit altogether, Gregor takes on a “father knows best” attitude of passivity, trusting that his father did the right thing in not telling him, and he does not become outraged at this obvious injustice. Gregor even seems to find a sick pleasure in being a slave to his family without a will of his own. He thinks of their desires in making even the simplest of decisions: “Maybe they’ll allow me to turn around now” (Kafka 638). Regardless of the circumstances surrounding him, Gregor, prior to his physical transformation, worked nearly all hours of the day, carrying his goods back and forth and back and forth, like a perpetually journeying ant on a slave-like mission to provide. It is no surprise that he ultimately finds the true fulfillment of his nature in turning into a giant insect, then dying to please his family once he realizes they wish to move on without him. Gregor does not become outraged

by the heartlessness of his family because that would be against his passive nature. Instead of remembering how ignored, abandoned, and unwanted he had become, before his death, “he thought of his family with compassion and love” (Kafka 639). More than that, “His conviction that he had to disappear was even more definite than his sister’s” (Kafka 639). Spiritually, Gregor has not changed at all since becoming an insect. He continues – even to the point of death – to concede his own desires to that of his family’s, regardless of how they treat him.

In contrast, Grete goes through a metamorphosis in the deepest and most spiritual sense of the word. Her entire personality changes within the confines of the story so that she is nearly unrecognizable at its closing. As the story opens, Grete is timid and unassuming, described by Gregor as a girl “who at seventeen was still a child, and whose lifestyle consisted of dressing herself neatly, sleeping late, helping out in the household, taking part in a few modest pleasures, and above all playing the violin” (Kafka 625-26). As her schedule insinuates, Grete does not have much of a life, and her family does not see fit to entrust her with any household chores of importance whatsoever. When Gregor changes into an insect, sweet little Grete becomes the closest thing to a friend he has in his changed condition, and she becomes his sole caretaker. However, this situation does not remain the same for very long. Soon Grete begins her metamorphosis, and her attitude toward her brother changes drastically. Though “She had become accustomed to playing the expert when it came to discussing anything that concerned Gregor with her parents” (Kafka 628), Grete’s attention to Gregor is no longer in his best interest. After her and her mother’s failed attempt at moving around Gregor’s furniture, and having Gregor come out from underneath his hiding place of the couch to frighten his mother into a faint, Grete’s exhausted explanation to her father is “Gregor broke out” (Kafka 630). This phrase, though seemingly harmless, betrays more an attitude of wanting to confine Gregor than set him free from his insectile bondage. One of the most symbolic moments of Grete’s transformation is the dropping of her violin near the end of the story, which seems to indicate one of the final stages of her transformation. Her violin, a symbol of her innocence and sweetness, is dropped when Mrs. Samsa stands up

hurriedly upon seeing Gregor. Immediately following this event, Grete's new savage nature manifests itself in its entirety. Her sweetness and naivete is shattered. This new, independent, decision-making Grete calls for Gregor's very destruction in amazingly cold-blooded terms: "It has to go" (Kafka 638), not even giving him the dignity of calling him by his gender, which shows that she no longer seems to view him as a brother or even a human being, but instead, as a vermin which must be exterminated. By the story's close, Grete is a strong but savage person, with little to no compassion for anyone other than herself.

Grete's metamorphosis, in keeping with an insectile theme, can be likened strongly to a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. One of the reader's first pictures of Grete is one of her sobbing in her room next to Gregor's, while the director and Mr. and Mrs. Samsa attempt to get the newly transformed bug-man out of his room. This strongly symbolizes Grete's cocoon-like state at this stage of the story. Grete has not begun to change yet; she is simply closed in, just waiting to begin her quiet transformation. As Grete takes on more responsibility, and even gets a job at a local store, Gregor notes that her neck is now "left uncovered, without ribbon or collar" (Kafka 636), symbolizing that Grete has begun to shed her cocoon and is well on her way to becoming a new creation. At the story's close, when Gregor has died and the Samsa family has closed a horrifying chapter in their lives and begun to move on, Grete makes her final transformation. While the Samsas are on a trolley on the way to their new apartment and new life, "their daughter arose first and stretched her young body" (Kafka 641). This act of stretching out on the trolley car brings Grete's metamorphosis to fruition. She has now pulled her wings from the confines of her cocoon and has emerged a beautiful, desirable, but savage butterfly.

Kafka seems to indicate through his writing that at least in the view of Mr. and Mrs. Samsa, Grete's change is most definitely for the better. Even though her parents seem to be completely engrossed in whatever Grete has to say and are willing to follow whatever direction she gives, Grete proves that she does not have the same affection for them. When Gregor comes out of his room to listen to her play the violin, Grete becomes frightened and "completely abandoned [her] mother and practically

vaulted off her chair, as if she would rather sacrifice her than remain in Gregor's vicinity" (Kafka 638). Despite this, after Gregor has died and the family is on their way to their new home, Mr. Samsa looks at Grete and notices her new liveliness, and both he and his wife "realized that it would soon be time to look for a good husband for her" (Kafka 641). Even though Grete is a selfish, controlling young woman, the characters in the story seem to think that this is good, because it is the only way a person can survive in this crazy world. In this way, Kafka's work is an accurate depiction of the Darwinian mindset that pervaded the twentieth century populace and continues to influence cultures everywhere today. The "survival of the fittest" mentality is certainly present in Kafka's writing; however, instead of leaving the reader happy at the triumph of Darwinism in the death of the inferior bug-man, readers are left mourning the death of the naive, but lovable main character.

And who is it that triumphs? His bullying father and the sister who betrayed him. Not everyone is doomed to be crushed like a bug, the story is saying; not everyone, just you and I, while other people somehow get ahead at our expense. It is a despairing conclusion. (Goldfarb 201)

The conclusion cannot help but be drawn that, though the dialogue between the Samsas contradicts the negative nature of the Darwinian mindset, the idea that only the strongest, most dominant personalities should survive is destructive to the family unit, and to societies at large. Kafka's story is not fantasy; it is a dark allegory, describing what can happen when Darwinist principles are embraced and taken to the extreme. After all, one critic said of Kafka's intentions in writing "The Metamorphosis":

It contains no metaphysical purpose, it is an account, in Kafka's terms, of a given situation in contemporary life; the situation, say of a bank clerk, on whom his whole family has depended, who wakes up one morning to discover that he is suffering from an incurable disease. (Spender 211-12)

Thus, if Kafka desired Gregor to be seen as a

representation of a diseased person, given the historical context and ethnic background of Franz Kafka, Gregor may also represent the handicapped people or people of “inferior race” who were persecuted in twentieth-century Germany, and Grete may represent the evil powers who called for their destruction. In his book on evolutionary ethics in pre-war Germany, Richard Weikart writes that “Some eugenicists even claimed that individuals with physical or mental disabilities were not only worthless, but of negative value” (Weikart 96). If Grete’s actions in calling for the destruction of Gregor are correct, it is only logical in the Darwinian mind to call for the destruction of all inferior people, such as was done in Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler’s reign. Weikart contends that, “The earliest significant German advocate for killing the ‘unfit’ was Haeckel, whose views on killing the weak and sick were, in his estimation, the logical consequence of his Darwinian monistic worldview” (Weikart 146). Thus, very much like Hitler’s treatment of undesirables, “It is [Grete’s] firm rejection of [Gregor] as a person that ultimately causes him to surrender his own sense of self, precipitating his death” (Silet n.p.). Grete’s Darwinian mindset is not only faulty, but also destructive to any and all societies. Contrary to what Silet says about Kafka’s characters being “adrift in a world of their own making over which they have little control” (Silet n.p.), it seems that Grete does, in fact, have much control over her world; however, what she does with that control is create a savage place in which she alone holds the life of weaker beings in her all-powerful sway.

Despite the undeniably savage nature of Grete’s transformation, her metamorphosis still remains the most stunning of the two metamorphoses in the story. While “Gregor’s transformation is not an escape from his past loneliness but an intensification of it” (Goldfarb 199), Grete’s transformation is deep and spiritual, changing her from a timid girl locked away in her bedroom into a young woman declaring that her insect brother is unfit to live. It is a story of two extremes. On the one hand, Gregor’s obvious, far less esoteric transformation is a sad commentary on what can happen to a person who goes through life in an insectile state of mind, living only to work and provide for family with no thought given to a higher purpose. Gregor’s family loyalty is

certainly not a negative quality in itself; however, it becomes a negative quality when it is not tempered by a healthy – not exaggerated – value of self. Contrastingly, Grete proves that the opposite extreme is also wrong. Living with a “primal” or “survival of the fittest” kind of mentality only brings destruction to others and in no way benefits mankind or the progress of a kinder, more charitable society. Thus, Kafka leaves his reader with two metamorphoses, one physical and obvious, and the other spiritual and esoteric, but the lesson is the same: a proper view of self and others is vital to a healthy, free society.

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Evaluation: *With beautiful prose, Emily offers her reader at least two important things: a deeply insightful examination of Kafka’s weird, heartbreaking story, and a much-needed reminder that genuine change tends usually to be not merely physical but spiritual, as well.*

I Am Thankful for Those Who Occupy

Michael Clayton

Course: English 101 (Composition)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *One choice for the final essay of the semester was to summarize, respond to, and argue with an editorial published by a national or local media outlet, and to use research to support a claim of truth, value, or policy related to the subject of the editorial.*

The “Arab Spring” that started in December of 2010 and continues in December of 2011 garnered the attention of the world. The news has been saturated with coverage of multiple uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. Citizens of countries including Yemen, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt have created a revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests aimed at economic and social inequalities. The most powerful tool in this “revolution” has been peaceful, non-violent protest. One unexpected offspring of the “Arab Spring” has been a movement by the name of “Occupy Wall Street” in the United States. In July of 2011, inspired by the youthful revolt in Egypt, a small, Vancouver-based anti-consumerist magazine, *Adbusters*, sent out an e-mail to readers suggesting that people assemble on Wall Street to protest corporate greed and corruption and their intrusion in the political system. As a result of social networking, the movement grew legs, and on September 17, 2011, hundreds of protestors took to Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan for a peaceful occupation of Wall Street to “get the money out.” The group claimed themselves to be the “99%,” compared to the richest “1%” who are benefitting from a political system heavily influenced by corporations and the power of money. The OWS movement has grown beyond anything most people, outside the movement, predicted. One worldwide event in October included eighty countries and 950 different protests.

Much of the mainstream media has painted an

unsightly portrait of the movement, while focusing on the “circus” aspect of the protests. In every uprising such as this, there will be some people in the crowd who project an unfavorable viewpoint, turning to vandalism or violence. Episodes of that sort have been miniscule and have immediately been denounced by the spokespeople of the OWS. The vast majority of protests have been peaceful, even with mounting evidence of police overreaction and violence. Several media outlets have chosen to cherry-pick video footage and have produced misleading information without researching what the movement is really about. Many “journalists” have chosen to mock and dismiss the movement as a bunch of hippies and anarchists without a distinct purpose.

One such article I have read is a perfect example of the misrepresentation of the OWS movement. Columnist Cal Thomas wrote a piece that was published in the *Daily Herald*, Northwest Suburbs Edition, on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 2011. In the article “Thankfulness and Those Who Occupy,” Mr. Thomas promotes an idea that the OWS movement is one of “envy” and the people who support or are involved in the movement are not “self-sufficient” and lack “work ethic.” I think the image of OWS, and its message, has been distorted by irresponsible journalism and ignorance. I was personally offended, angered, and saddened by Mr. Thomas, and his condescending description of many Americans.

In Mr. Thomas’ column, he starts out by saying he once was part of the 99 percent. I think at this point it is important to designate what it means to be in the one percent. According to a graphic published by *The New York Times*, the top one percent has an income that averages \$717,000 a year and starts at \$386,000 a year. At the age of thirty-seven, making \$25,000 a year, Mr. Thomas was frustrated by his career and salary. He goes on to say that his hard work and experience eventually paid off and resulted in a better-paying job. With his statement “for more than half my life I was a 99-percenter” (Thomas 16), Mr. Thomas leads me to believe that this better job led him on a path to be included in the income bracket of the one percent of the country. This particular assertion is not what I have a problem with.

I think Mr. Thomas starts to go wrong when he makes the statement “Rather than envy them, I wanted

to be like them” (Thomas 16). He was speaking of successful people he interviewed when he was a young reporter. With that statement, I think Mr. Thomas creates a distinct separation between himself and many Americans, including those who support OWS. I don’t believe that most Americans are unhappy or resentful because they are not in the “one percent.” Nor have I read anywhere in the first official statement from OWS, or on the OWS website, that the objective is to be included in the “one percent.”

After I read “Thankfulness and Those Who Occupy,” I immediately started to think of someone I am very thankful for. My great-uncle Dave now lives in Wisconsin after living in the Chicago area all his life. He is a WWII veteran, earning a Purple Heart after being dropped in Normandy on D-Day at the age of nineteen. Around the age of twenty-three, he returned from three- and one-half years of service, started working odd jobs, and never attended college. He later became a Chicago firefighter, retiring after twenty-five years. When I interviewed my uncle, he didn’t know too much about OWS, but he did say that he believes the rich are getting richer while the middle class is struggling. I then asked him if he wanted to become a millionaire when he was growing up. He said “Hell no, I never thought I could be a millionaire. I didn’t have the education. I only had a grade school education. Money wasn’t that important to me. I wanted to make some money and save a little bit for me and Juanita (his wife). We gave some money away but, we were ok with what we had” (Personal Interview, 2011). I get no feeling of envy or resentment from my uncle and would consider him one who had “work ethic” second to none. He never became a millionaire and was ok with that. If he had had a million dollars, he said “I might have gotten a seventeen-foot fishing boat instead of a fourteen-foot.” I believe most Americans would share this viewpoint.

I was recently watching a documentary called *Two Americas* on television. The documentary focused on two families at the opposite end of the economic spectrum. One story was that of a middle- class family struggling to make ends meet as a result of Paul, the father, losing his \$55,000 a year job due to the recession. Javier, the father of the second family, is the chairman and CEO of one of the largest commodities brokerage companies in North

America and Europe, with annual revenue of more than \$100 million. Javier makes a couple of statements that lead right into two of my arguments, related to avenues taken to become part of the “one-percent,” as well as what is happening to the middle class. In the coverage that I have seen of OWS, outside of the mainstream media, a major part of the dialogue has included the erosion of the middle class.

Javier was doing his senior year internship at a crude oil brokerage, mostly as a go-for. At this point his life took a dramatic turn. He says “unfortunate for the world, but fortunate for Javier Loya, Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait, and the crude oil price went from \$15 to \$40” (*Two Americas*). He goes on to explain that he went from getting lunch to making \$75,000 a year. He eventually moved to Texas where the oil companies were. There is no doubt that Javier worked hard to go from getting lunch to where he is now, but the key word in his statement is “fortunate.” The world is full of stories of a man or woman who was in the right place at the right time. Javier had all the tools to aid in his success and took advantage of an opportunity presented to him. Opportunity is not created, it is cultivated or exploited. People of all segments of society are often subject to conditions out of his or her control. Those conditions can both hinder or accelerate the ascension to the “one percent.”

A second statement by Javier also stood out as a revealing commentary. Javier points out, “I really believe the American dream is alive and well. Now, it’s different than the American dream my parents envisioned. You know. Certainly with the old you come here, you work for a company, and say, put in forty years, you got your retirement, you got your home. Oh yeah, that’s gone away, those jobs are now overseas, but the world is changing, the economy is changing” (*Two Americas*). First of all, has the American dream become a quest to be in the “one percent?” I have heard politicians say they want everyone to be rich. That notion on its face is unrealistic. I did a little math. If you multiply 160,000,000 (approximate number of working Americans) times \$717,000 (average yearly salary of the top 1%), you get \$114,720,000,000,000. The current total GDP of the U.S. is somewhere around \$14 trillion. You do the math. Secondly, you can argue why those jobs that Javier’s parents had are disappearing, but

the fact is, that they are, at an alarming rate in the last thirty years. The jobs just are not there. There also was the 2008 housing crash, and one of the biggest economic downturns in history starting before that. Even if every one of the approximately three millions jobs available were filled, there still would be about eleven million people unemployed. This subject is something that is a continuing part of the conversation among OWS and its supporters.

Recently on the *CBS News* program *60 Minutes*, which I accessed on the Internet, Leslie Stahl asked President Obama's jobs commission leader, Jeffery Immelt, a question related to U.S. corporations and jobs. Leslie's question was, "Shouldn't American corporations, don't they have some type of civic responsibility to create jobs?" Mr. Immelt's response embodies a principle message of OWS. He answers "My name's not above the door, I work for investors." This comment does evoke the idea that today's CEOs and corporations put profits before anything else. At what point is enough profit enough? Many of these giant corporations would still remain profitable if they brought jobs back to the U.S.

I do not think capitalism and all corporations are bad. There are some in the OWS movement that think we don't need corporations. Capitalism, corporations, and government themselves cannot be "evil." All these institutions benefit society if they are left to their primary purpose. The problem is the *people* that exploit those institutions, for their own personal gain, at the expense of others and the environment. The American people, and OWS supporters, understand that most of the greatest accomplishments of this country have occurred when all these elements work together in pursuit of one common goal.

In his Thanksgiving Day editorial, Mr. Thomas also loses my support for his point of view when he says "There is not a single pie from which all must eat" (16). He uses this analogy to explain that OWS does not understand economics. However, the *world* is one big pie. We all share its resources—both natural and human. These resources are the ingredients that create an economy. Can anything be made or sold without these resources? Can capital be raised without these resources? Once capital is gained from these resources, it has been distributed

disproportionally towards the "one-percent" in the past thirty years. The problem is that too many people keep eating after they are full. Gluttony is just as deadly as starvation; it just takes longer. The share of the nation's wealth for the "one percent" is around 40%. Look at it this way. If you were at your mother's house for a holiday dinner, with ten people, with a pie on the table cut into ten pieces, your fat uncle would eat four, and let the other nine people split six.

The OWS movement has moved inequality to the forefront of political conversation. Many of these statistics have not been this distorted since just before the Great Depression. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the "one percent" has seen their income increase by 275% from 1979 thru 2007 ("Trends in the Distribution of Household Income 1979-2007"). The top "one percent" earned more than 23% of the total income of the nation in 2007. In 1978, the average CEO earned thirty-five times what the average American worker made. Today, that number is around 240 times what the average worker makes. Because of technology and innovation, productivity has exploded in that same time period as well. Despite these increases, the average overall wages have increased less than twenty percent. The middle and lower class in this country have gone from spending, saving, and investing to spending and borrowing without sustainable wage increases.

When speaking about the recent debt commission and conveying a thought on rearrangement of taxes on the wealthy, Mr. Thomas states that these words are "elements of a poison familiar to many who have succeeded in life of their own efforts" (16). The first problem with this statement is the assertion that the "one percent" has gotten there solely of their own making. No one has anything without the help of people, places, and things. When someone makes a million dollars off of a widget, there are hundreds, maybe even thousands, of things that need to happen. Did that person create the raw materials needed for making the parts of the widget? Did that person make, transport, store and assemble parts? Did that person build the highways needed for transportation for those parts? Did that person build the schools he and his employees used to gain the education needed to build that widget? Does that person protect his widget from fire and theft

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twenty-four-hours-a-day? Did that person write the patent laws that protect his widget from being copied? I'll stop there. I think you get the point. All the things needed to produce that widget come from the private *and* public sector, as well as the earth's resources. **NO ONE DOES ANYTHING, OR HAS ANYTHING, ON HIS OR HER OWN.**

Secondly, taxes are not "poison." As it says in the U.S. Constitution, Article 1 Section 8, "The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect all taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general *welfare* of the United States; but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States" (*Usconstitution.net*). Taxes are essential to the country for many reasons. The OWS movement wants the people responsible for setting the rate and allocating those taxes, to be responsible and fair. Why did congressmen sign a pledge not to raise taxes, created by a lobbyist, Grover Norquist? The majority of Americans, as well as the millionaires themselves, agree we should raise taxes on millionaires. It shows that Congress is not listening to its constituency. We can all agree that not all taxes are spent wisely, but revenue is certainly a part of the formula for help during a recession or economic downturn.

The problem on Capitol Hill is that money influences the decision making all too often. I think more than anything, OWS wants to "get the money out" of Washington. OWS realizes the entire system is broken and does not endorse any particular political party. Congressmen on both sides of the aisle have seen their own wealth dramatically increase compared to the majority of Americans. According to *Politifact.com*, "42 percent of House Members and 67 percent of Senators are millionaires in net worth." I am not saying that being a millionaire is wrong, but it does raise questions. Is Congress in touch with the middle class? Does being a millionaire affect policy making? Why are the rules different for Congress regarding insider trading?

With corporations spending hundreds of millions of dollars through lobbying, and the increase in funding needed to get elected, it is no wonder the majority of Americans don't believe their elected officials have their best interest in mind. More than 90% of elections are won

by the candidate that raises the most money. Because of the decision made by the U.S. Supreme Court, in the *Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission* case, corporations can make unlimited donations to political campaigns, without transparency.

Mr. Thomas goes on to make more general and disparaging comments toward Americans and the OWS movement. His myopic viewpoint speaks in a tone that resonates as both hyperbolic and rhetorical. I don't believe "Human nature is such that a substantial number of people can be addicted to a government check if they choose not to work" (16). He shows no understanding of addiction, but more than that, I believe that people want to work. The time spent looking for jobs has steadily been rising since unemployment insurance has been extended. I am not currently employed full-time. Recently, I was lucky to get an interview for a full-time job, after sending out hundreds of applications. During that interview, I was informed that she had more than fifty candidates for that one position. There simply are just not enough jobs to go around. I understand some people lack some ambition and drive, but does that make them less than human? There is no way for anyone to know exactly what another person has gone through, leading to their current circumstances. Mr. Thomas has no right to judge.

This distorted dialogue continues when Thomas says, "How many parents are bragging about their kids occupying cities and universities and fouling the ground and streets with human waste?"(16). What? This comment indicates the lack of honest coverage related to OWS. He is trying to portray OWS and its supporters as dirty and lacking in dignity. He continues the message that the OWS movement is made of "kids." There is no doubt the movement started with a youthful element and many of the core members are young, but most of these "kids" are college students. College students above the age of eighteen are ADULTS! I also think that these adults have parents who are proud that their children are exercising their first amendment right to protest and are standing up for a cause they believe in.

I am not sure what Mr. Thomas is watching, or reading to get his information on OWS and its supporters, or that he is making a serious attempt to learn more about it. The coverage I have accessed, outside of mainstream

media, paints a completely different picture of the movement for me. I have seen the movement grow to include a wide cross-section of working class Americans. I have learned that OWS has much in common with the Tea Party, including dislike of TARP, bank profits as a result, misuse of taxpayers' money, overreaching and ineffective governing, money in Washington, and lack of confidence in the working of the system as a whole. One thing I don't get from the Tea Party, and from people who bash OWS, is the virtue of altruism. I get the sense from OWS that they subscribe to the notion "all men are created equal," and therefore, that we should all try to help one another.

I have seen students, teachers, university professors, economists, nurses, doctors, businessmen and women, religious figures, civil rights groups, policemen, firemen, construction workers, carpenters, electricians, contractors, veterans, mothers, grandmothers, fathers, children, aunts, uncles, every race, hippies, journalists, politicians and many, many, more join in marching, and supporting the OWS movement. Do all these Americans lack "work ethic," are they not "self-sufficient," do they "envy" the one percent? I think these Americans would gladly answer that question for you.

I believe OWS stands for all the people who think they are not getting a fair shake. I interviewed Mark Healy, professor and chairperson of the economics department at Harper College. He said something that I think speaks to

the core of OWS: "Equity, the fair distribution of income, increases societal satisfaction." I think citizens of this country would just like to be satisfied with a job well done, a living wage, a home, a loving family, and good health. People have not been satisfied with the direction the country has gone. People are not satisfied with that fact that one of two people in this country is now considered low-income or below the poverty line. What OWS and its supporters have done is create a voice for the citizens of this country who are not "satisfied" and want answers and change. I am thankful to those of OWS and for the country I live in, which allows movements like this to happen.

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Evaluation: *In this response, Michael presents an informed, passionate, and clarifying explanation of the truth of the Occupy movement, in response to syndicated columnist Cal Thomas. It is exciting to encounter such spirited, thoughtful, and meaningful writing on a subject that is at the center of American politics and economics today.*

Men of Violent Means: The Chicago Circulation War and Its Effects on Chicago Prohibition

Jackie Cooney

Course: Law Enforcement
and Justice Administration 230
(Organized Crime)

Instructor: Wayne A. Johnson

Assignment: *Research a topic in organized crime and write a paper that places the topic within a historical context, while also examining the underlying motivation of the criminal organization and the organization's effects on society.*

Prohibition was one of the most colorful and influential periods in American history. Hot jazz danced among the smiles and loud laughter of the speakeasies. Money flowed freely like the illegal liquor that filled millions of glasses every night. More could be understood with a wink and a smile than with an entire conversation. It was an era of excesses. While people preached morality and constraint in public, at home and in the bars, they worshipped gluttony. Almost a century has passed since the enactment of the Volstead Act, and the United States is still talking about the consequences of prohibitive laws, citing the violence, wide-spread corruption, and general disregard for human safety that can accompany them. Nowhere is there a city more synonymous with the unabashed violence and graft of the era than Chicago. But the successful practices of bootleggers and gangsters didn't just sprout from the streets of Chicago when Prohibition took effect in 1920. It had a teacher, a predecessor, a mentor: an event so forgotten that most history books don't mention it, most people don't know about it, and those biographies that do talk about it only dedicate a sliver of space to it. It was the war that came

before the war over booze. It was the war over newspaper circulation. The Chicago Circulation War was Chicago's first foray into large-scale organized crime and helped usher in Chicago's most infamous historical period, Prohibition.

Unfortunately, historians and biographers do not agree on integral parts of the events of this topic because primary resources available are few and often times conflicting. Some of the big barriers to full discovery of the war are the absence of the battle in major newspapers and arrest records of the sluggers on the front lines. At the time of the war, Chicago had more than just two major dailies, and the *Chicago Sun-Times* didn't exist yet. The *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago American*, *Chicago Examiner*, *Chicago Daily News*, *Chicago Record-Herald* and others suppressed news or deliberately misreported the violence in the streets and the reasons behind it because it was the very watchdogs of the city who sanctioned this war (Wendt 383-384; Ogden 48; Gies 35; "What's the Matter" 1).

War was declared in 1900 when yellow-journalism mogul William Randolph Hearst bulldozed his way on to the Chicago daily newspaper market with the opening of his *Chicago American* (Wendt 352). His competitors like Robert Patterson's *Chicago Tribune* (Joseph Patterson and Robert McCormick took over the *Tribune* later after Robert Patterson died) and Victor Lawson's *Chicago Daily News* and *Chicago Morning-Record* did not bid him a warm welcome. Pre-existing papers hired rough and tumble men with a talent to intimidate in order to keep the new guy off the streets and out of the hands of the city's citizens (Winkler 171-172; Wendt 353). Simultaneously, Hearst hired his own goon squad to force "fair representation" for the *American* on newsstands and street corners (Ogden 51). No one knows who struck the first blows of the decades-long battle. It is unclear if Hearst hired strongmen in retaliation to the established papers' recruitment of the same or if it was the other way around. In the overall historical scope, placing blame on who started it doesn't really matter as much as what happened after the first delivered slugging.

Authors can't agree on how long the war lasted. Some say that the war started in 1910 and only lasted until 1913 or so (English 100-101). With a newly uncovered

resource, an independent Chicago daily paper called *The Day Book*, the timeline becomes a little clearer. *The Day Book*, published between 1911 and 1917, sides with authors who date the war beginning in 1900. (“Employment of Sluggers” 14). The slugging hit an uneasy peace before 1910 (Gies 36). Then, hell’s gates opened and unleashed the most violent portion of the war on Chicago when Victor Lawson slashed the price of his papers to one cent. His move forced the *Tribune* to do the same. Hearst’s *American* already sold for one cent, and the drop caused competition to increase to a degree unseen by Chicago (Swanberg 270-271). By the end of *The Day Book*’s life, it still talked about the “news sluggers,” mentioning that they should be sent to fight in Europe if the United States ever declared war against Germany (“Merely Comment” 8). The U.S. did go to war, and as World War I ended, some authors recognized that the slugging continued. Gus Russo in his book *The Outfit: The Role of Chicago’s Underworld in the Shaping of Modern America* states that the war lasted even into Prohibition. Russo claims that Al Capone was hired to fight for the *Tribune* in the 1920s and that he stopped the circulation fights (198). The incident he refers to was actually in relation to labor strife, not the circulation war. He stopped a labor strike that would have crippled the newspapers (Bergreen 379-380). Capone’s involvement in the circulation war is unclear because he came to Chicago in 1919, the tail end of the war and Russo’s Capone quote is the only evidence so far that suggests his involvement (198).

The Day Book proclaimed that the papers educated their men in “the most vicious school of crime in the big city” (“Stop the Wild” 23). The pupils did well. They took to the streets, spreading fear and destruction to uphold the mighty law of circulation. Without readership, a paper ceases to exist (Mott 597). Circulators hurried to keep their papers alive while trying to kill off the competitor (McKinney 129).

Howard Abadinsky, in the ninth edition of his book *Organized Crime*, describes early twentieth-century gangsters as puppets of politicians and gamblers. It is commonly thought that the decades preceding 1920 were filled with street gang crime and vice-dens, sequestered to certain sections of the city. Abadinsky credits the mix of outlawed booze and America’s need of alcoholic beverages

Student Reflections on Writing: Jackie Cooney

I know when I’ve got a good historical topic to pursue. Something happens inside me. It starts in my gut with a tremble of excitement, followed by a surge of radiating warmth heading north to my chest. The back of my head tingles. Facts and keywords race around, connecting to ideas, as my brain strategically organizes them into larger, writeable categories. I get such a buzz from factual discovery. The deeper I dig, the more my gut sends adrenaline coursing through my veins. You never know what you’re going to find when you think way, way outside the box. It could be a single sentence hidden in a 1,000-page book that can yield groundbreaking morsels of information. A journalism instructor once told me I had a reporter’s intuition. He promised it would make me a great investigative journalist. But my heart wasn’t into uncovering the present. My passion, my life, is in discovering the forgotten past.

Hardly anyone knows about the Chicago Circulation War and even less write about it. Finding reputable information, let alone primary resources, is difficult and time consuming. Even though the paper is done and now published, I cannot stop thinking about it. It’s on a continuous loop in my head. My gut tells me that there are more details waiting to be exposed.

for creating a cocktail of extreme violence and large-scale organized crime. The drive for supremacy in the liquor market is what changed organized crime. Gangs once under the thumb of politicians and vice lords now had the power and only answered to themselves. For some parts of the country, Prohibition brought an opportunity for criminals to become big-time illegal entrepreneurs with a city-wide reach or larger (60-61). Chicago was different. Chicago had the benefit of training criminals in big-time city-wide illegal crime with the protection of big-time legal businesses before the enactment of the Volstead Act.

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The term “organized crime” does not have one universally accepted definition. Each criminal justice agency and/or geographic region has its own definition. The Federal Bureau of Investigation uses the definition of:

Any group having some manner of formalized structure and whose primary objective is to obtain money through illegal activities. Such groups maintain their position through the use of actual or threatened violence, corrupt political officials, graft, or extortion, and generally have a significant impact on the people in their locales, region, or the country as a whole. (Abadinsky 2)

The perpetrators of the Chicago Circulation War exhibited strong similarities with organized crime groups. It is in the study of the circulation war that one can find the roots of a type of organized crime fitting the city known worldwide for the Prohibition era.

Two heavy hitters dominate the information on the Chicago Circulation War. There are far more resources on William Randolph Hearst because of his nationwide notoriety. Locally, Robert McCormick and the *Chicago Tribune* are Chicago institutions that have weathered many storms. Unfortunately, resources on Victor Lawson are very few. It seems his newspapering days have been somewhat forgotten by history. Gaining information on him and his businesses is very difficult. Sketchy evidence has to be pieced together from sentences and short articles proving Lawson’s involvement in the war.

There are two parts to the war: the part played by the upper management and the part played by the foot soldiers. From the sluggers’ point of view, their motive for pushing papers was not to influence the public vote or to participate in some part of the political process. If their motive was to fight to force political change, then the battles would be more akin to a terrorist organization than organized crime (Abadinsky 3). *The Day Book* never reported any political reasons for the violence. State’s Attorney Marclay Hoyne never attributed any of the slugging activities to politics (“Hoyne Says” 3; “Grand Jury Aims” 3; “Hoyne Sends Letter” 23). Everything was done on the streets for the purposes of circulation (Swanberg 274). No author has attributed street slugging as an attempt to influence a political ideology. It is true

that sluggers like Dion O’Banion leased their guns and fists on Election Day to whomever their whim sided (Asbury 341-342). While they worked for the papers, it wasn’t political.

Some political ideological tension existed between William Randolph Hearst, Robert Patterson/Robert McCormick, and Victor Lawson. The *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Daily News* were staunchly republican, whereas the *Chicago American* was a democratic paper (Gies 35). The upper management’s political leaning does not make politics a circulation issue. Politics is a content issue that is handled by departments other than circulation. Content itself can drive circulation up or down, but the circulation department is separate from the content producing departments. Circulation is about money. The sluggers weren’t concerned with whether readers liked what was being written. They were paid to sell and distribute as much as possible.

Chicago newspapers didn’t invent the use of corruption, extortion, and violence as business practices. Many businesses hired violent people for settling labor disputes. The difference here is that the newspapers were the watchdogs of the city. They reported on the misdeeds of big business, of the government, and of criminals. But when they crossed over to using violence to gain more business, they became like the businesses they wrote about. What set the newspapers apart was that unlike the strikes other businesses wanted to prevent or squelch, Chicago newspapers used violence as a way to push product and to control an area.

The higher-ups in the newspapers knew that their circulation departments used illegal tactics (Swanberg 271). Newspapers protected their employees from prosecution so they, too, participated in corruption. *The Day Book* complained about policemen being taken off the streets and given to the newspapers for the papers’ protection. Each paper had at least one or two cops stationed at the office. The *Daily News* had two cops at its offices for at least 16 years (“News about Chicago” 10). The police department even sold newspapers for the paper companies while still in uniform. By 1912, the papers obtained sheriff’s badges for their circulators (“Investigate” 22). The Chicago Police Department gave ex-convict news sluggers Deputy Sheriff’s badges

and Deputy Policeman's badges ("Stop the Wild" 23). Max Annenberg, then the *Chicago Tribune* circulation manager, felt that he and his henchmen needed protection from public harassment. *The Day Book* reports that he also felt "that he [had] been called upon to keep order in Chicago," ("Annenberg in Again" 27). A street car conductor named Frank Witt and a teamster named George Hehr were murdered by a person or people brandishing the shields given to them by the police department ("School of Crime" 9). Witt's accused murderers were defended by lawyers paid by the *Chicago American* ("Story of Witt" 4). Criminals became deputized during Prohibition as well. By 1922, Al Capone possessed a Deputy Sheriff's badge (Kobler 97).

Max Annenberg wasn't above the fray. He got right down in the blood and bodies. In 1913, Annenberg went down to a Maxwell Street billiards hall as a bodyguard for a photographer needing to get a snapshot of gambling for a *Tribune* story. The camera's flash and the bang that followed scared local residents, thinking someone had set off a bomb close by. Suddenly, Annenberg and his men and the photographer ran to the car and started to race away. Alexander Belford stood at the curb trying to see what was going on. Annenberg saw Belford at the curb, aimed, and fired. The bullet hit its intended target. Belford went down. Police rushed to the scene and yelled for Annenberg to stop. Annenberg replied with bullets. Officers Roth and Weisbaum commandeered a vehicle and chased them, shooting above their heads. Annenberg got away. Later that morning, he showed up at the Maxwell Street Police Station with *Tribune* Managing Editor Edward Beck. Thirty-five witnesses sat in the police station, and two identified Annenberg by sight and name. Despite the evidence, Annenberg was not arrested. Instead, he was treated like a V.I.P. and allowed to go home ("Annenberg in Panic" 1-4). When Max was finally brought up on charges, State's Attorney Marclay Hoyne told *The Day Book* that *Tribune* officials actively recruited people to "testify favorably for the *Tribune*." One man was offered as much as \$500, whereas another was offered the price of a new hat ("Grand Jury Returns" 2-3). In the end, Annenberg was never convicted of the crime ("Annenberg Discharged" 23).

The *Tribune* wasn't the only paper than partook

in the corruption. Apparently, Hearst's manager Andy Lawrence was "the real mayor of Chicago" and pulled the puppet strings of the sheriff and police departments. President of the Civil Service Commission Harlan Campbell owed his position to Andy Lawrence because Campbell used to work as Hearst's business manager. Mayor Carter Harrison, Jr. had a former Hearst employee as his private secretary ("Disarm" 1). William Hale "Big Bill" Thompson's secretary was an ex-Hearst city editor named Charles Fitzmorris. Thompson appointed Fitzmorris to the position himself (Wendt 468).

Prohibition became one of the most successful periods of illegal crime in part because of its corruption. It's common knowledge that law, city, state, and federal officials took bribes to overlook rum-running and bootlegging. There were some that followed the letter of the law and refused to partake in alcohol and its vices. In Chicago, corruption was part of doing business. Men like Mike McDonald and the two aldermen of the First Ward, John "Bathhouse" Coughlin and Michael "Hinky Dink" Kenna, controlled Chicago before Prohibition (Asbury 122). "Big Bill" Thompson surpassed them all when it came to corruption.

As long as there was money behind the smile and handshake, Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson happily befriended a criminal. Elected in 1915, he held the mayoralty for three terms, with a forced rest between the second and third terms when a reform-minded candidate was elected. Thompson kept the vice districts and the speakeasies hopping during his terms, without much harassment. He was elected the third time, pledging to flout the Prohibition law in 1927 (Abadinsky 111). Thompson and State's Attorney Robert E. Crowe's close-knit ties created a political power unlike any other by 1928 (Asbury 241). Big Bill reopened brothels and "resorts" closed by other mayors (Asbury 314). His major criminal benefactor was no secret. Al Capone and his men backed Thompson's campaign by delivering the vote and donating hundreds of thousands of illicit dollars to ensure a victory (Abadinsky 111; Asbury 337). Capone was so proud of his big boy that he even hung his picture on the wall next to Abraham Lincoln and George Washington (Asbury 368). In great Chicago tradition, gangsters were rarely arrested in the city due to deep connections and

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deeper pockets. Gangsters persuaded witnesses to or not to testify, depending what the situation called for (Allen 228).

Circulators walked around with an air of fearlessness and power. They were deputized by the police department and given guns by their employers (“Stop the Wild” 24; “Arsenal” 30). Sluggers were hardly arrested for slugging. If a newsboy fought back in self defense, the newsboy was arrested (“‘Eat’ Papers” 26-27). One of the more audacious displays took place on the Clark Street Bridge in December 1915 when two rival factions from the *Examiner* and *Herald* decided to settle a long-held grudge. Policeman Chas. Conlon heard the fracas on the bridge and broke up the fight with his club as persuasion. The sluggers scattered. When Conlon turned to walk away, a slugger jumped him from behind and hit him. As he crumpled to the ground, six sluggers joined in. They beat him so bad he had to be helped to the hospital (“Beat Policeman” 1-2). The powers of persuasion affected the community. The public was kept in the dark about the violence they saw on the streets. A favorite technique of the circulation departments was to steal the oppositions’ newspapers and dump them into the lake or the river. Left behind were papers like the *Chicago American* or the *Chicago Examiner* instead of the *Tribune*, forcing the public to buy what the circulators wanted them to purchase (Ogden 47; Swanberg 271; McKinney 129-130). Circulators were paid extortionists. If a newsstand owner refused to abide by the sluggers’ demands, his stand would be destroyed and other stands would be set up to compete, cutting off the business owner from selling anything (“Warrant Out” 17; “‘Eat’ Papers” 26). Newsboys on the corners were forced to take more newspapers in the “eating newspapers” technique. When a driver or slugger delivered papers, they suggested that the newsboy take more than he needed. The boys knew they couldn’t sell them. One boy asked what he was going to do with the leftovers. The driver replied, “Take them home and eat them.” The boy couldn’t return any unsold papers. He had to pay for them out of his own pocket. But he was stuck between three very difficult prospects. If he didn’t take the suggested amount, no more papers would be delivered, and competitor newsboys would be purposefully placed on his corner, cutting his business and

profits. The second choice was to refuse and get assaulted by dangerous sluggers like Ed “Spike” O’Donnell, a ruffian with a notorious reputation for dishing out terrible beatings (“‘Eat’ Papers” 26; “Law Grabs” 1-2). The third option, and the least dangerous one, was to take the suggested amount of papers.

Booze was a business of distribution and sales (Asbury 325). Herbert Asbury credited Spike O’Donnell for developing a sales technique of using violence to force a dealer to take a certain product. It works like the “eating papers” method. A gangster shows up at a saloonkeeper’s establishment and asks him if he will take his product. If the answer is no, then the gangster beats him into submission or does something worse. O’Donnell’s method permeated throughout gangdom (Asbury 327). The method was not invented by him, but he was one of the more infamous slugger practitioners of “eating papers” (“Law Grabs” 1-2). Another favorite tactic during Prohibition, though similar to the “eating papers” method, was blowing up the establishments of those who refused to conform to the requests to sell Torrio-Capone beer (Bergreen 181). News sluggers set fire to dealers’ stands if the owners were non-compliant as well (McKinney 130). The age of the vehicle was dawning during the circulation war and became very popular during the 1920s and on. In the war, circulators would shoot up or bomb the trucks. The *Tribune* had a black limousine truck that stalked Chicago’s streets under Max Annenberg’s direction. The truck would lie in wait close to a chosen newsstand for a rival vehicle to stop and make a delivery. When the moment was right, Annenberg and his henchmen would shoot up the truck, the driver, and anything else without discretion. Often times, a fire fight would ensue (McKinney 130, 131). The main differences between the circulation war and Prohibition with respect to this technique were the use of shot guns, the Thompson sub-machine gun, and the vehicle used to perpetrate the shooting was stolen and therefore dropped far from the scene (Allen 225-226). Hijacking rival paper trucks was a common practice. Hijackers dumped the offending papers into the city’s various waterways (Smith 137). Prohibition bootleggers fell victim to the same practice. Independent bootleggers hijacked Torrio-Capone delivery trucks and instead of dumping the liquor, they sold it (Asbury 235, 327; Allen 227).

Upper echelons of the newspaper bureaucracies knew what was going on in their circulation departments. The orders came down from on high to boost their respective papers while at the same time preventing the opposition papers from even reaching the hands of consumers (Ogden 51; Winkler 171-172; Wendt 353, 383-384). Once the orders were given, Hearst and McCormick took a hands-off approach in an attempt to distance themselves from the unsavory events in the streets. This policy of leadership is called decentralization. Decentralized organizations, legitimate and criminal, allow their lower echelons to be imaginative with their skills without being micromanaged (Abadinsky 11-12). Coincidentally, decentralization had its benefits for newspapers employing criminally violent circulators. Disjointed leadership allowed the figureheads to deny responsibility for victims and property damage accrued by their employees. Lawyers for Hearst suggested that he not interfere with the specific activities of his employees, invoking a type of plausible deniability in case the law came knocking (Swanberg 271). If he didn't get involved in the circulation department's activities, he couldn't be blamed for the aftermath, thus saving his name and his nationwide news empire. When Robert McCormick and Joe Patterson had joint charge of the *Tribune*, they in no way wanted to intrude on James Keeley's work to boost circulation with the use of Max Annenberg (Wendt 386-387). McCormick blamed the violence not on his circulators, but on immigrants stealing jobs from American citizens. He tried to explain the war away as leftover problems from the 1912 union strike, claiming that the problem was between the newsboys and teamsters. He compared the battles to an Italian "vendetta" (Wendt 353), a term for taking vengeance upon a person who offends the "family" no matter how small the offense or how much violence or how long the retaliation takes to complete (Abadinsky 133). Some of the battles were in retaliation for some slight upon one or more of a group. Moe Annenberg, Max Annenberg's brother, and his men set out to avenge the brazen beating of Moe by *Daily News* circulators. Moe and his band never caught the assailants, but Moe's intention was to kill his attackers (Ogden 49, 50).

The history of Chicago organized crime is riddled with vengeance murders. Dion O'Banion, North Side

bootlegger, severely offended Johnny Torrio, underworld kingpin, by conning Torrio out of \$500,000 when O'Banion sold him his share of the Sieben Brewery. What O'Banion didn't tell Torrio was that the brewery was to be raided by police on the day Torrio was supposed to take over O'Banion's portion. Torrio and a few others showed up at the brewery only to be arrested. He was fined \$5,000 and ordered to serve nine months in jail. O'Banion added salt to the wound by saying "Oh, to hell with them Sicilians," when Hymie Weiss suggested the North Siders make peace. The insult traveled through the grapevine, and Torrio heard and was livid. On November 10, 1924, a specially assembled hit squad walked into O'Banion's flower shop. One man took O'Banion's hand as if to shake it. He held O'Banion close and refused to let go while the two assassins shot him full of holes (Asbury 348-351).

McCormick's attempt to deflect blame from his company and place it on vendettas is interesting. His circulators' retaliations were like those of the mob. By likening the battles to the vendetta, he successfully aligned the circulation war with not only Italian organized crime but other organized crime groups such as the Torrio-Capone gang.

Violent outbursts by circulators littered the city in a savage race for revenues and superiority over all other newspapers. In 1915, the departments of the *Chicago American* and the *Chicago Journal* faced off outside the Chicago Board of Trade Building. *American* Publisher Harrison Parker became angered when he saw the *Journal* sitting in the spot next to the *Daily News*, where he felt his paper should reside. Parker didn't care that the *Journal* had had that position for the previous 12 years. He phoned his circulation department and commanded them to "get display" for the *American*. At some point the *Journal* got wind of the *American's* action and decided to defend their position. About 30 to 40 men descended upon the Loop newsstands. Inevitably, a fight broke out so big that it blocked traffic for three blocks. Out of all the fighters, only two were arrested, and they were released on peace bonds ("Sluggers Riot" 1-2). In May 1916, a shootout erupted at the *Chicago Examiner* building. Chauffeurs from a neighboring garage decided to exact vengeance on the *Examiner's* employees for beating up a fellow

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chauffeur. Five trucks full of chauffeurs descended on the building's alleyway entrance. The chauffeurs took out revolvers and started blanketing the circulation department with bullets. Though caught by surprise, Hearst's circulators almost immediately started shooting. The chauffeurs eventually ran off. *Examiner* boss driver, Matthew Foley, met up with policemen rushing to the scene. He jumped in their vehicle, and they chased the chauffeurs. One truck flipped over, and Foley jumped out of the police car and started to fight one of the chauffeurs. When a cop tried to pry them apart, they threatened to shoot him. The cop had enough and shot Foley in the back, puncturing his lung. They exchanged about 100 bullets in the skirmish. Captain Morgan Collins said that he had heard that the chauffeurs were actually sent to the *Examiner* building by a rival paper ("Hundred Shots" 10). Approximately 40 people died between 1900-1913 as a direct result of the feud ("Stop the Wild" 23). At a Kent College of Law lecture, Judge Pettit noted that by 1912, 100 people died at the wheels of unruly newspaper delivery trucks ("What's the Matter" 1).

On top of the death toll already accumulated with the circulation war, Prohibition brought Chicago an additional 500 murders before the end of the 1920s (Asbury 355). Capone's stronghold of Cicero became a minefield when on September 20, 1926, eleven cars made the trek from the North Side to the Hawthorn Inn. In retaliation for killing their buddy Dion O'Banion, Weiss and his gang pulled out an arsenal of weapons and unloaded a thousand bullets into the hotel and its surrounding buildings (Asbury 357). The pinnacle of violence during the 1920s was the St. Valentine's Day Massacre in 1929. Supposedly, the hit was orchestrated by hit man Jack McGurn. Six of Bugs Moran's gang and a friend of the group were mowed down in a garage on Clark Street (Kobler 238, 245; Asbury 359). The St. Valentine's Day Massacre ended the struggle for supremacy in Chicago with Capone the victor (Abadinsky 117).

The violence of the 1920s attracted the attention of the nation. Chicago's foul reputation reached as far as Capitol Hill. Ken Burns and Lynn Novak's 2011 documentary *Prohibition* tell of a senator who begged President Calvin Coolidge to send the U.S. Marines stationed in Nicaragua to Chicago to stop the ruthlessness. It wasn't the first

time that Chicago got nationwide acclaim for its crime. *The Day Book* reported that in 1913 national newspapers became concerned with the Chicago newspapers' use of men of violence to increase circulation and break strikes ("Employment of Sluggers" 15). In another instance, James Keeley testified to a senate committee and admitted the violence. He testified that a man was pushed into an empty elevator shaft at the *Tribune*. Then the perpetrator followed up with gunfire (Smith 138). What Keeley didn't say was that the man was a *Tribune* circulator trying to get out of the slugging business. His brother circulator jumped him in the *Tribune* building, beat him bloody, and threw him into the empty elevator shaft. Friends picked the man up at the bottom and cleaned him off while the angry circulator pulled his gun, took aim, and fired repeatedly. It is unknown if the man or his friends got hit or died (McKinney 130).

The regional scope of these activities reached to the farthest corners of the city and its neighborhoods. Sluggers had routes that had to be strictly followed. They had to be available to fix a problem if one arose (Ogden 47, 50-51; "Sluggers Riot" 2). Hearst's *American* kept publishing earlier editions to the point where his evening paper competed for space among the morning dailies (Ogden 50). The *American* was set out at 6 a.m. and had six more editions throughout the day. If it was a big news day, special editions would be printed along with the other editions (Winkler 172). The city was carved up into zones, and circulators were assigned to them. Moe Annenberg worked the Englewood zone, then moved up to Woodlawn, then was promoted to oversee the entire South Side circulation effort (Ogden 47, 49, 50). The *Tribune* was predominantly along the lakefront, with only a 75,000 per day circulation on the South Side (Ogden 49). The *Chicago Daily News* had high circulation numbers on the South Side where Moe was stationed (Ogden 48). Due to Moe's violent techniques coupled with his clever strategies, he and his men forced the *Daily News* from its top spot on the South Side (Ogden 49, 52).

The most influential man of Prohibition was Johnny Torrio. To say Torrio was the brains behind Chicago's underworld during the 1920s is an understatement. Herbert Asbury said that "Johnny Torrio is unsurpassed in the annals of American crime; he was probably the

nearest thing to a real mastermind that this country has yet produced.” Torrio ran his illegal businesses similarly to his legal counterparts. Like Hearst and McCormick, he handed down the orders to kill, maim, or send a message to anyone who stopped his business’ progress to his underlings. Once the orders were given, he stepped back. He never got his hands dirty with the nastier side of his enterprises (Asbury 321). Prohibition gave him the avenue to expand his reach city-wide and to flex his mental muscle. Torrio gathered together all the gang leaders of the city and made them a proposition. His grandiose idea was that if all the gangs focused their illegal energies on bootlegging and liquor distribution, they could have the world in the palm of their hands. Each gang got a piece of the action with Torrio playing the king among them. Some of the gang names are familiar: O’Banion’s North Siders, Ralph Sheldon’s gang, and the Saltis-McErlane gang (Asbury 324-325). Spike O’Donnell and his South Side O’Donnells were not invited to take part in the festivities. They soon would butt heads with Torrio (Asbury 326).

Russo suggests that the circulation war set the physical boundaries for the Prohibition battles of the Beer Wars (198). The circulation war did split the city into sections for purposes of distribution (Ogden 47, 49, 50). But there isn’t any evidence to suggest that these zones were kept the same during Prohibition. Johnny Torrio split the city into territories based on the agreement with the gangs (Asbury 324). Common sense dictates that these gangs probably asked for territories they already knew. Being on home turf has its advantages. They would know where to go if there was trouble. They would know the ins and the outs of the area. They would know who to trust. It would be dangerous for a gang to ask for territory outside their known sphere, especially when they are trying to build a criminal base of operations for themselves.

The Ragen Colts already existed by the time the circulation wars heated up (English 100-101). Dion O’Banion was already powerful in the 42nd and 43rd Wards on the North Side before taking up employment with the papers. His specialty was getting out the vote (Asbury 341). Spike O’Donnell and his brothers were criminally experienced by the time Spike started slugging for the war (English 150). The South Side O’Donnells took their

own territory from the Torrio-sanctioned Saltis-McErlane gang because Spike and his brothers were left out of the Prohibition pact between gang leaders (Asbury 326-327). Frank McErlane was given the South Side by Torrio because they were based out of that area (English 151). Other people involved in Prohibition, like the West Side O’Donnells, the Touhy Gang, and Terry Druggan, so far have no ties to the circulation war but were given a stake in the Prohibition profits (English 149, 152-153). Though the precise birth dates of specific gangs are not listed, most gangs (past and present) form along socioeconomic lines. Where there is an absence of legitimate economic opportunity and a presence of positive attitudes toward criminal activities, such as in Chicago, people come together to create economic success outside of the legal norm (Abadinsky 17-18; English 99-100). Locations of gangs formed not because of the circulation war or Prohibition, but because of a lack of legal employment. The circulation war and Prohibition provided more steady paychecks than the gangs’ previous criminal endeavors.

The roster of Prohibition gangsters partially matches the known participants of the circulation war. Dion O’Banion started with Hearst then supposedly left for more money with the *Tribune* (English 143-144). He became the bootlegger on the North Side (Asbury 325, 329). Hymie Weiss and Vincent “Schemer” Drucci were reportedly participants in the war, though it is not stated for whom they worked. (Weaver 300). After the war, Weiss became O’Banion’s right-hand man and Drucci teamed up with them as well (Asbury 343). The Ragen Colts worked for Hearst then flipped for the *Tribune* for the same reason O’Banion left (English 100). A faction of the Colts known as the Ralph Sheldon gang worked the Southwest Side during Prohibition (Asbury 325, 329). Edward “Spike” O’Donnell worked for the *American*. He and his brothers made up the South Side O’Donnells and fought for the far South Side (“Law Grabs” 1-2; Asbury 326, 329). Tim Murphy worked for Hearst and got into another facet of organized crime, the union rackets, after his service with the circulators (Ogden 49; Kobler 73). Walter Stevens slugged for the *Tribune*. He was the only remaining man left alive in the Mossy Enright gang (Enright slugged for Hearst then for the *Tribune*) and decided to side with Torrio-Capone after his boss

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was murdered in February 1920 (Swanberg 271; Ogden 49; Asbury 328, 330; "Printers to Decide" 4). Frankie McErlane slugged for Hearst and was co-leader of the Saltis-McErlane gang on the Southwest Side (Asbury 327, 329; Swanberg 271).

The most interesting name to accompany both lists is mentioned in the 2005 reprint of Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan's 1942 book *Lords of the Levee: The Story of Bathhouse John and Hinky Dink*. While Big Jim Colosimo was still alive, Johnny Torrio and his gang protected him while at the same time they "killed in the newspaper circulation wars" (302). The importance of Torrio's involvement is ground breaking. Torrio, Chicago underworld magnate, teacher of Al Capone, participated in and saw first-hand how the circulation war was planned and executed. If he truly slugged for the newspapers, the Chicago Circulation War had a large and direct impact on the efficient execution of Prohibition. How Torrio ran the underworld looks strikingly similar to the events of the newspaper war.

It isn't clear if the high circulation numbers are reliable. Each paper claimed gains during the war (Smith 134-135). Reported numbers include sales from legitimate subscriptions and street purchases. But they also would include the practice of "eating papers," where the newsboys had to pay for the excess newspapers physically forced upon them ("Eat' Papers" 26). Circulation numbers change depending on which authors are consulted. It is difficult to say what really won the war because so many factors go into the success and failure of a newspaper. The question is, what factor was the most important in the fight: was it the success of the sluggers or was it something entirely different? The war was not won on the streets of Chicago, but in the forests of Canada. The content-producing departments of the newspapers were warring with each other. The newspapers were getting thicker because of the increased content. (Wendt 354, 384). The cost of newsprint shot skyward (Wendt 396). By making its own paper, the *Tribune's* paper mill gave them the upper hand, allowing them to produce thicker papers at a cheaper price (Gies 40). No matter how many sluggers slugged in the streets or how many attention-grabbing articles a paper may have, if it doesn't have paper to print on, the whole thing goes under. The only paper still in existence, the only one that took a big

risk on building a paper mill from scratch, is the winner, *The Chicago Tribune*.

The aftershocks of the circulation war brought about a different quake in the streets: Prohibition. There are strong similarities between the Chicago Circulation War and Prohibition. Burton Rascoe, a *Tribune* reporter who saw the circulation war first hand, claimed in his biography, *Before I Forget*, that the war "was the beginning of gangsterism and racketeering in Chicago" (qtd. in McKinney 129-130). History forgot the senseless sacrifices of the innocents by the circulators to the newspaper demi-gods. No one remembers the warriors slaughtered in the name of the all-mighty newspaper. Prohibition maybe the most recognizable period in Chicago history, but it's the Chicago Circulation War that broke ground on large-scale distribution operations with violent overtones. Without the circulation war, the large-scale violence might not have been as bad and the distribution might not have been so good.

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Evaluation: Ms. Cooney rigorously researched a topic that has been hidden in the annals of Chicago history for almost 100 years. The Chicago Circulation War demonstrated the dark side of the newspaper industry, and since the papers would not air their own dirty laundry, these criminal activities remained largely under-reported for generations. This paper demonstrates a very thorough and intelligent research process, and it provides a comprehensive and well-written description of its subject. Not only that, it holds a reader’s interest. This paper is truly a triumph!

The Illusion of Convenience

Micah Corlew

Course: English 100 (Composition)

Instructor: Judi Nitsch

Assignment: *Students were asked to synthesize three different readings on Web 2.0's social, intellectual, and emotional effects on society. They did not have to propose an independent argument.*

Web 2.0 is an unprecedented phenomenon sweeping across the globe with disease-like speed, bringing with it everything from democracy to stunted social development. Not surprisingly, this new form of “interactive Internet” is in the crosshairs of numerous sociologists, anthropologists, and concerned authors alike. Remarkably, such sources have attributed unifying rebel forces in the Libyan Civil War, as well as strengthening the global economy to Web 2.0. Until its recent development, revolutions have never been started so swiftly, nor have markets soared so rapidly. But with this unforeseeable, unfathomable network of intricacy comes an underlying toll to its users’ intellect, social life, and emotions, and we just now are starting to understand the true ramifications of living life “online.” What was once seen as harmless time spent perusing the infinite horizons of the Internet is now being associated with the cause of social and mental disorders in American teenagers and even in some adults. The controversy and mental pandemic prevalent in today’s Internet-addicted youth should be reason enough to rethink the boundaries of Internet law and development.

Let me begin this rethinking by way of an analogy. In the mid-1800s, the Johns Company began the mining of asbestos in the Appalachian foothills for commercial use. This ground-breaking material was used in a variety of ways, including flame retardant insulation, masonry bricks, flooring, furniture, and even artificial snow. It was economically feasible to produce and at the time was a “jack of all trades” of industrial materials. In the 1950s, it was primarily used as insulation, and it even made its way into cigarette filters. The general public did not question the physical properties or the effects they had on the human body. It was a product that contributed to American society running smoothly and efficiently. As the saying goes, “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Meaning,

if a system or method works, there is no need to change it. As lung disease flourished in asbestos mining towns, concerns arose. Sometime in the late 1970s, public records emerged, entailing the health hazards associated with asbestos, and even more startling than the health hazards was the fact that these records were withheld from public eye for almost 40 years. Outrage and a large-scale industrial abatement of asbestos followed (“Asbestos” n.p.). Today, asbestos can still be found lurking in the ceilings and walls of buildings around the world, but the health hazards are not forgotten. How is the asbestos story related to Web 2.0? The answer is quite simple; throughout time, civilization has been known to produce different commodities that, after years of development and use, are discovered to be extremely hazardous to public health and society. Although Web 2.0 is probably not going to inflict lung disease or mesothelioma on its user, recent research done by numerous institutions and organizations indicate that serious consequences to mental and emotional health are possible, particularly in the young.

It is a generally accepted concept in American society that children start their lives completely immersed and surrounded by their parents, and as they grow, the ties are slowly severed until independence is finally gained. It is crucial to establishing self-sufficiency that teenagers are exposed to situations free of parental supervision. Of course, children need training wheels on their bicycles as they learn to ride, but after a certain point in time, those wheels that help initiate the learning process prevent the child from learning how to ride free of aid. If the training wheels never come off, independence is never gained. Sherry Turkle, an MIT psychologist, reminds us that “there used to be a point in time for an urban child... to navigate the city alone. It was a rite of passage that communicated to children that they were on their own and responsible” (173); cell phones have ended this rite. The ever increasing development of Web 2.0 is strengthening the parent-to-child ties that inevitably need to be severed. As Sherry Turkle argues in her book, *Alone Together*, cell phones and Facebook are terrific examples of what is inhibiting these breaks and preventing young adults from achieving independence. Regardless of the physical distance from parent to offspring, the parents are always present. Whether it is being connected through a smart phone in their kid’s front pocket, or through a laptop in their dorm room, the ubiquitous parent is literally an arm’s length away at all times. Knowing that mom and dad are less than a phone call away must have some

psychological effect on numerous aspects of a child's life. The non-critical development of technology for kids is selling convenience at the high cost of parental-dependent youth. In other words, Web 2.0 precludes the development of independence in its young users.

Another facet of Web 2.0 that impacts all age groups is the communicative culture developed by its users. Typically hidden from sight (unless using video chat or other V.O.I.P. communication), users are stripped of the essential keys to understanding tone and physical linguistics of language. Friends chatting online are incapable of reading body language, interpreting tone of voice, or making eye contact, which are all important factors to effective communication. If the English language is stripped down to its bare essentials, miscommunication is almost inescapable. The easiest occurrence to note is the word "okay." Capable of being construed in a variety of ways, the word "okay" can simply mean "yes." It can be used to question, such as "okay?" And it can even be used sarcastically in disbelief, for example: "yeah, okay...." Being unable to grasp tone of voice alone is enough to generate many quarrels among friends, family, and lovers. Ilana Gershon, acclaimed sociologist at Indiana University, explored these issues in her book on the different "media ideologies" of teenagers and dating, *The Breakup 2.0*. Her findings are in many ways disturbing: there are teenagers who are so buried in technology and Web 2.0, they cannot live without it (18). Even so, the teens she interviews reveal the sheer variety of views on what is socially acceptable in Web 2.0 and technology. The ambiguities of message and mode of delivery are serious:

[O]n Facebook, you can send a public message by posting to someone's wall so anyone in the Facebook network can know the content of the message, the author, and the time it was sent. With a private Facebook message, only the addresser and addressee can see the message. So Joe invites Jen to go bowling via Facebook wall post; should Jen consider this a date? Why is Joe sending the message so publicly - to make it less of a date (that is more casual) or more of a date (warning other people who might be interested in Jen that he, Joe, was pursuing her)? (33).

The lack of face-to-face interaction masks the intent of communication. If Joe was to simply ask Jen to go bowling in person, Jen could read his body language; she could see if he was nervous or excited. She would have

a lot more factors that would help solve the mystery of missing intent.

To complicate communication further, the newly established grounds for Web 2.0 communication are overly ironic. Teens are connecting through text and Facebook to hide basic emotion, allowing themselves to feel less vulnerable, but at the same time, the lack of emotion is the root of the problem in the end. Maybe this occurrence is derived from teenage ignorance or maybe this is something much greater. The technology-dependent teenager will one day have a job and a family. How are they going to effectively communicate to their children or co-workers? If all social practice is spent outside social space and on the Internet, anxiously trying to decipher others' intentions, how will they know any other way of communication? If the only communicative highway is one shrouded in masking emotion and intent, how will this generation navigate real-time interaction in the adult world?

While we lose crucial skills, the Internet learns quite a bit from our use. As the Web transforms into something overly personal and omniscient, it gathers more information about us without our knowledge. Online chats, personal photos, and even intimate conversations are all stored in the depths of Internet databases. At the time of the Internet's conception, no one cared to wonder what information was kept. What was said and shared was not used against us or towards us in attempt to purchase consumer products. The Internet was still in its purest form, untouched by the groping hand of advertisers and data miners. As the Web developed, the economy consumed it, intertwining sale and marketing into every page. Originally created for the promotion of democracy and education, the Internet was quickly hijacked as a means of product marketing. Typically, money follows consumer trends. Wherever the general public diverts its attention, that platform or medium is soon overrun by advertisements: Youtube encrypts commercials before your desired video begins, Google sells the number one spot in their search queue, and even Facebook sells your likes and dislikes to companies hoping to sell to you. This prevalence of marketing shows that Web development was and is funded by corporate marketers who want our attention, regardless of whether we want theirs. Undoubtedly, this has formed a true catch-22 – without the infinite funding of marketing, the Internet would not have developed so sophisticatedly, or as quickly.

The price for the development of Web 2.0 technologies

is higher than any of us imagined. Every tidbit of user information entered nowadays is stored for purchase by a company's marketing department. A Facebook user "liking" Old Spice deodorant could be sold to Proctor & Gamble, and in return, advertising for Gillette razors, Olay moisturizers, and Crest toothpaste are likely to appear on that user's Facebook page. Users inadvertently condition their own Web 2.0 environment into a personalized ad sphere, but that's small fries compared to the underlying problem in the present day's Internet. Advertising is only the visible tip of the ominous iceberg. What lies beneath the surface is the invasion of privacy and the lack of exploration in both the virtual and the real world. Eli Pariser, author and political activist, wrote *The Filter Bubble* to reveal the metaphorical ad bubble Web 2.0 programs create around every user. In essence, Pariser argues that the Web is becoming so personalized that the act of searching for information is already determined by our online profile, making users less likely to find new information. He touches on a variety of topics, from Facebook to military technology, all pertaining to some way that personal privacy is compromised without our knowledge. The implications are frightening:

[the t]echnologies that support personalization will only get more powerful in the years ahead. Sensors that can pick up new personal signals and data streams will become even more deeply embedded in the surface of everyday life. The server farms that support the Googles and Amazons will grow, while the processors inside them shrink; the computing power will be unleashed to make increasingly precise guesses about our preferences and even our interior lives. Personalized "augmented reality" technologies will project an overlay over our experience of the real world, not just the digital one (190).

The consequences of a world where technology knows us better than we know ourselves are frightening. A computer making calculated assumptions as to what we like and dislike is great in theory, but the capitalistic suggestions infringe on our free will; we can only be consumers, nothing more. The act is no different than parents dressing their kids and telling them what to eat through their adulthood, except we adults are now the ones being fed and dressed, unable to think for ourselves. If there is no need for exploration, nothing unexpected will be found; intellectual exploration via the most efficient tool around will be shut down. Users will live in their preconditioned Web 2.0-based environment with no need to venture outward. I cannot say society is headed

to a state of dormancy because that is simply untrue. Advertising does draw consumers out into the world, but the times of "let's go where the night takes us" are over: the filter bubble will be embedded in our physical space. This occurrence would not be such a problem if it was controllable, but there is no "off switch" for these personalized filters that most Internet users don't know about. And unfortunately for us, advertisers will only get more clever and cunning, recycling the information we exchange with our peers via the Internet more rapidly.

Call me old-fashioned, but there used to be a time where people only learned about each other through face-to-face interaction. People did not have web pages with lists of all of their hobbies and likes. The only pictures you saw of someone were the ones they showed you. Parents could not virtually embrace their children; friends could not constantly text their peers to gain the perception of friendship. Lovers did not suit each other without ever meeting in person. The virtual gap from person to person is shrinking while the literal distance between people expands. It is a game of tug-of-war. The more time spent online, the less connected you are to the real world. The more time you spend in the real world, the further you drift from culture, more and more of which has shifted online. The questions and moral conundrums imposed from the use of Web 2.0 are endless, yet the answers are few. And there is no one direction to point the finger in accusation. Since the Internet is the new meeting ground for dreams and inspiration, it has inspired an impossible dream for me: an Internet free of capitalism. I am envious of the time where the Internet was true to its purpose of creation, education, and democracy, not to encourage commerce and fantasy. Our actual selves and our profiled selves are two entirely different entities. Unfortunately, most of us are living as the virtual entity, completely disconnected from the physical world.

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Evaluation: *Micah made this assignment his own—he used the readings as springboards to consider the issues carefully. The writing is excellent, too, and full of passion. He worked very carefully to craft the piece, and that effort is quite clear. This essay was a joy to read!*

Still Lifeless

Christian Davis

Course: Literature 105 (Poetry)

Instructor: Nancy Davis

Assignment: *Analyze a poem to discover its fuller meaning by exploring several poetic devices used in it.*

Nelly Sachs' poem, "Chorus of the Rescued," illustrates an upsetting depiction of the perpetual horrors elicited by the Holocaust unto its sufferers. Her breathtaking use of imagery transforms intangible into fathomable and brings to life the now vanished appreciation for the traumas endured by the deceased, as well as the rescued. Through symbolic word choice, the tone of the poem is conveyed in a figurative but nonetheless heart-wrenchingly comprehensive fashion. Sachs also employs repetition in the line, "We, the rescued," thus revealing the subjects of the poem to be the excessively traumatized and recently rescued Jewish captives, awaiting their imminent demise. The emotional conviction of this poem communicates an indescribable feeling of despair only to be survived by those few who have outlived such cruelties.

Within the opening stanza, Sachs makes use of figurative language that consequently draws out various dual meanings. One crucial instance of duality is Sachs' masculine personification of the word "death." This strikes not as coincidence, but rather, Sachs may have deliberately compared death to Adolf Hitler's malevolence, primarily concerning his role in the mass genocide. In this context, she depicts "death," himself, as an instrumentalist, and perhaps even the conductor of "their mutilated music." In this context, the word "their" establishes a tone of ambiguity by loosely defining the ownership over the "mutilated music" itself to be not only the music emitted from the victims' bodies, but also the music being conducted by "death's bow." Deeply interpreting her images in this sentence, the "bows" that deteriorate one's "sinew" are perhaps physical weapons. At the same time, they may also signify the Nazi soldiers' pleasure in killing people, just as a musician passionately plays an instrument. Metaphorically speaking, Sachs compares a conceptual object, "sinew," and transforms it

into the strings of an instrument, "And on whose sinews he had already stroked his bow." "Sinew," being the ethereal vitality of one's aura, is physically being ravaged by the "bow" of death.

As Sachs transitions into the next stanza, she reveals a far more physical reality of the victims awaiting death, only to be saved moments before hangings were incipient. She begins with, "The nooses wound for our necks still dangle," signifying how imminent death appeared to have been. Relating the concept of *time-running-out* to an "hour glass," Sachs symbolically captures the gravest moment of one's life: "Hourglasses still fill with our dripping blood." Excavating this sentence, the word "still" might connote that "We, the rescued" are, in actuality, not entirely liberated. It is reasonable to associate "still" with the victims' inability to forget the terrors embedded into their minds, thus making the rescued beyond liberation. Concluding this stanza with magnificent irony, Sachs writes of the "blue air," describing the delightfully familiar sunny, blue skies. This is symbolic of the Earth's

Student Reflections on Writing: Christian Davis

Somehow external and passively overlooked is the greatest faculty of mankind: that is, the ability to signify an otherwise vacuous universe; to understand this world through the impossibly magnificent medium of language. The torch of knowledge is passed down through the authors of history, and it is through their words that we can live vicariously, as their stories and accounts shelter the legacy of human civilization.

Writing is symbolic thought in its contemplated maturity, and equally as much, it discloses the author's fervent impulsion, idiosyncrasies, and indecision. A certain code of words can unlock an understanding within your readers that is otherwise elusive, as it flutters formlessly in the realm of abstraction. Ultimately, writing is the liaison between the ethereal and the corporeal; between innovation and materialization. It is the torch that humanity carries with it into the abysmal dimness of the unknown.

sentimental beauty, once blissfully embracing, but now serving as the canvas for their dismal execution.

In the subsequent section, Sachs repeats, “We, the rescued,” and then goes on to write, “The worms of fear *still* feed on us.” Once again, the word “still” solidifies the poem’s apparent theme by diminishing the refugees’ recently acquired safety to being *as-good-as-dead*. The word “still” is repeated, further instilling irony within the title as well as the repeating phrase, “We the rescued.” To explain this irony blatantly, if they are *still* suffering through memories of past evils and lost loved ones, then the delighted, “rescued,” are inherently not rescued mentally, rather they are *still* suffering. “The worms of fear still feed on us” delivers yet another interpretable significance, once again enforcing the concept of everlasting trauma, but it also connotes worms that feed on organisms newly deceased. Sachs once again commences dual meaning in the sentence, “Our constellation is buried in dust.” It is possible that the “constellation” is a metaphor for the Star of David, which branded them for concentration camps and genocide (“Holocaust Badges,” n.p.). Thus, the “dust” that buries one’s “constellation” pertains to the Jewish race now reduced to “dust,” but also the Star of David patch torn off from one’s clothing once they were physically freed (“Holocaust Badges,” n.p.).

Just before embarking upon the end of the poem, Sachs reveals the fragile state of mind burdened by the “rescued.” She speaks for all of the rescued:

We, the rescued,
Beg you:
Show us your sun, but gradually,
Lead us from star to star, step by step.
Be gentle when you teach us to live again...

She is welcoming the possibility of learning to “live again” as well as any and all support available; however, the delicacy of their mental state was truly something to bear mind to during such a vital transition. The amount of time necessary for mending their psychosis is crucial to their recovery.

As Sachs goes further, into the final stanza, she presents a metaphor of, “an angry dog,” to ensure that no reminder of the Holocaust would be tolerable, especially while harboring such recent melancholy nostalgia. Furthermore, this metaphor is possibly symbolic of either the Nazi soldiers’ animalistic mind, or it can be interpreted more literally, as she may be referring to the

dogs utilized by the Nazis for terror. The consequence given for transgressing their fragile mental limit is written as follows:

It could be, it could be
That we will dissolve into dust-
Dissolve into dust before your eyes.
For what binds our fabric together?

This conclusion to the poem is easily the most perplexing and ambiguous set of phrases. “Dissolving into dust” utilizes repetition of the word “dust,” as mentioned earlier. Thus, it is reasonable to presume a correlation between the rescued dissolving “into dust,” along with their “constellation,” which has been “buried in dust.” Finally, the question posed at the end, calls upon inquiry for the reader to speculate. The “fabric” is possibly a metaphor for strands working together to create something greater. It can also be relating back to the Star of David patch, which was made of fabric. The concept is arguably stating that “dust” is what binds fabric together; therefore, the Star of David patch, worn and torn off, is emblematic of the unity of the Jewish people, but also the fragile spirit which may physically “dissolve into dust.”

This poem explores the experience of the Jewish people throughout the Holocaust, and correspondingly compares the wicked enjoyment of the Nazis killing to a musician, passionately performing. Irony and ambiguity bathe this poem generously, just as each metaphor employs these qualities. It has come to be known that “We, the rescued,” although physically rescued, *still* suffer perpetual mental trauma that will not easily be dismissed. So, what binds our fabric together? Is it sinew in string form, or nothing? For we are all doomed to dissolve into stardust.

Works Cited

“Holocaust Badges.” *jewishvirtuallibrary.org*. Web. 6 March 2011.

Evaluation: *Christian is a natural when it comes to analyzing poetry. His intuitive grasp of poetic devices and language allows him a depth of understanding few of his peers can match.*

Hamlet and the Animals

Nedda Djavid

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Alicia Tomasian

Assignment: Write a literary analysis research paper citing at least five secondary sources.

Throughout *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare is concerned with portraying and dissecting a corrupt world. He produces characters and events that test the boundaries of human behavior and go against social norms. Within this corruption, however, Shakespeare introduces Hamlet as a foil to the severe amorality witnessed in the play. Hamlet's heightened morality and sense of what is good sets him apart from the other characters and sets a standard of behavior. Following his father's murder, Hamlet is exposed to extremely amoral acts that serve to lessen his faith in the abilities of mankind. Because he does not want to believe man is capable of such acts, Hamlet reduces the people in his life to mere animals. Hamlet attempts to justify their amoral actions by perceiving these characters as completely cut off from the innately human construct of morality. His animal representations project this subhuman status on characters who are incapable of comprehending morality rather than consciously disregarding it. As he transforms his perception of these characters, he also changes his behavior toward them. Because they are animals, they no longer warrant the same treatment they would receive if they were human beings; therefore, Hamlet begins to treat them as such. This justification of behavior allows Hamlet to do these things without feeling guilt or abandonment of his moral standards. Although Hamlet believes that man has the ability to reach a high standard of moral life, his exposure to corruption, evil, and amoral acts lead him to see his surroundings as nothing but mere animals.

At the start of the play, Hamlet believes mankind should live up to a high moral standard. Because of this predisposed idea, Hamlet loses his faith in mankind as the play continues and he witnesses evil and corrupt acts committed by those around him. Following his father's death, Hamlet has an interaction with his mother that serves to foil his moral standards with those of everybody

else's. His mother's questioning of his continued state of grief causes him to retaliate. Hamlet's response explains why he thinks his behavior is appropriate, thereby clarifying his moral standards:

Seems, madam, Nay, it is. I know not 'seems.'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

.....
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,

That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,

For they are actions that a man might play.

But I have that within which passes show-

These but the trappings and the suits of woe. (*Ham.* 1.2.76-86)

Hamlet's rants are important in that they display his awareness of appropriate behavior. He does not feel that it is right to be over his father's death as quickly as everybody in the court is. When Hamlet mentions "man," he is not only alluding to himself, but he is also referring to the behavior of man in general. Hamlet believes that the appropriate behavior following his father's death is not celebration: rather, it is mourning. The rest of the court's inability to see this and act upon it illustrates their lack of moral judgment and behavior. As Hamlet continuously experiences the failure of his surroundings to behave morally and in accordance to the true nature of man, he loses faith in man:

What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world. The paragon of animals. And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me. (*Ham.* 2.2. 304-310)

Throughout this exclamation, Hamlet describes the nature of man and his unique potential. His description of man as the "paragon of animals" portrays Hamlet's belief that man is set apart from other animals due to his supernatural abilities. Although Hamlet classifies man as an animal, his use of the term "paragon" displays how highly he thinks of man. Man is the model of excellence to which all other animals are held; he has the innate ability to reason, understand, and act spiritually as angels do. However, Hamlet has yet to witness anybody behaving in such a manner. As a result, he displays his disappointment in what he has observed around him: the failure of man to display any moral actions. Observing Hamlet's exposure

to corrupt behavior, literary critic Thomas Greene suggests that Hamlet's disappointment in the state of man is because of his immersion in their constant immoral and evil actions: "Hamlet presents a universe emptied of moral or supernatural pattern. The emptiness is felt most deeply in Hamlet's own speeches—in his melancholy reduction of the paragon of animals to the quintessence of dust" (357). Greene attributes Hamlet's degradation of man to the fact that Hamlet is living in a corrupt world. Through his analysis, Greene concludes that Hamlet experiences an internal emptiness associated with this lack of morality. However, Greene's argument does not present all of the factors influencing Hamlet's depression. The reason Hamlet feels "melancholy" is not only because he is surrounded with amoral behavior but because his moral expectations for man are being defied. Hamlet's experience of the degradation of man from the paragon of animals to a subhuman status adds to his depression. This constant let-down of his expectations weakens his resolve to believe in the abilities of man and leaves him questioning the world he lives in. This doubt in mankind is then reflected upon the people in his life. They serve to constantly disappoint him with their actions, and because of this, Hamlet loses all faith in the ability of man. Continuing his previous argument, Greene explains that Hamlet's interactions with the characters associated with him have a negative effect on his view of life as a whole:

Hamlet is the only character in the play who senses the extent of the damage: there is something rotten not only in Denmark; not only the time is out of joint.... As the action continues and as the perfidy, real or imagined, of each character in turn is revealed—of Claudius, of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, of Ophelia—Hamlet's revulsion is heightened, not only from them but from life itself. (358)

Greene's analysis displays that Hamlet's heightened "revulsion" takes an immense toll on him, and he begins to show his dislike for the characters and life itself. Contrary to Greene's belief, these disappointments do not take a toll directly on Hamlet's view of life. Hamlet has a predefined notion of what man should be like and does not want to disappoint himself with the idea that there is no man capable of behaving in this manner. When Hamlet realizes the people he is surrounded by do not represent the "paragon of animals," he changes his perception of

them from man to animal. His incorporation of animal imagery is so heavy that he eventually convinces himself that he is surrounded by animals. Therefore, he changes his behavior toward them. Literary critic Ronald Knowles recognizes Hamlet's disdain for the people around him and attributes it to a failure of experiencing the moral behavior thought to be common to mankind: "Rhetoric provided a massive compilation of human truths inherited from the past. Given an ahistorical assumption of the universality of human nature, any individual experience was a minor reflection of the collective experience embodied" (1058). Knowles argues that the universality of human nature creates a moral compass against which Hamlet judges the characters around him. It is apparent to Knowles that Hamlet's behavior is a reflection of the universality of human nature, while the other characters are established to reflect amorality.

Through animalistic rhetoric and imagery, Hamlet reduces amoral characters to a subhuman status because they are devoid of what he perceives as common human nature: "What is a man / If his chief good and market of his time / Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more" (*Ham.* 4.4.34-36). Hamlet's new assessment of man contrasts his previous view. If man does not display his attributes that set him apart from other animals, then Hamlet believes man is no better than an animal in itself. He parallels the purpose of animals—to "sleep and feed"—to that of a man lacking supernatural abilities. Knowles addresses this statement by Hamlet: "The conditional question invites an automatic rebuttal in the form of the most common commonplace of them all—man is a rational animal. Hamlet's mind and discourse divide around the two factors of reason and animality" (1058). Through this analysis, Knowles recognizes that Hamlet begins to categorize man into two categories: animalistic and rational. By doing so, Knowles concludes that Hamlet is able to distinguish the difference between moral and amoral behavior by identifying rational behavior.

Following his conclusions that man is an animal, Hamlet begins to incorporate heavy animal imagery directed toward all of his interactions in the play. Hamlet's use of animal imagery is not used as a literary device, but as a projection of his actual perception. This belief lowers Hamlet's heightened sense of morality, and he allows himself to treat the people in his life with the same behavior as he would toward an animal.

One of the first victims of Hamlet's newly deranged perception is Ophelia. When speaking to Ophelia, Hamlet admits that he did love her at one point. However, in accordance with his new views regarding the people in his life, he confesses a change in his feelings:

Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once. (*Ham.* 3.1.114-116)

Through these claims, it is clear that Hamlet's opinions of Ophelia have changed dramatically. Hamlet's interaction with Polonius supports this idea as his new disdain toward mankind leads to an intense belittlement of Ophelia:

HAMLET. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
being a good kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?

POLONIUS. I have, my lord.

HAMLET. Let her not walk i' th' sun. Conception is a blessing, but as your daughter may conceive, friend,
look to't. (*Ham.* 2.2.181-186)

His reference to Ophelia possibly walking in the sun parallels her to the dead dog. This heavy instance of animal imagery displays his newly minted perception of the people in his life. This shift from love to complete scorn is a direct result of Hamlet's new view of mankind. He feels no obligation to treat her with the respect or morality that he would a human, but refers to her as a dog and maintains this state of mind. In *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us*, Caroline Spurgeon refers to Shakespeare's use of the term 'dog' to have a negative connotation:

This tendency to group repeatedly a certain chain of ideas round some particular emotional or mental stimulus is another group of ideas centring round an animal. This is so marked in its repetition that it has been noted by others –I mean the dog, called up inevitably by the thought of false friends or flatterers. (195)

Spurgeon notes that Shakespeare's use of the term 'dog' is not used lightly, but it is used to refer to "love and affection assumed for a selfish end" (195).

Although Spurgeon's analysis of the term "dog" is valid, she fails to mention the negative connotation of the word itself. "Dog" is a degrading term, and because Hamlet is using it to refer to Ophelia, he is

directly insulting her. He enhances this use of imagery by incorporating maggots into his description. The idea of maggots breeding on a dead dog parallels Hamlet's idea of Ophelia being with child. Displaying his disgust, he is expressing that he cannot fathom the idea of her carrying a child, as it would be parallel to the negative description he offers.

Hamlet continues his use of animal imagery, this time directing it towards Polonius. In an early conversation, Hamlet indirectly refers to Polonius as a weasel when describing a cloud. Polonius, however, believes that the conversation is truly about the cloud and does not know he is the subject of Hamlet's ridicule. This displays Polonius' stupidity and ignorance:

HAMLET. Methinks it is like a weasel.

POLONIUS. It is back'd like a weasel. (*Ham.* 3.2.78-79)

The significance of the animal imagery directed towards Polonius is ultimately discovered during his death. Literary critic Joseph Meeker takes an interesting approach to analyzing the death of Polonius. He begins by examining the animal imagery used toward Polonius moments before his death, recognizing the use of the term "rat." The significance of this term is the repeated identification of Polonius as a rodent. Meeker's recognition of the parallel between the first and second instances solidifies that in Hamlet's mind, Polonius is a rodent. This imagery continues to the moment preceding Polonius' death. Directly preceding his death, Hamlet refers to Polonius as a rat: "Hey now? A rat? Dead for a ducat, dead" (*Ham.* 3.4.25)! Meeker suggests that Hamlet does not kill Polonius because he is a man, but because he is projected in his mind as a rat. Because of this projection, we see Hamlet's first instance of actual murder. I believe Meeker's claims accurately display Hamlet's state of mind at this point in the play. His observations are significant because of Hamlet's reluctance to physically harm anybody prior to that moment. In agreeing with Meeker's theory, it is apparent that the animal imagery goes so far in Hamlet's mind that Polonius has been transformed completely from a human to an animal, thereby justifying the murder as a moral act. "Hamlet's hate-filled mind created instantly an image of an animal competitive with man, the rat, which could legitimately be killed" (53). The ease and guiltlessness with which Hamlet murders Polonius is reflected upon the ease with which he would kill a common rat. Meeker correctly analyzes that the intensity

Student Reflections on Writing: Nedda Djavid

I spent the first 12 years of my education in classes where teachers emphasized the importance of creativity and expanding the mind. Every year, I had to do creative exercises and projects that forced me to think outside the box in ways that I would never do on my own. I enjoyed writing and often considered myself good at it. Then, I went to college. My major changed my priorities. I no longer had the luxury of exercising the creative muscle that was my brain, but focused on numbers and calculations all day. I exited the writing world and little did I know, it would be hard to go back. "Hamlet and the Animals" was written for an English class that my transfer college informed me that I had to take, at the last minute. When I started this class, I realized that I hadn't practiced in over two years. As good as I thought I was, I had returned to square one. Even as I write this reflection, I find it hard to translate what is in my brain to words on a piece of paper. Writing the research paper for my English class was my wakeup call. The hours upon hours I spent trying and failing to reach my old abilities jerked me back into reality and made me realize I had abandoned writing. Discouraged, I went to my professor, the patient and ever-supportive Professor Tomasion, over and over again. I had edited almost every single line in that paper. It was a difficult journey for me, but I promised myself that once I finished it, I would begin to integrate writing back into my life no matter what. Writing had allowed me to express myself in a way that I couldn't with any other medium. Losing that ability was like having a physical block between my thoughts and the piece of paper in front of me, and to be honest, it frightened me. I never want to lose that ability to display my emotions, feelings, and arguments again. Thanks to this paper and the English class I took, I realized the importance of writing and that I need to incorporate it into my life again, regardless of whether it is necessary or not.

of this act displays how transformed Hamlet's mind is at this point in the play.

One of the most recurring instances of animal imagery in *Hamlet* is directed toward Gertrude. Hamlet is deeply affected by her betrayal because of her actions in the wake of his father's death. In order to display her lack of morality, the application of animal imagery toward Gertrude begins early in the play:

O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason
Would have mourned longer!—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her gallèd eyes. (*Ham.* 1.2.150-156)

Hamlet observes that even a beast would have mourned longer than his mother, and therefore begins to reference her as a beast for the remainder of the play. When Hamlet considers the idea that Gertrude is sleeping with Claudius, his comparisons to her animal-like behavior increase significantly. He finds this behavior revolting, and his views on mankind are further corrupted. If his mother is able to commit such a heinous and incestuous act, then she should not be included in the same realm as man.

Observing that Gertrude has the same capacity as an animal, Hamlet does not trust that she has the morality to stay away from Claudius' bed. He takes it upon himself to convey to her the animalistic behavior she is taking part in: "Nay, but to live / In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed, / Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love / Over the nasty sty—" (*Ham.* 3.4.93-96). This is perhaps the most negative instance of animal imagery used in the entire play. Hamlet uses this reference to a "sty" in order to degrade Gertrude to the status of a barn animal. Her incestuous behavior with Claudius is the epitome of amoral behavior, and as a result, Hamlet uses incredibly harsh language to describe it. Hamlet's descriptions of Gertrude as a lusty animal serve to mirror the views of pamphleteer Joseph Swetnam. This common ground displays a similar mindset during the 1600s: the belief that women do not have control over their desires: "And all to deceive the simple and plain-meaning Man; they can with the Satyr, out of one Mouth blow both hot and cold" (7). Here, Swetnam is drawing a similarity between women and the abilities of the Satyr. The term "satyr," used to describe a man who has strong sexual desires, was previously used by Hamlet as a reference to Claudius. This term, used to describe both women and men, ultimately

has a negative connotation regarding self-control. Hamlet's use of barn-animal imagery toward Gertrude displays what he thinks of her actions, and Swetnam's use of the term 'satyr' identifies a mindset regarding the lustfulness of women in the 1600s. Swetnam continues to account the lustfulness of women with his description of Semiramis of Babylon: "After her Husband's death, she waxed so unsatiabie in Carnal Lust, that two Men at one time could not satisfie her Desire, and so by her unsatiableness, at length, all Perfia grew full of Whores" (51). Swetnam offers a description of Semiramis's behavior following the death of her husband, the story of which closely parallels Hamlet's view of Gertrude's insatiable lust. Gertrude's lust is again displayed with scorn by Hamlet when he references her transition from King Hamlet to Claudius: "Have you eyes? / Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed / And batten on this moor? Ha, have you eyes" (*Ham.* 3.4.66-68)? Hamlet's intense questioning of Gertrude is done in order to try and get her to realize the amorality of her actions. This vivid description plays a key part in separating Gertrude from human to animal. The characteristic being described here is that Gertrude is living to eat, rather than eating to live. This aspect of her character puts her in the same category as a gorging animal rather than a reasonable human being. This parallels Swetnam's story regarding Semiramis' transition to another man after her husband's death solely for the purpose of satisfying her desires. This carnal lust displayed by both these women portrays the negative mindset surrounding women and their sexual activities during the 1600s.

Throughout the play, Hamlet references almost all of the characters he interacts with as animals. The one character to which Hamlet's negative animal imagery is not applied is King Hamlet. In fact, the former king is one of the characters that is referred to in a positive manner: "He was a man, take him for all in all. / I shall not look upon his like again" (*Ham.* 1.2.394-395). Hamlet's rare description of his father as a man is a stark foil to the animal imagery found in the rest of the play. He refers to King Hamlet as a "man" and states that he will never find another person who was the same. Because of this contrast between animal imagery and the description of King Hamlet, we are left with the notion that the former king is, in Hamlet's eyes, someone who has all the characteristics of man.

Throughout the play, Hamlet is the only character who displays a heightened sense of morality. His actions mirror that of the universally accepted method for good, moral behavior. His experiences with amorality, lack of conscience, the inability to reason, and a reliance on carnal pleasures serve to weaken his beliefs in the true abilities of mankind. Hamlet does, however, have a standard to hold all the characters in his life to: his father. Because he experienced the full aptitude of man from his father, Hamlet is aware that man has the ability to be the paragon of all animals. His interactions with the corrupt and amoral people in his life do not change his perception; rather, he changes his perception of them. The people in Hamlet's life are lacking the true characteristics of man, and as a result he begins to think of them as animals. In doing so, Hamlet is able to justify his poor behavior toward them. The use of animal imagery displays Hamlet's method of dealing with the amorality and corruption he sees around him without taking part in it himself.

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Evaluation: *Nedda's analysis of Hamlet is impressive because of its fresh approach to understanding the play's concept of humanity, through images of the non-human. She also draws on archival research, applying early modern pamphleteer Joseph Swetnam's rhetoric to her reading of Gertrude. In so doing, she follows many feminist new historicists tracing connections between pamphlets on gender and Renaissance drama.*

Relative Reactivity of Carbons in Radical Chlorination

Veronica Eklund

Course: Chemistry 205 (Organic Chemistry II)

Instructor: Daniel J. Stanford

Assignment: *Students performed a five-week research project in the lab portion of the course and were assigned to write a paper in American Chemical Society format, as if it were to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.*

Introduction

This experiment chlorinated different mono-chlorinated alkanes to determine the effects of the existing chlorine substituent on the reactivity of each carbon in the compound for further chlorination. This is an important reaction because it is a form of halogenation. Halogenated compounds are becoming increasingly important to the field of agrochemical research and development, because they provide environmentally friendly and user-safe products.¹ Halogens are also very important functional groups for synthesizing many compounds. Alkyl halides serve as a useful intermediate in order to form many more valuable products, such as alcohols and alkenes.² However, it is important to be able to control where the halogen is located, in order to assure the desired final product.

Product distribution of many reactions was analyzed in this project. This was done to determine which factors contribute the most to product distribution. One known factor is the number of hydrogens that would lead to the creation of a specific product.³ Another factor is the reactivity of the carbons to which the hydrogens are attached, which is dependent on the stability of the intermediate. Understanding the relative stabilities of the radicals can aid significantly in the analysis of reactivity trends and product distribution.⁴ This component is affected by several circumstances: the degree of substitution of the carbon, the electron withdrawing effect of the chlorine, and the electron donating resonance effect of the chlorine; all of these contribute to a more or less stable radical intermediate.³ The experiment discussed in this paper was designed to investigate to what extent each of these elements influences the stability of the radical intermediate, and therefore influences the product distribution.

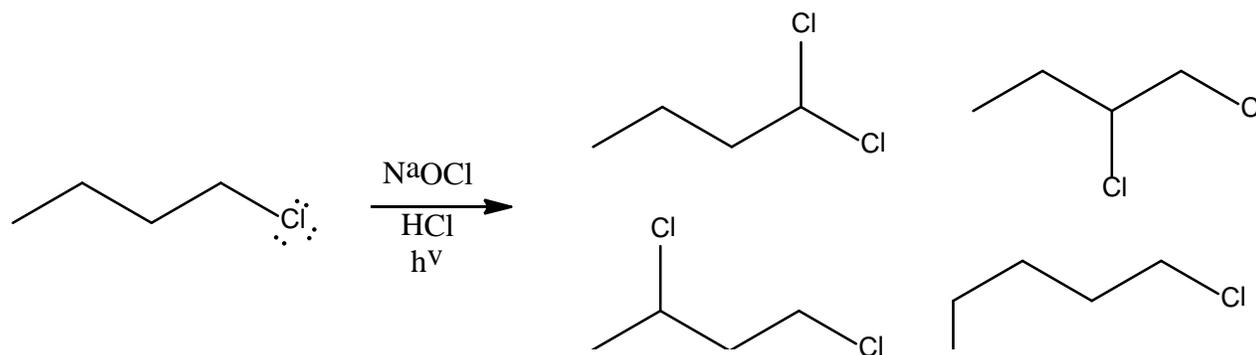


Figure 1. Overall reaction example of the chlorination of 1-chlorobutane.

Dihalo Product	Boiling Point (°C)	Retention Time (min)	Percent Composition ¹ (%)	Relative Reactivity ²	Class Averages
<i>Chlorination of 1-chlorobutane</i>					
1,1-	112	2.018	0.262	1.00	1.00
1,2-	125	2.097	0.883	3.37	3.63
1,3-	134	2.174	1.816	6.93	7.48
1,4-	161	2.469	1.020	2.60	2.76
<i>Chlorination of 1-chloropropane</i>					
1,1-	85	2.230	0.838	1.00	1.00
1,2-	96	2.289	2.333	2.79	2.91
1,3-	120	2.689	1.531	1.22	1.28
<i>Chlorination of 1-chloropentane</i>					
1,1-	N/A	2.368	0.156	1.00	1.00
1,2-	148	2.454	0.519	3.32	3.25
1,3-	N/A	2.618	1.282	8.20	7.99
1,4-	162	2.732	1.748	11.18	10.90
1,5-	179	3.113	0.812	3.47	3.38
<i>Chlorination of 2-chloropropane</i>					
1,2-	96	2.290	2.866	1.00	1.00
2,2-	72	2.030	3.478	7.28	7.44
<i>Chlorination of 1-bromobutane</i>					
1,1-	136	2.306	0.222	1.00	1.00
1,2-	142	2.411	0.983	4.42	4.29
1,3-	151	2.529	2.406	10.81	10.59
1,4-	N/A	2.941	0.878	2.63	2.67
<i>Chlorination of 3-chloro-3-methylpentane</i>					
1,3-	N/A	2.976 ³	1.911	1.00	1.00
2,3-	N/A	2.602 ³	2.556	2.01	2.00
3,3-chloromethyl	173	2.725 ³	1.741	1.82	1.87

Table 1. GC results of each reaction product mixture. ¹Percent of total solution, determined by integration on the GC. ²Refers to the relative reactivity of the carbon in the starting material that led to the product; expressed as a ratio (see Calculation 1). ³Boiling points could not be found for each product in the literature, so a GC/MS was used to determine the order of elution.

$$\begin{array}{l}
 1,1: 0.262/3H = 0.131 \qquad 1,2: 0.883/2H = 0.442 \\
 0.131/0.131 = 1.00 \qquad 0.442/0.131 = 3.37
 \end{array}$$

Calculation 1. Sample of relative reactivity calculation using 1-chlorobutane and the 1,1- and 1,2- products.

Student Reflections on Writing: Veronica Eklund

As far as subjects and activities go, reading and writing do not necessarily make it onto my favorites list. I am definitely a science, numbers and logic person, as mild dyslexia has made reading a genuine chore for me. However, that has not prevented me from continuously trying to improve my ability to write more easily and cohesively. As you can see from the fact that my article is an organic chemistry research paper, although I pursued science, I still needed to be able to convey my findings and hypotheses through writing.

Good writing skills are critical to success, regardless of what you want to do. When applying for jobs, the initial step is nearly always submitting a resume and cover letter. If they are not well-written, you will be hard pressed for an opportunity to speak with someone. Not to mention, with the world becoming more digital every day, and relying on email as the primary form of communication, it is more important than ever that you are able to clearly express yourself through writing.

Therefore, no matter what your interests or dreams for the future are, take your writing education seriously. Never underestimate the power of the written word, or the power of those who possess the skill to articulate it effectively.

Results

Each reaction was controlled for mono-chlorination by having a large excess of the alkyl halide in comparison to the chlorine (about 14:1). The products were analyzed by using a gas chromatograph (GC), and elution was assumed in order of boiling point. The exception to this was the reaction with 3-chloro-3-methylpentane, because only one of the products had a known boiling point found in literature. For this product mixture, a gas chromatograph/mass spectroscopy (GC/MS) was conducted in order to determine what order the products eluted in. The summary of results is shown in Table 1.

GC/MS data for the products of the chlorination of 3-chloro-3-methylpentane.— All product peaks show the molecular ion at 154 m/z. The MS for the first product GC peak showed no significant peaks above 91 m/z. The MS for the second product GC peak showed a small peak at 125 m/z and a peak at 105 m/z. The MS for the third product GC peak showed a large peak at 125 m/z and a peak at 119 m/z.

Discussion

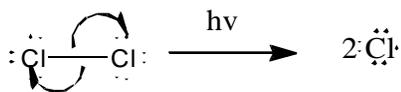
In order to truly understand the results and how the aforementioned elements (degree of substitution, electron withdrawing inductive effect of the halogen, and electron-donating resonance effect of the halogen) affected them, it is important to examine the accepted mechanism in which this reaction follows (Figure 2).

Table 1 helps to analyze which of the factors contributes the most to product distribution. Varying the starting material and changing only one thing at a time provides control and allows the responsible factor to be correctly attributed. Each of the discussed elements certainly may have played a role in the product distribution, but it is clear that some factors are stronger contributors than others.

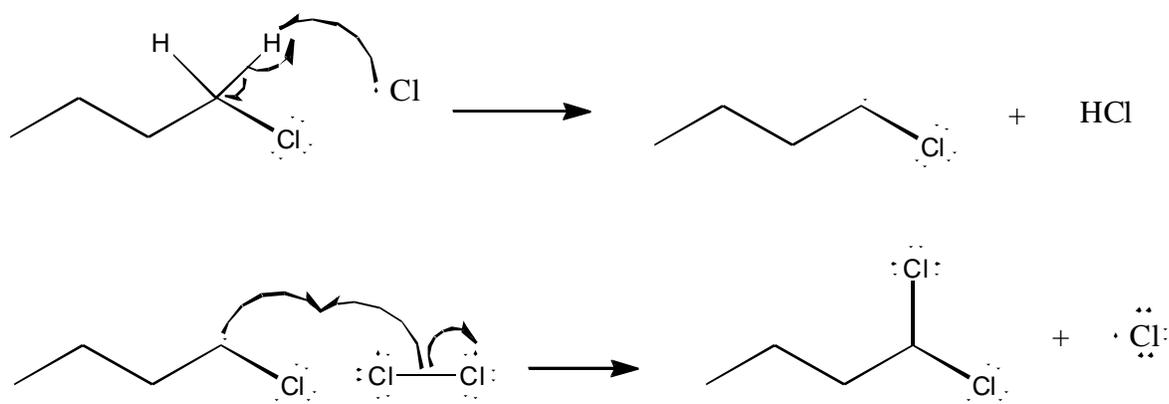
The strongest contributor was found to be the degree of substitution of the intermediate radical. The favored product was formed by a secondary radical intermediate in every reaction, even if the inductive effect was higher than an available primary carbon.

The next greatest contributor was found to be the electron-withdrawing inductive effect of the halogen already on the compound. Table 1 shows that it is more favorable to chlorinate carbons further away from the halogen. Also, if multiple secondary carbons are available, the secondary carbon furthest from the halogen is preferred to yield the major product. The data even shows that as the carbon chain increases, the primary carbon furthest from the halogen becomes increasingly preferred over the secondary carbon directly next to the halogen.

Initiation:



Propagation:



Termination:

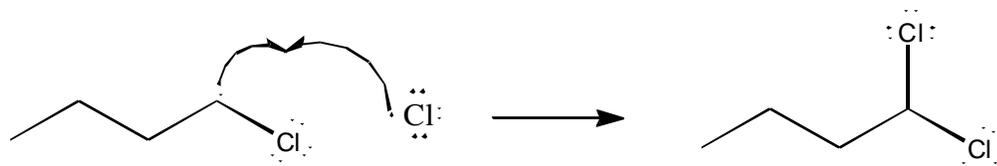


Figure 2. Accepted chain mechanism of radical chlorination. The radicals form the same way on each of the other carbons in order to yield the other products in Figure 1.

The one exception to the rest of the results was the reaction with 3-chloro-3-methylpentane as the starting material. It would have been expected to see carbon-1 be more reactive than the methyl group on carbon-3, since the inductive effect would have been less on C-1. One theory found in support of this is called neighboring-group assistance. This theory explains that when a radical is present on a neighboring carbon from a halogen, it is possible that the halogen “assists” in the abstraction of the hydrogen and forms a cyclic intermediate radical.⁵ This bridged free radical is more stable than a traditional primary radical and therefore is preferred to the primary radical farther from the halogen.

Relative Reactivity of Carbons in Radical Chlorination

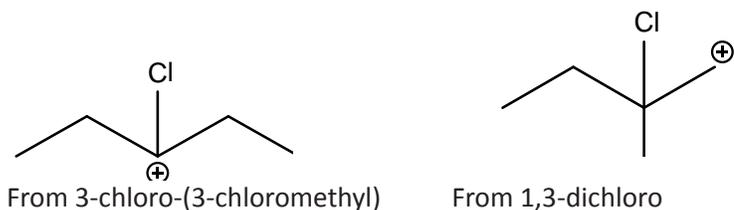


Figure 3. Ion formed at 105 m/z by losing a CH_2Cl radical. The cation from the 3-chloro-(3-chloromethyl) would be more stable because it is secondary. The primary cation from the 1,3-dichloro would be unlikely to form.

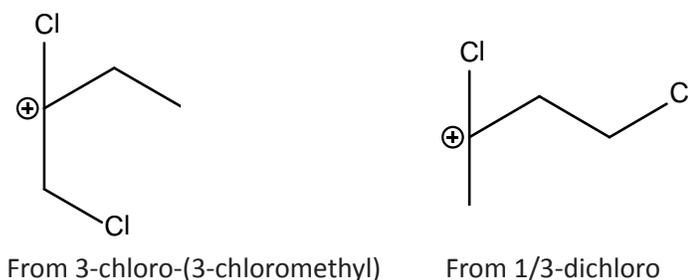


Figure 4. Ion formed at 125 m/z by losing a CH_3CH_2 radical. Both of the cations are secondary; however, 1,3-dichloro's inductive effect would be much less, so it would be expected to be more stable and have a larger peak.

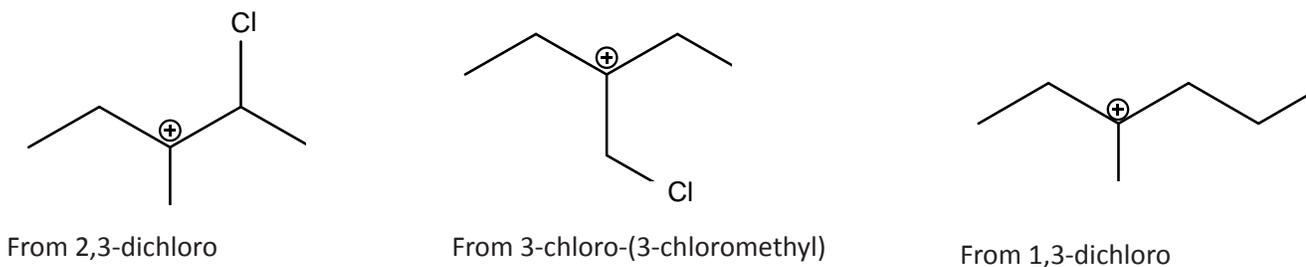


Figure 5. Ion formed at 119 m/z by losing a Cl radical. All of the shown cations are tertiary, but 1,3-dichloro's would have the lowest inductive effect; therefore, it is the most likely suspect for the peak at 119 m/z.

When using the MS spectra to determine which GC peak belongs to which product, the MS peaks were analyzed by looking at the potential ions formed from each product (Figures 3, 4, and 5).

From this analysis it was determined that the products of the chlorination of 3-chloro-3-methylpentane eluted in the GC in the following order: 2,3-dichloro-3-methylpentane; 3-chloro-(3-chloromethyl)-pentane; and 1,3-dichloro-3-methylpentane.

It is difficult to analyze the electron donation resonance effect of the halogen, and if it is even present in these reactions. None of the experiments performed were able to test for this. What can be determined, however, is if the halogen has an electron-donating resonance effect, it is not as strong as its electron-withdrawing inductive effect. This

would explain why, in every case, the primary carbon furthest from the halogen is more reactive than the primary carbon the halogen is on.

These experiments have been a good start to examining radical halogenation and the effects an existing halogen has on the product distribution. However, there is still much to be examined and determined. Some future work that will be done using these results include absolute confirmation of boiling points/elution order of the dichloro-3-methylpentane isomers (through separation by GC or fractional distillation), as well as relative calibration of reactivity between different molecules.

Experimental

A typical experimental procedure for the radical chlorination of a haloalkane is described in this section. Any variations are listed after the typical procedure. Six different haloalkanes were used: 1-chlorobutane; 1-chloropentane; 1-chloropropane; 2-chloropropane; 1-bromobutane; and 3-chloro-3-methylpentane.

Using a 3-dram vial as the reaction vessel, 2.0 mL of the haloalkane were combined with 2.0 mL of 5% sodium hypochlorite solution. Then, 1.0 mL of 3 M hydrochloric acid was added to the vial. The vial was capped and shaken until all of the yellow color was in the top, organic layer. The vial was then placed between two fluorescent bulbs and shaken periodically, until both layers of the solution were colorless.

The solution was then neutralized with 200 mg of calcium carbonate, or until bubbles did not form when the calcium carbonate was added. The calcium carbonate was added in several proportions, and the vial was shaken vigorously between each addition. Using a Pasteur pipet, the bottom aqueous layer was removed from the vial and set aside. The remaining organic solution was dried over sodium sulfate, which was added until it ceased clumping upon addition. The solution was then left to dry for 10 minutes.

A filter pipet was prepared by placing a small piece of cotton in the bottom a Pasteur pipet. Using another Pasteur pipet, the organic solution was filtered through the filter pipet, into a pre-massed GC vial. A GC was obtained of the final solution.

Changes to procedure: For the chlorination of 1-chloropentane, 2.3 mL of the haloalkane was used. For the chlorination of 1-chloropropane, 1.7 mL of the haloalkane was used. These changes were made in an attempt to keep the excess reactant in excess by the same proportion for each reaction. It was determined that this was unnecessary because it is still in excess by a very large amount without these revisions. For the chlorination of 3-chloro-3-methylpentane, a GC/MS was obtained to determine the elution order of the products.

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Evaluation: *Veronica's paper shows a true comprehension of the concepts and problems being probed in this project. She also spotted a rather subtle trend in the data that I would not have expected students at this level to come up with on their own. Her arguments and explanations were the best I have seen to date.*

Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars* and Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games:* Stories of Courageous Care

Shari Emme

Course: Literature 219 (Children's Literature)
Instructor: Anne Davidovicz

Assignment: *For this project, students are required to write a comparative literary analysis of characters encountered in young adult novels read during the semester.*

In Lois Lowry's book, *Number the Stars*, and Suzanne Collins' novel, *The Hunger Games*, the main characters live in worlds comprised of harsh realities. Annemarie Johansen must face daily life in Denmark in the midst of Nazi occupation during World War II in *Number the Stars*, while Katniss Everdeen must dwell in the dystopian society of District 12 created by the Capitol in *The Hunger Games*. Annemarie and Katniss witness how their relatives and friends are affected by the cruelties that are part of these societies and determine that they must take steps in order to help save them from harm. Thus, Annemarie and Katniss both act courageously because they want to protect the people they care about.

Annemarie Johansen lives in a world where Nazi officers stand guard over "every corner" (Lowry 8) in Copenhagen. The residents are watched carefully for any sign of disobedience to the German authority's rules. The intimidating forces of "helmets...cold eyes...and...tall shiny boots" (Lowry 2) have been in Denmark for three years. Due to their presence, Annemarie's "whole world ha[s] changed" (Lowry 17), and she has had to find a way in which to deal with life in this new realm. She is frightened by the soldiers when she and her friend Ellen are stopped by them for running in the street and then questioned. Annemarie begins to reply to their questions, but promptly realizes she must keep her answers short and on point. "Don't talk so much....Just answer them, that's

all" (Lowry 3). She speaks for the group initially and provides the soldiers only with the essential information they require. This includes giving them only Ellen's first name when Annemarie is asked for that information, thus not relaying to the soldiers any notion that Ellen is Jewish.

Annemarie's parents try to protect her and her little sister, Kirsti, from the cruelties of this new world as best they can, but their presence in Annemarie's life also provides her a means through which she is able to discover how she can help to protect others from the dangerous forces around them. Through the examples of her parents, as well as that of her uncle, Henrik, she does her best to keep a watchful eye over her younger sister. This is evidenced in the book when she pulls Kirsti away from the German soldiers "before Kirsti could resist" (Lowry 5) and potentially say something harmful to the soldiers after being stopped for running in the street. As set out previously, Annemarie knows that it is best to impart only what needs to be said in an appropriate manner when questioned by the officers. However, Kirsti, who has known no other life than that with the Nazi forces ever present, has a tendency to prattle on and act in an irritated manner toward the German soldiers.

As the story continues, Annemarie acts boldly in order to protect her friend, Ellen, as well as Annemarie's own family. When the Nazi officers arrive at the Johansens' apartment in the middle of the night, searching for the Rosens, Annemarie's sharp mind alerts her to the potential danger to their safety lurking around Ellen's neck. As the officers are about to enter the room where Annemarie and Ellen are hiding, Annemarie "grab[s] the little gold chain, yank[s] with all her strength and [breaks] it...[S]he crumple[s] it into her hand and close[s] her fingers tightly" (Lowry 45). Annemarie knows that if the officers were to see this simple piece of jewelry always worn by Ellen, comprised of the symbol of her religious beliefs, the Star of David, Ellen, Annemarie, and the other members of Annemarie's family would be taken away, imprisoned, and, perhaps, even killed. Through Annemarie's undaunted action, she manages to help in keeping Ellen and her own family safe from the Nazis during their search of the apartment.

Despite the life-saving effort Annemarie exhibits when the Nazi officers search the Johansens' apartment,

Annemarie questions whether she can be brave enough to defend anyone and doubts her ability. “Would [I] die to protect them?...Annemarie was honest enough to admit...to herself, that she wasn’t sure” (Lowry 26). She never thought she would be called upon to exhibit such courage, but when the time first arrives, she acts fast and boldly. However, her reservations continue to linger in her mind. Uncle Henrik talks with her about her capacity to be brave, and she confesses to him the doubts she has only revealed to herself. Uncle Henrik does not agree. “I think that is not true. I think you are like your mama... your papa, and...me. Frightened, but determined, and if the time came...I am quite sure you would be *very, very brave*” (Lowry 76) (emphasis added). Uncle Henrik recognizes in her the ability to perform courageous acts that she does not yet see in herself. This talk eventually succeeds in encouraging Annemarie as to her abilities, and she will come to learn of her potential as circumstances unfold.

As the family prepares for the wake of Great-aunt Birte “who never was” (Lowry 77), Annemarie recognizes it is her responsibility to remain quiet and not tell Ellen the truth about the matter. “She understood that she was protecting Ellen the way her mother had protected her” (Lowry 78). Annemarie does not want Ellen to feel sad because Ellen believes that Great-aunt Birte really did exist, but is now dead, and that the family is mourning her loss. However, more importantly, Annemarie realizes that by not telling Ellen at this point in time, that this is not the case, she is actually protecting Ellen from potential harm. If Ellen were to know of the plan being put into effect to reunite her with her parents and transfer them to Sweden, she might be even more frightened than what she is in the situation currently, which might cause her to react differently should they be approached by German officers or someone they did not know. Further, Annemarie understands it is vital for her to continue the pretense of Great-aunt Birte’s death when the Nazi officers arrive at the house and she is directly questioned by them as to who has died: “‘My Great-aunt Birte,’ she lied, in a firm voice” (Lowry 84). By making this statement in a composed manner, she helps to keep the officers from a heightened wariness, which assists in the result of the officers eventually leaving the farmhouse believing that nothing other than a wake is taking place there. This

Student Reflections on Writing: Shari Emme

Writing is a vital part of my life. It has helped me to better understand who I am as a person. Through my writing, be it a poem, short story or journaling, I have been able to discover characteristics about myself that I had not realized were there. Writing has helped me deal with difficulties in my life and strengthened my resolve to move forward. It has guided me through times of indecisiveness and aided me in finding a resolution. It has helped me identify traits I don’t particularly like about myself and allowed me the ability to change those items in a positive manner. For me, as for many, writing is also a cathartic tool. I have been able to come to terms with the aspects of my life that I cannot change through the written expression of my fear, frustration, anger, or pain. Writing has given me a voice when I thought I could not be heard. It has brought me into a community with others who understand my aspirations and goals at a time when I thought I was alone in my views. It has made me realize that I am a complete and valuable person as I am and do not need to conform to the expectations that others have for me in order to matter in this world. Writing has given me a life that, years ago, I did not know was possible.

allows the plan to continue forward so that Ellen’s family may make their escape to Sweden.

As the plot progresses, Annemarie takes the bravest action of all when she delivers to Uncle Henrik the envelope from Peter that fell out of Mr. Rosen’s pocket. Again, heeding the influence of her parents and her uncle, Annemarie follows through on the task heroically. Although she has no idea what the envelope contains, she is keenly aware that it is of vital importance to Uncle Henrik’s mission of safely transporting the Rosens and others to Sweden, where they will be out of danger. “‘It’s important, isn’t it, Mama?...I will take it....I know the way and it’s almost light now. I can run like the wind’”

(Lowry 104). Annemarie realizes that, although she does not know exactly what is in the envelope, it is something necessary to the plan, and she must carry out the mission of delivering it to Uncle Henrik as quickly as possible. Upon being stopped by the Nazi officers and their guard dogs, she does not falter in her assignment, but follows her mother's directions, chattering like "a silly little girl" (Lowry 113). Annemarie's acting this part in a courageous manner again helps to decrease the level of suspicion by the Nazi guards, and they eventually allow her to continue on her way, believing that she is on a mindless task of delivering a trifling gift to her uncle. As a result, she is able to arrive at Uncle Henrik's boat and deliver to him the envelope containing the drug-soaked handkerchief prior to the arrival of the German officers at his boat for inspection. This permits Ellen and her family to avoid detection by the guard dogs and sail to safety in Sweden.

These examples provide us with the opportunity to view Annemarie's transformation from doubt to bold action in order to protect others. She, herself, does not realize this change fully until her conversation with Uncle Henrik following execution of the plan when he tells her how proud he is of her "because you were so very brave" ... "No, I wasn't. I was very frightened" ... "You risked your life." ... "I didn't even think about that!" ... "That's all that *brave* means – not thinking about the dangers. Just thinking about what you must do" (Lowry 122-123). Annemarie, now, truly becomes aware of how courageous she has been in her actions because she wanted to protect those she cared about.

Annemarie's bravery echoes those examples set forth in children's literature of people who dared to act during the time of the Holocaust to protect others. In *Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank, we learn of Miep and Jan Gies, who helped the Frank family move to their hiding place in Amsterdam without the Nazis' knowledge, through smuggling the Frank family's clothes, other items and the family members themselves to the annex set up in Mr. Frank's office building. Further, Miep, along with Bep Voskujil, purchase the groceries and other items necessary for daily life and covertly deliver them to the annex for use by the Frank family and the others hiding in the annex. Marisabina Russo's *Always Remember Me: How One Family Survived World War II*, tells the

story of how Oma, a Jewish woman in Germany, helps her daughters survive the Holocaust. After obtaining passage to America for herself and her two daughters, Oma decides to send only the youngest daughter to the United States when the other daughter decides to marry and remain in Germany. Oma also remains behind in an effort to protect her daughter, who is not leaving. We also see in *Heroes of the Holocaust*, by Susan Glick, the courageous actions of people such as Hannah Senesh, a Hungarian Jew living in Palestine at the time of the Holocaust. Senesh joined with the British forces in a mission to parachute into Yugoslavia to assist the Jews in fleeing from the Nazis. After successfully arriving in Yugoslavia, Senesh pursues a further effort to reach Hungary in order to rescue her mother. The book also emphasizes the story of Oskar Schindler, a Gentile, who helped to save more than one thousand Jews from death at the hands of the Nazis by convincing the Nazi faction that he required them to work in his ammunitions factory, though the production of ammunition was not the actual purpose of the factory. Additionally, like the deception Annemarie employs, a tactic Katniss will also use in *The Hunger Games*, Schindler's use of deceptive practices in dealing with the Nazis was necessary in order to protect those Jews under his care against the evil that has been encountered.

In *The Hunger Games*, Katniss Everdeen faces a world similar to that in which Annemarie lives, though set in a future time. In an existence somewhat akin to Annemarie's Copenhagen during 1943, the citizens of Katniss' District Twelve are subject to the monitoring by the Peacekeepers, as well as the Capitol, in an attempt to control what the citizens do. They are forced into slum-like living conditions, with little food, little money, little electricity and no political power, especially over the forced participation in the annual Hunger Games.

In contrast to Annemarie, Katniss' courageous abilities arise from the absence of parental involvement. Her father has been killed in a coal mine blast and her mother retreats into a shell of depression and grief, leaving no parent available to care for Katniss and her young sister, Prim. "At eleven years old, ... I took over as head of the family" (Collins 27). As a result of her father's death and her mother's inability to cope, Katniss must

face becoming the decision maker and provider for the family at a premature age, or else the family will perish. As the family nears the point of dying from starvation, Katniss comes up with a plan whereby she is able to save them from what had seemed to be an inevitable fate. “I thought of the hours spent in the woods with my father and I knew how we were going to survive” (Collins 32). She determines that, by using her father’s bow and arrows, she will begin hunting game in the woods just outside the Seam, where Katniss and her family live. Katniss braves many dangers in order to provide food for her family, ranging from the electric fence which separates District Twelve from the woods, to the “flesh-eaters...[that] roam freely,...venomous snakes, [and] rabid animals” (Collins 5). She remarks that “I’ve been putting food on the table for four years. That’s no small task” (Collins 89). She comprehends the hazards she must face in obtaining food in order to feed her mother and sister. There are many things that could happen to Katniss while hunting. While in the forest, she could be attacked by a wild animal, injured by another hunter, or she could be caught by the Peacekeepers and be imprisoned for breaking the law.

As Katniss hones her skills, she is able to kill better game and also identify several berry types growing in the woods in order to eliminate dangerous varieties, both of which she can sell at the Hob, the black market in the Seam, or to others who want to purchase a particular item. This provides additional money for the family in order for them to buy necessities for life other than food. Katniss enters her name multiple times in the reaping so that she may obtain tesserae, the extra “supply of grain and oil” (Collins 13) for the family. While providing her family with additional sustenance, this measure increases the possibility of her name being chosen as the female tribute at the reaping.

Katniss has done what she needed to after her father’s death to make certain that people did not learn of how her mother had retreated from life for fear that Katniss and Prim might be sent to the community home. “I could never let that happen to Prim” (Collins 27). However, like Annemarie, Katniss also professes doubt over her ability to fully safeguard Prim. “I protect Prim in every way I can, but I’m powerless against the reaping”

(Collins 15). This is the first year that Prim’s name will be entered into the reaping lottery box. The reaping is the one factor Katniss has no control over, and she does not yet realize how valiant she will be on the day of this admission of uncertainty in order to shield her sister from its results. Katniss feels Prim’s chances of being chosen in the reaping are extremely low, and tries to make certain of this by not “let[ting] her take out any tesserae” (Collins 15), so that only one slip of paper with Prim’s name is in the drawing box. Katniss’ name is entered on 20 slips of paper in the reaping drawing box, and the idea is held out that Prim is not really in any danger of being chosen. However, when it is Prim’s name that is drawn as District Twelve’s female tribute at the reaping, Katniss does not hesitate to step forward and volunteer to take Prim’s place. “With one sweep of my arm, I push her behind me. ‘I volunteer!’ I gasp. ‘I volunteer as tribute!’” (Collins 22). She knows that Prim cannot survive the Hunger Games, and Katniss’ valor in taking Prim’s place protects Prim from the certain fate of death if she were to participate. In no way would Katniss have allowed Prim to be sent into the arena. Katniss does not hesitate risking her own life in order to save that of her sister’s.

Katniss’ next bold accomplishment will be her effort to survive the games. Although she is doubtful that she can do this, she knows that she must make every attempt at survival in order to return to District Twelve to care for Prim and their mother. Prim begs that she try with all her might to win the games in order to come home. “And I know, because of Prim, I have to” (Collins 36). Katniss keeps the goal of returning home in her mind for the safety of her sister. She detests what it is she will have to do in order to make this happen, but, at this point, she recognizes that this is her only option.

Once inside the arena, Katniss encounters situations in which she must act courageously in order to protect others she cares about beyond her own family. She even begins to consider what it is she must do in order to help Rue survive. When the two split up to implement the plan to destroy the Careers’ food supply, Katniss admits that she is “feeling somehow worried...about leaving Rue alone, about leaving Prim alone back home. No, Prim has my mother and Gale and a baker who has promised

she won't go hungry. Rue has only me" (Collins 213). She senses a responsibility towards the protection of Rue. This summarizes that Katniss considers sacrificing her own life in order to save Rue.

After Rue's death and upon learning that two tributes from the same District will be allowed to win if they both survive to the end of the games, she goes in search of Peeta. When she finds him, she discovers that he has been badly injured with a deep cut to the upper thigh, administered by Cato. Katniss stays with Peeta, cleans his wound and his clothing, administers first aid to him and moves him to a safer place. She realizes that "by teaming up with him, I've made myself far more vulnerable than when I was alone....But I knew he was injured. And still I came after him. I'm just going to have to trust that whatever instinct sent me to find him was a good one" (Collins 263). She recognizes that this action makes her more susceptible to being killed, and thus leaving her mother and Prim without protection. But, as a result of her pursuit of him, she is actually protecting Peeta. She does not understand all of the reasons for her actions in actively searching for Peeta at this point, but part of it does have to do with the fact that she does not want him to die. "And while I was talking, the idea of actually losing Peeta hit me again and I realized how much I don't want him to die...[a]nd it's not about the sponsors[,]. . . what will happen back home...[or] that I don't want to be alone. It's him. I don't want to lose the boy with the bread" (Collins 297). Katniss will do what it takes in order to shield Peeta from whatever harm lies in wait for him in the arena. She will not give up and stand idly by, allowing him to die from the wounds he has already suffered.

When Katniss realizes that Peeta will soon succumb to the blood poisoning infection without the proper medicine, she takes the risk of going to the feast set out by the Gamekeepers in order to obtain this medicine. "[A]ll I can think is that he is going to die if I don't get to that feast" (Collins 276). Katniss knows that the other tributes who are still living will also be at the feast and that there will be attempts made on her life, especially by Cato, who has been looking specifically for her to make her his kill. Knowing that Peeta's survival lies squarely in her hands, she determines that she must act on this opportunity, no matter the risk.

Once Katniss and Peeta endure to the end of the games, believing that they have actually won since they are the last two survivors and are from the same District, a wrench is thrown into the action, and the rules are again changed so that only one tribute can win. But Katniss will not allow the Capitol or the Gamemakers to dictate the death of either her or Peeta. She states "*We both know they have to have a victor....Without a victor, the whole thing would blow up on the Gamemakers' faces. They'd have failed the Capitol....If Peeta and I were both to die, or they thought we were....*" (Collins 344). Katniss knows that the nightlock berries are poisonous. She is willing to take the risk of possibly ingesting the berries in order to stop those in charge from forcing her and Peeta to kill one another. Making the Capitol and the Gamemakers believe that the couple will commit suicide by taking the poisonous berries is their only option. At first, Peeta resists and tells Katniss to kill him so that she can win. But Katniss flatly refuses his suggestion, wanting to protect him, herself, and her family. "'You're not leaving me here alone,' I say. Because if he dies, I'll never go home, not really. I'll spend the rest of my life in this arena trying to think my way out" (Collins 343). She knows that if she must kill Peeta to become the sole victor, she will be of no use to Prim and her mother. She will end up retreating into a shell like her mother following the death of her father, searching for a reason for her actions in this final stage of the games. Moreover, she does not want Peeta to die at the hands of anyone, including her own.

Furthermore, comparable to the performance Annemarie gives of the chattering young girl when confronted by the Nazi guards, Katniss plays the role of a romantic, love-struck teenager both in the arena and during the winner interviews that take place following the conclusion of the games. "If I want to keep Peeta alive, I've got to give the audience something more to care about. Star-crossed lovers desperate to get home together. Two hearts beating as one. Romance" (Collins 261). Katniss' romantic actions obtain the pot of broth, which Peeta much needs in his current condition. She keeps up this performance in order to obtain other favors for the pair's survival, though her act seems to change from a performance into something of genuine emotion as time passes. Her true feelings show as she does what is necessary to continue their existence.

Once the games have ended, Haymitch makes clear to her the issues brewing in the Capitol due to the actions she took in the arena to end the games with both she and Peeta still alive. ““You’re in trouble. Word is the Capitol’s furious about you showing them up in the arena....Your only defense can be you were so madly in love you weren’t responsible for your actions.... Got it?’...‘Got it,’ I say” (Collins 356-357). She realizes her acting this part is necessary in order for both her and Peeta, and possibly their families, to survive any injurious plot by the government by convincing the Capitol that she was not trying to make fools of the leaders when she thought up the double suicide attempt in the arena. When questioned by Caesar Flickerman during the course of the interview as to her thinking on her actions, she states “I just...couldn’t bear the thought of...being without him” (Collins 369). As a measure of safety, she needs to present the reason for her actions as only being done because she was so blindly in love with Peeta, she could not bear going on without him. “Peeta will suffer, too, if this goes wrong” (Collins 358). She carries out these performances to save them both from harm. This is reinforced through her statement that “I did what it took...to keep us both alive” (Collins 373). This revelation discloses her awareness of what harm may surround them following the games. Katniss is willing to fight and take risks in order to ensure the safety of those she cares about.

Valiant efforts to protect those one cares about such as these are also evident in Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Although this book is not technically a *children’s* literature book, it is a novel that has been widely read by many children and young adults. Jem acts bravely in an effort to try to protect Scout after they are attacked by Bob Ewell while walking home following the school Halloween pageant. Jem tells Scout to run and, after she falls due to her costume, Jem struggles with Ewell and then drags her to safety from their attacker. Unfortunately, Ewell is able to get a hold of Jem, and Jem is injured during the attack. However, the caring effort of protection is taken one step further when Arthur “Boo” Radley comes to Jem and Scout’s rescue. Although the children have been frightened by the scary stories about Radley, he has tried to befriend them by leaving gifts for them in the hollowed-out tree on the edge of the Radley

property, which Jem and Scout accept. Radley’s care and concern for the children leads him to being in the right place at the right time, where he acts courageously to save both children from the continued assault by Ewell.

Annemarie and Katniss both have been required to grow up too soon in order to deal with the way of life that has been forced upon them. They learn to respond in a manner that is far beyond their years in age. Both act in a courageous manner as they feel it is their responsibility to help those they care about because they do not want harm to come to them. The bravery exhibited by Annemarie and Katniss is greatly commendable and proves their concern for others.

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Evaluation: *In this paper, Shari astutely analyzes characters from diverse children’s literature genres: historical fiction and fantasy. Her writing is consistently authoritative, insightful, and compelling. Her observations challenge the notion of “children’s” literature as unworthy of scholarly attention.*

Spiritual Dawn: Friedrich Nietzsche's Morality of Greatness

Elizabeth Erikson

Course: English 101 (Composition)

Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment: *In an expository essay, explain Friedrich Nietzsche's ultimate message for the "free spirits" he is writing to in Beyond Good and Evil.*

Imagine you are alone in a store and the owner is nowhere in sight—does anything prevent you from running off with whatever you want? Your answer to this question brings your moral values into view. Some people might answer that if no harmful consequences for themselves would result, like being arrested, stealing would be acceptable. Others may say that it depends on the situation; for example, stealing food to feed your starving family would be excusable. Still others may say that regardless of the consequences or situation, stealing would never be acceptable. While opinions differ regarding what is morally acceptable or excusable, most people do not deny that moral values play an important role in their lives. However, few stop to consider the great extent to which morality shapes their character and behavior, and even fewer stop to consider how their moral values may limit them. In *Beyond Good and Evil* Friedrich Nietzsche examines the origin, effect, and value of this morality. He objects to absolute, universal moral laws because these standards of behavior, implemented in an attempt to shepherd the species from descending into chaos, destruction, and despair, limit those who could without these constraints be extraordinary. His book is written for the "free spirits," a small group of readers who, like himself, are not content to sleepwalk through life with the society-promoted goal of relative happiness and security. Denying neither the pleasure nor the pain of the human experience, they strive for a wholeness and

wakefulness of the spirit that will place them on the path toward greatness. Nietzsche's ultimate message for the "free spirits" is that in order to reach their full potential as human beings they must guide their lives by their own personally created values because the reigning moral values of society are unreliable and detrimental to the human spirit.

Nietzsche approaches the subject of morality in a remarkably original, creative, and fearless way that differs vastly from the methods of other philosophers. In the history of Western philosophy, dating as far back as 500 BCE, myriad discourses have been written about human morality. Although countless philosophers have taken on this enormous challenge, Nietzsche believes that none of them have gone far enough down to its roots. He describes them as creating systems that support moral beliefs, but neglecting to question the soundness of the concept of morality itself, merely accepting its validity as a given (*Beyond* 97). In addition, they create their philosophies in a backwards way, first taking a conclusion regarding truth and then constructing evidence in its support. These truths they promote are only personal opinions influenced by the prevalent beliefs of the day. Nietzsche uses Arthur Schopenhauer as an example of this tendency: "Schopenhauer only did what philosophers are in the habit of doing—he adopted a *popular prejudice* and exaggerated it" (*Beyond* 25). In this light, the history of philosophy becomes little more than various reflections of the common ethos of each philosopher's time. Seeing these truths as merely prejudices removes their absoluteness and places them in the realm of fallibility.

In addition to exposing philosophers' flawed methods, Nietzsche criticizes their goal of presenting an absolute, objective universal form of truth by which people can guide their lives. He believes these moral truths are unreasonable "because they address themselves to 'all,' because they generalize where one must not generalize" (*Beyond* 109). It is difficult to imagine a belief that will always be beneficial for every person in every situation. In Nietzsche's view, "truth" is malleable—philosophers were chasing after an absolute truth that did not exist. He asks, "what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of 'true' and 'false'?" Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness

and, as it were, lighter and darker shadows and shades of appearance...?” (*Beyond* 46). Morality is not black or white in his view, rather many shades of grey.

Different in yet another way from past philosophers, Nietzsche believes that the harm or benefit caused by holding a certain belief to be true is more important than its absolute, universal validity. He says, “The falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgment The question is to what extent is it life-promoting, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-cultivating” (*Beyond* 11). A belief that is beneficial for one person may be incredibly harmful for another, depending on the individual’s character and circumstances. Nietzsche encourages “free spirits” to strive to find personal values that are useful for achieving excellence rather than searching for an absolute truth that can be applied to all of humankind.

Rejecting the validity of absolute moral truths, Nietzsche explains how morality is of human rather than divine origin, constructed to fill a specific need in society. He says that what becomes labeled as moral or immoral is determined by how useful these beliefs are to a community (*Beyond* 113). He believes that there are two basic types of morality: master morality and slave morality. Master morality is created by the ruling group of the time. Nietzsche describes them as judging “what is harmful to [them] is harmful in itself” (*Beyond* 205). Their morality is constructed by valuing qualities that are conducive to power, such as strength, pride, and ruthlessness, and devaluing qualities that are not, such as weakness, humility, and gentleness. As a result, Nietzsche labels them “value-creating” (*Beyond* 205). The ruling group only feels a sense of moral obligation toward its peers, and can behave toward weaker groups in any way that they feel would cause the most benefit for themselves. Nietzsche says this takes them beyond the absolutes of good and evil (*Beyond* 206). If the virtue of an action is determined solely by its consequences for a group or person, then a certain action cannot be classified as always good or always evil. There could not be eternal moral laws because what is of harm or benefit would vary depending on changing circumstances. Neither could there be universal moral laws because there would be different standards of treatment regarding those belonging or not

belonging to the ruling group.

In contrast to master morality, the weaker group constructs absolute truths in reaction to the values of their oppressors, which leads to slave morality (*Beyond* 207). The lives of those in the weak group are filled with hardship. This can be seen in the experiences of the ancient Jewish people: “The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor” (*The HarperCollins Study Bible*, Ex. 1.13-14). It is in this type of situation that slave morality develops. The weaker group must find some way to make their lives tolerable. They do this by labeling everything that their oppressors believe as absolutely evil as what they believe as absolutely good. Nietzsche says that this

Student Reflections on Writing: Elizabeth Erikson

When my English 101 class received our second assignment, to write an expository essay on Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Beyond Good and Evil*, Professor Hemmer told us, “Remember, you don’t have to agree with him, you just have to try to understand him.” He repeated this many times throughout the semester, and it is something that has stayed with me. This outlook—to concern myself with *understanding* rather than with agreeing or disagreeing—has allowed me to see the beauty, goodness, and truth in certain works that I previously might have dismissed because, on first reading, I disagreed with them so strongly. I spent a lot of time trying to understand Nietzsche while I was writing this essay, but I know that I barely scratched the surface. Although it can be difficult and intimidating to write about something that one does not fully understand, this should not be a deterrent because the process of writing, in my experience, leads to better understanding. The little of Nietzsche’s thought that I do understand is quite beautiful. That there is a great deal left that I do not understand simply means that more beauty is waiting to be discovered in the future.

view is used to “ease existence for those who suffer,” and calls it “essentially a morality of utility” (*Beyond* 207). In this view, morality is the result of beliefs that are useful to a certain group at a certain time rather than the result of divine commands. Judaism can be seen as being at the root of Christian morality. Because Christian “slave values” have been so instrumental in shaping the Western population into its current state, Nietzsche believes that acknowledging their human origins is incredibly important. In addition, he believes it is important to question whether these values are still beneficial to people today.

While in the past these values were helpful to humankind, Nietzsche believes that they have now become very harmful because they cultivate mediocrity and discourage people from rising above what is average. He says that slave morality is fear-based in the way it rejects anything that could be harmful to the community. People often fear what is very different, so someone with very unique ideas would then be labeled as a threat to the security of the community. Nietzsche says, “The highest and strongest drives, when they break out passionately and drive the individual far above the average and the flats of the herd conscience, wreck the self-confidence of the community Hence just these drives are branded and slandered most” (*Beyond* 113). This type of atmosphere breeds mediocrity and hinders individual greatness. He believes this slave morality has resulted in the West being molded into a herd of mindless sheep: “a smaller, almost ridiculous type, a herd animal, something eager to please, sickly, and mediocre has been bred, the European of today” (*Beyond* 76). Human beings are capable of achieving amazing things, but to do so, they must set their sights higher than the goal of just fitting in.

In addition to breeding mediocrity, Christian morality is also harmful because it devalues the earthly human experience. Nietzsche describes how denying the value of being human came to be encouraged, saying, “‘becoming unworldly,’ ‘unsensual,’ and ‘higher men’ were fused into a single feeling” (*Beyond* 75). The weaker, oppressed groups of the past suffered terribly in their lives. It became useful for them to believe that every aspect of their human experience was not valuable—the true value was in the afterlife where they would finally

be free of their pain. As a result, they “suffer life like a sickness” (*Beyond* 74). If someone is experiencing great misery and believes joy will only come after death, it is logical that he or she would long for life to be over. If someone takes the view that there is not a more perfect world he or she will go to after death, then the human experience becomes a great deal more valuable. With this view, people can focus their energy not on trying to secure a place for their souls in some heavenly realm, but rather on reaching their full human potentials on earth.

Although Christian values have been instrumental in shaping humankind into its current form, Nietzsche believes that religion no longer serves as a moral touchstone in people’s lives. He says “that ‘God is dead,’ that the belief in the Christian god has become unbelievable” (*Gay* 279). This should not be taken to mean that there once was an eternal, divine, creator being who literally died. Rather, that the Christian God has gone the way of Zeus and Odin. He is no longer relevant in a busy society that values science over the irrationality of faith. Living in such a society distances people from spiritual concerns, and they “simply have no time left for religion” (*Beyond* 69). Nietzsche goes on to say that “our modern, noisy, time-consuming industriousness, proud of itself, stupidly proud, educates and prepares people, more than anything else does, precisely for ‘unbelief’” (*Beyond* 69). Religious beliefs are unable to thrive in such a secular culture; they wither in the face of science.

As a result of this lack of religious guidance, Nietzsche feels that society has become overly skeptical and fears that in the future life will take on a complete sense of meaninglessness. He describes society as suffering from “a nervous exhaustion and sickliness” in which “everything is unrest, disturbance, doubt, attempt” (*Beyond* 130). Society’s old beliefs, previously useful, are now seen to be unhealthy and unreliable. Without absolute answers to life’s difficulties, people are left to wander alone, lost in the world. Nietzsche illustrates society’s sad condition through his character of “the madman.” This man is seen running through a market crying, “Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us?” (*Gay* 181). In this spiritual void, Nietzsche fears

that future generations will have nothing to worship but “the stone, stupidity, gravity, fate, the nothing” (*Beyond* 67). Society’s absence of faith opens the door to nihilism.

While this lack of faith places humankind in a very uncomfortable and challenging situation, Nietzsche believes that it offers an opportunity for a new kind of spiritual growth. He explains that the fight against and ultimate destruction of the old beliefs has created a never-before-experienced spiritual tension in society (*Beyond* 2). Many have dealt with this tension by retreating into the security of Christianity and democracy, but Nietzsche believes there are “free spirits” in society that refuse to be placated by such dogma (*Beyond* 2-3). They find opportunity and joy in this new freedom from spiritual restraint: “[W]e hear the news that ‘the old god is dead,’ as if a new dawn shone on us; our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, premonitions, expectation” (*Gay* 280). No longer constrained by the old, limiting moral absolutes, they are free to guide their lives by their own personally created values. These “free spirits” will certainly not be dogmatists; Nietzsche imagines them as saying, “My judgment is *my* judgment: no one else is easily entitled to it” (*Beyond* 53). Values applicable to everyone can by definition only be common, and what is common is precisely what needs to be escaped. “Free spirits” must determine what values will be beneficial for each of them alone, what will allow them to rise far above what is common. In this atmosphere it is now possible to “shoot for the most distant goals” (Nietzsche, *Beyond* 2). “Free spirits” can use the pain and void that they feel in their lives to propel them onto the path of greatness.

In contrast to the *unfree* spirits who hide from their pain in dogma, “free spirits” must strive toward awareness and acceptance of reality as it is. Viewing the world through the filter of dogmatic beliefs distorts reality. Nietzsche marvels at the way this filter can make people in even the most difficult situation content with their lots in life: “Perhaps nothing in Christianity or Buddhism is as venerable as their art of teaching even the lowliest how to place themselves through piety in an illusory higher order of things and thus to maintain their contentment with the real order” (*Beyond* 73-74). Seeing a situation like poverty or oppression through a filter that values weakness and humility brings about complacency. While this may

lead to a relatively comfortable and easy life, it will not help someone reach his or her full potential. Nietzsche emphasizes that “one must be dry, clear, without illusion” (*Beyond* 50). Having clear awareness of a situation like poverty or oppression and truly feeling the pain that it causes would motivate people to take action in order to improve their lives.

It follows that in seeing things as they are, “free spirits” must embrace all aspects of the human experience, even the most painful. Nietzsche says, “everything evil, terrible, tyrannical in man, everything in him that is kin to beasts of prey and serpents, serves the enhancement of the species ‘man’ as much as its opposite does” (*Beyond* 54-55). Accepting the light *and* the dark in life prevents spirits from becoming fragmented and leads to a wholeness of the spirit that is essential for achieving greatness. Nietzsche further describes the importance of the dark: “The discipline of suffering, of *great* suffering—do you not know that only *this* discipline has created all enhancement of man so far?” (*Beyond* 154). While pleasure in life provides a balance to suffering and should not be rejected, it is only through the experience of great suffering that someone becomes truly strong. Never having to deal with pain or struggle leads to weak and fragile spirits. Without having to struggle in life, without having to face and overcome challenges, how could someone grow? In a life filled only with comfort, where would someone find the motivation to achieve anything greater?

An example of facing pain with courage and using it for growth can be seen in Nietzsche’s own life experience, which was filled with many sufferings and struggles. His brilliantly creative mind was plagued by psychosis and despair. He longed for health, but could not stop the rapid deterioration of his ever-sick and frail body. Rejected by the woman he loved and made an outcast by his new ideas, he was alone in the world. Many weaker spirits would have been crushed by what he went through. The comparatively blissful escape of apathy was no doubt an incessant tempter, but he did not run from his pain, rather he saw in it an opportunity for growth. He lived by his maxim, “What does not destroy me, makes me stronger” (*Twilight* 467). The strength and courage it must have taken for him to hold this belief should not

be underestimated. It is to be admired that throughout his long suffering, he never lost his belief in the value of the human experience and the great potential of humankind.

Nietzsche's philosophy is made unique not only by his original and fearless ideas, but also by the manner in which he chooses to communicate them. The task of communicating ideas through writing has many pitfalls. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, Socrates harshly criticizes the use of the written word to discuss heightened ideas. He likens writing to a painting: "The painter's products stand before us as though they were alive, but if you question them, they maintain a most majestic silence" (*Plato* 521). In conversation, people can ask questions if they are confused about the speaker's meaning. But, like a painting hanging in a museum, a book cannot answer questions or clarify concepts for the reader. With this view, writing is dead, and only people are alive. Socrates believes that the written word is also deficient in the way that it can be so easily misunderstood: "[I]t doesn't know how to address the right people, and not address the wrong" (*Plato* 521). People with no background in physics, for example, would not get very far in trying to study the first edition of Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*, but if they were to meet with Hawking in person, he could tailor his explanations to their level of knowledge. In this way, conversation can be seen as highly superior to writing.

Both Plato and Nietzsche find creative ways to go around this problem of writing. Plato does so by only writing conversations between his characters. These dialogues often feature a profound question and several less-than-perfect theories about its answer, which can motivate readers to take up the questions themselves. In this way, his writing is alive. In Nietzsche's case, he overcomes the problems of writing by first directing his work to a very specific audience: the "free spirits." Second, he writes in a series of aphorisms that if not read closely and in order can make little sense and be easily taken out of context. He appears to contradict himself in places; for example, in one passage encouraging hardness of heart, and in another, sympathy. This causes the reader to think hard about what Nietzsche actually believes to be true. Lastly, in contrast to other philosophers who are in the habit of writing, "x, y, or z is True," he avoids clear statements of fact. Rather, he writes in a poetic way,

often using metaphors to illustrate his points. He opens *Beyond Good and Evil* with the statement, "Supposing truth is a woman—what then?" (1), and leaves it to the readers to form their own conclusions about its meaning. Perhaps Nietzsche's intention in choosing this unique and challenging style of writing is to force readers to think for themselves, which places them a little bit farther along on the path toward greatness.

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Evaluation: *Elizabeth's essay is by far the best expository essay on Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil that I have ever read: clear, precise, and penetrating. I could not have written a better piece myself.*

The Catholic Church and Galileo: A Clash of Ideas

Yordanka Ganeva

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Pearl Ratunil

Assignment: Write an eight- to ten-page research paper that uses at least eight to ten scholarly sources. Your project may attend to the historical, cultural, or social context of a literary work.

The Catholic Church today is one of the richest religious denominations in the world placing it in a very powerful position in society. Even more powerful and influential was the Catholic Church in the seventeenth century. At the time, Galileo Galilei tried to offer ordinary people a method of reasoning only to be criticized and censured by an institution (the Church), which dismissed Galilei's discoveries because of its fear in losing world power. Galileo's heliocentric theory is now known to be true. Back in 1616, he offered access to his "spyglass" (Drake 27), so people could see the motion of the stars with their own eyes. German playwright Bertolt Brecht offered a closer look at Galileo's life in a drama created in the 1940s. Brecht presents Galileo as an astronomer, but in a more humanized way. He basically talks about Galileo's everyday life. Moreover, the very first scene introduces Galileo while he is taking a bath, and this is how Brecht identifies one with Galilei in a more intimate level. This brilliant play reveals an insight into Galileo's environment and the preceding obstacles he faced with the Catholic Church in the seventeenth century. Brecht chose to write about Galilei realizing that his heliocentric theory is truth after all. This moment of contradictory views is stamped in history as a myth, connected to authority and revolutionary ideas. The Catholic Church in the seventeenth century sensed that newly found scientific discoveries would displace religion, and people would become more inclined to believe these new proven facts brought to the public's attention by Galileo. Therefore, in 1632, "the Church declared war

on reason" (Bunson 8) because of the fear that science may replace religion in the minds of the people, and the Church would lose power. This is why the Holy Office sends the Inquisition to investigate Galileo's work, make him abjure the heliocentric teachings, and put him under home arrest because of publishing *Dialogo* (a book where Galileo defends the Copernican theory). Sensing that Galileo's revolutionary ideas would replace religion in people's minds, the Catholic Church decided to oppress his teachings in order to protect the Church's power and authority.

In *Galileo*, Bertolt Brecht opens a lively discussion detailing the struggles between revolutionary science and the callous Catholic Church. In the 1930s, he decided to shed light on the scientist's life, realizing the importance great minds have in society. Brecht was moved by the successful splitting of the uranium atom (Weimar 141), and this gave him the idea to dramatize Galileo's life and the Catholic Church's opposition to his ideas. In Brecht's work, the Church opposes Galileo because he offers evidence in support of the Copernican system; "he places his faith in human reason" and not in the teachings of the church (Weimar 439). However, by this time, Aristotelian and Ptolemaic world systems were accepted by the Catholic Church and synchronized with the Bible (Bunson 6). According to the Church, a geocentric theory is perfectly tuned with the verses, but Brecht also speaks of geocentrism as egotism. He offers the nature of the Church in the character of the Old Cardinal to prove his point:

I won't be nobody on an inconsequential star briefly twirling hither and thither. I tread the earth, and the earth is firm beneath my feet, and there is no motion to the earth, and the earth is the center of all things, and I am the center of the earth. And the eye of the Creator is upon me. About me revolve, affixed to their crystal shells, the lesser lights of the stars and the great light of the sun, created to give light upon me that God might see me – Man, God's greatest effort, the center of creation. (73)

Brecht portrays the character of The Old Cardinal using "I" and "me" in his speech many times in order to emphasize the importance of the church and the egotistic

geocentrism it reflects. This egotism further wants one to believe that it is important for the church to be in the center and exercise its power and authority over people. The Old Cardinal opposes the heliocentric theory because he fears losing the authority he and the Catholic Church as a whole have. He fears for his own "I." Brecht specifically uses "light upon me that God might see me" to expose the Cardinal's confidence in his own position and draw attention to himself, to his egotism. The playwright stresses that the Catholic Church in the seventeenth century was a leading political power controlling the thoughts and feelings of its people. The Church's response to the threat of Galileo was the establishment of the Inquisition, which was in charge of finding facts in Galileo's work that are controversial with respect to the Bible and forcing him to abjure of his discoveries (Miller 65). The Catholic Church opposed Galileo to protect its power and authority and prevent displacement with science. Understanding that logical and reasonable thinking was about to usurp Church teaching is when the Church took preventative measures to suppress Galileo's innovative ideas.

Ronald Numbers shares interesting facts about the antagonistic way the church meets Galileo's discoveries in his book *Galileo Goes to Jail*. He explains why the Catholic Church disapproves of and attempts to disprove his ideas:

It is true of course that in the seventeenth century the arch-Copernican Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) met opposition from Catholic authorities in Rome. However, their dispute focused on matters related to biblical interpretation, educational jurisdiction, and the threat Galileo represented to the entrenched "scientific" authority of Aristotle. (Numbers 52)

Numbers presents the root of the dispute between the Inquisition and Galileo's ideas. He emphasizes Galileo's teachings as a threat to the Catholic Church by him disproving "the entrenched" Aristotelian world system. Numbers also adds that Aristotle's world system is comfortably "entrenched," and the Catholic Church approves of it because of its compatibility with the Bible. "His physics was so firmly entrenched for two millennia that it effectively prevented the development of genuine physics for most of that period" (Hodgson 633). An

Aristotelian world system was used by the church as an absolute truth, and each newly born idea failed because of the inadequacy to be proven by the "Holy Writ" (78). The Catholic Church opposed other scholars and their scientific findings, which were revolutionary at the time. Galileo's idea to disprove the Aristotelian view became a serious threat.

Galileo offered supportive evidence for his findings in his book *Dialogo*, which is the reason for his persecution. In it "he gave himself to the cause of convincing the world to embrace the Copernican theory" (Bunson 7). Behind his courage to publish the previously mentioned book stays the election of "Galileo's longtime friend and protector, Cardinal Maffeo Barberini, who was elected pope and took the name Urban VIII" (Bunson 8). Galileo viewed Barberini as his friend and protector, and because of that, he believed this would lead to a more favorable attitude on the side of the Church to the Copernican thought. Galileo already has a file with initial adjudication headed by Cardinal Bellarmine, who was a church's guardian against deviations (Sobel 43). Since Galileo was devoted to bringing Copernican theory to the general public in a way for them to embrace it, he became a subject of the Inquisition. The Inquisition sought after anyone who challenged the Church's authority and presented a threat to their power in society. "An Inquisition minute of 25 February 1616 indicates the Pope ordered the most illustrious Lord Cardinal Bellarmine to call Galileo before himself and warn him to abandon [deserendas] these [Copernican] opinions" (Miller 53). This is how the Catholic Church clearly stated its position against innovative ideas and mostly served as a warning to Galileo to give up his teachings. Galileo's stubborn character was the driving force that led him to publishing *Dialogo* and speaking openly in defense of Copernicanism. Sadly, this book brought the power of the Catholic Church over him. Brecht's protagonist was familiar with his file; however, "a curious addendum never seen by Galileo was inserted into his file that he should abstain altogether from teaching or defending" Copernican theory (Bunson8). This dubious document brought the founder of astronomy to experience the power of the Church in the seventeenth century. It is a time period when the Church is protecting its influence over the people. It is for this purpose that it is

important that no other teaching would take over in their minds, especially Galileo's revolutionary ideas.

Galileo had hopes that the Church would embrace the Copernican theory because of his connections to the authoritative figures in the priestly society. To this point, Brecht demonstrates Galileo's friendship with Cardinal Bellarmine by displaying a social occasion at Bellarmine's house where Galileo is a guest. Another close friend of Galileo is Cardinal Barberini, who is genuinely interested in Galileo's discoveries. It becomes clear later that Galileo published *Dialogo* thinking that his newly promoted friend Barberini would secure his theories (Numbers 70). Unfortunately, Cardinal Bellarmine, even though aware of Galileo's innovative discoveries, chose to protect the authority of the church. Brecht reflects this moment when in his play, Galileo asks, with disappointment, "Do you realize, the future of all scientific research is--" when Bellarmine interrupts him: "Completely assured, Mr. Galilei. It is not given to a man to know the truth: it is granted to him to seek after truth. Science is the legitimate and beloved daughter of the Church. She must have confidence in the Church" (79). The use of the word "truth" in Bellarmine's speech emphasizes that he is convinced of Galileo's theories; however, he decides to hold the truth for the people yet. Moreover, the comparison of science to "beloved daughter" demonstrates insistence on the fact that the Church must keep its power, that religion needs to continue exercising central authority. Thus, for the Church to keep its position and not be displaced by science, a decision to oppress Galileo's findings is issued, and he must recant.

This is how a great mind such as Galileo is brought to the point where he must abjure of his teachings. Indication of a curious addendum brings Brecht's protagonist into trouble with the "Holy Office" (75): "Galileo's attempt misfired because the special injunction came to the surface, and from its point of view any discussion of the earth's motion by Galileo was prohibited, whether or not it amounted to a defense" (Finocchiaro 236). This document, mysteriously found in Galileo's file, successfully put his theories on hold. However, later, they were recognized as true facts. There is a later translated document, *Tractatus*, which "represents the unofficial position of the Church with regard to Copernicanism and

Galileo's work" (Boschiero 244). This very little examined document includes Cardinal Bellarmine's standpoint as Urban VIII and his opinions of Galileo's theory. After all, the Church kept its authority, and no one suspected how this "addendum" was found in Galileo's file. Led by the threat of displacement, the Catholic Church made Galileo recant of his teachings.

Thinking that he has a friend in the face of the church leader Bellarmine, Galileo's relaxed imprisonment—given to him by the church—proves that the relationship between church and science in the seventeenth century was dysfunctional (Bunson 9). Galileo's acquaintances turned out against him because he threatened Church teachings. His teachings "paved the way for the acceptance of the Copernican idea by changing the very nature of science. He argued for a coherent view, with many persuasive pointers, and his *Dialogo* (*The Dialogue on the Two Great World Systems*), while not containing much new science, nevertheless made it intellectually respectable to believe in a moving planet Earth" (Gingerich 24). Galileo left behind a method of reasonable thinking. He, like many geniuses, was alienated during his life and recognized after his death. Three hundred years later, Pope John Paul II, in 1981, established a commission to re-evaluate the Vatican's dealings with Galileo. In 1992, the commission concluded that the incident was the result of "tragic mutual incomprehension" between the scientist and theologians who "failed to grasp the profound nonliteral meaning of the Scriptures when they described the physical structure of the universe" (Bunson 9). Pope John Paul II tried to erase the dark moment of Galileo's reputation by offering an excuse for the way the Church dealt with Galileo. The reason suggested may be true, because historical facts and documents speak of literal and figurative mistranslations of the Bible. However, the events that took place in 1625 prove that the Catholic Church had enough control to oppose the famous astronomer Galileo and had the power to put down his teachings. In 1988, Pope John Paul wrote in a memorable letter that science and religion "will inevitably interact and they do not include isolation" (qtd. in Bunson 9). These promising words are an appeal to scientists to speak up, and that the time of the Inquisition has passed. Yet, Galileo's case leaves a stamp in the documents of The Catholic Church and proof of its fear

to give up power to scientific inclination. The Catholic Church reaffirmed its power in the mission to oppress Galileo's teachings, when the threat that science may overwhelm religious dogma seemed a logical concern.

Bertolt Brecht recognized Galileo's contribution to the field of astronomy with his play and he expressed his disagreement with the Catholic oppression of the seventeenth century. He demonstrates the capability of the Church to silence scientists and philosophers at the time: they had the capability to disprove Galileo's theory supporting Copernicanism, the capability to force him to abjure of his teachings, and the capability to slip in a vindictive addendum. However, in the end, the Catholic Church has "recanted" after all. This is a long-awaited victory for Galileo. In his honor, there is a Galileo spacecraft, which is studying the moons of Jupiter at close range (Sobel 374). It is not too late to realize that an authority can be false. For religions, it is even easier to fall into a trap of delusion. Led by the threat of having their center displaced with science, the Church silenced Galilei. Many after him have suffered a similar oppression by the Church. Yet, he fought with the truth, and he ultimately won the unfair controversy between science and religion.

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Evaluation: *This paper is well-researched and provides a strong evaluation of the play in light of Brecht's revisionist history.*

The Religion of Carl Sagan

Janice Gedmin

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Pearl Ratunil

Assignment: Write an eight- to ten-page research paper that uses at least eight to ten scholarly sources. Your project may attend to the historical, cultural, or social context of a literary work.

Readers of Carl Sagan's book *Contact* are led to think that religion plays a deleterious role in scientific progress. The reader begins to wonder how and why religion has survived for so many years. Researching Carl Sagan's life reveals an intelligent, dynamic individual who was a gifted astronomer, thinker, and writer. He was able to convey complex scientific ideas in a way easily understood by laypersons. He loved science, and he felt it held the answers to questions people had about the world. He found organized religion irritating and felt it to be a force that hindered scientific progress. These are just two reasons why he never embraced a traditional religious faith. In the book *Contact*, Ellie Arroway is the main character. She has much in common with Sagan; both are astronomers, interested in extraterrestrials, and skeptics. The parallels between the fictional character Ellie and Carl Sagan's life are numerous. Neither finds any evidence for God, but both have a deep faith in the scientific process. As the reader is introduced to several religious ideas in the book, questions regarding the author's beliefs begin to emerge. In the book *Contact*, Ellie is the female version of Carl Sagan. To understand Sagan's beliefs, the reader has to look at Ellie's attitudes. Although Ellie and Sagan are both agnostics, one could argue that they are also religious, not in a traditional way, but by a modern definition of someone with the human characteristics of being awed by the world, seeking the truth, and serving as witness to truth.

In *Contact*, Ellie has a conversation with Reverend Joss and states if she is an agnostic it is because there

is no evidence that God exists and no strong evidence that God does not exist. She tells Joss, "You could just as well say that an agnostic is a deeply religious person with at least a rudimentary knowledge of human fallibility" (Sagan 169). The word "agnostic," according to *dictionary.com*, is "a person who holds the existence of the ultimate cause, as god, and the essential nature of things are unknown, or that human knowledge is limited to experience." The *dictionary.com* definition of religion is "a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe...often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs." Definitions for religion outside the dictionary are ambiguous. Theology professor Melissa Conroy claims that she has her students write their own definitions, and then look at others people's definitions to help them understand how difficult it is to come up with an exact definition of religion (137). Andrew Carter, who works with young adults in London, observes their modern values and proposes, "perhaps the strongest human need, the religion to which most of us aspire, is to have a sense of making a contribution—of belonging to, and of being accepted by, a community of shared values" (300). Finally, Sandrick gives the legal history of the definition of religion and looks for a modern definition, since many court cases involve people using religious reasons as a defense in court, when there is no belief in the traditional God. She likes newspaperman H.L. Mencken's definition: "Its single function is to give man access to the powers which seem to control his destiny, and its single purpose is to induce those powers to be friendly to him" (qtd. in Sandrick 575). A modern religious person could be defined as one who looks for purpose and meaning in life, seeks truth and goodness, has a deep reverence for all of creation, desires to contribute to the world in a positive way, and witnesses to the truth by telling his or her story. It would be impossible for a religious person to go through life without analyzing things. Though Ellie knows she is not religious in Joss' sense, she feels religious in her own sense. She has a strong desire to learn about life and to find the truth. Because of her extremely analytical mind, there can be no blind faith for her, but she religiously lives to be converted, if that is possible. She understands human fallibility and knows that she will not always interpret

things correctly. Both Ellie and Sagan are intelligent, questioning, skeptical individuals. They seek the truth. They are curious and are awed by the world around them. The set of beliefs that Ellie and Carl Sagan have are a belief in science; they look for truth based on evidence derived using the scientific method. Their personalities require hard evidence. They are agnostic, because there is no evidence for God, but they are religious in a modern way because they continually search for truth.

Carl Sagan fits the description of an agnostic who could be seen as deeply religious because he is deeply awed by the world. In an interview with Edward Wakin, published in *U.S. Catholic*, he states, “there is no deeper religious feeling than the feeling for the natural world” (70). The world around him stirs up such deep emotion in him, that he uses the word “religious” many times to describe the feeling. In the short video, *Pale Blue Dot*, he gives the viewers scientific data based on where the earth is in the universe and its relatively small size, but he goes further and shows his reverence for the universe when he gives examples of human activity and sets a moral tone by his comments that citizens of Earth need to work to preserve and care for their planet. He is extremely thoughtful and considerate of the planet, desires to witness to its beauty, and encourages all to honor its goodness. He wishes to convert everyone to his way of thinking, much like a religious zealot. Sagan did a 13-episode television show, *Cosmos*, to enlighten laypersons regarding scientific concepts. Although most critics agree that Sagan brought good scientific information to the program, others were critical that it strayed from pure science, with Sagan acting the role of visionary. Lessl wrote an essay discussing the mystical wording used by Sagan in the program. He suggests that Sagan brings sacredness to his scientific study, and Sagan seeking goodness suggests that the evolution of the mind may be the way mankind can be saved from its own destructiveness. Lessl points out Sagan’s prophesying the destruction of earth from an alien’s perspective, and notes that Sagan relates this to “a failure to follow the scientific way” (182). This would be similar to a Christian zealot suggesting mankind’s doom to a failure of following “the way” of Jesus. Giberson and Artigas note in their book that Sagan was a skeptic, yet awed by the world, the awe

producing a “religious feeling that could substitute for traditional religion” (126). Though this religious feeling of “awe” is not traditional religion, it falls into a modern definition of religion.

Ellie, in the same conversation with Joss, points out that there is no “compelling evidence that God exists” (169). She uses the words “convince us” and “better job” to put the burden on God to provide evidence. Compelling evidence would have to be an objective sign, something that could be noted with the senses, weighed, and measured. She is looking for tangible, universal evidence that would leave little doubt about the existence of God. If God is all-powerful, she feels he could and should do a good job of giving evidence of His existence. Carl Sagan is very much the skeptic and wants hard evidence. In “The God Hypothesis,” Sagan systematically looks at the different arguments for the existence of God and refutes them. The fact that he refutes the arguments suggests his strong knowledge of religion. He comments on people that claim a religious experience and note the things that happen to them are usually based in their culture. For instance, the Virgin Mary does not appear to people in countries that are not Christian, and people in the Western world do not receive religious experiences associated with the East. There is not one universal religious experience, as would be presumed with one God. Sagan continually uses his scientific mind to find truth. He looks at the argument of who or what caused the universe; if one says “God,” Sagan would counter, “why not say the Big Bang Theory?” Sagan always looks at all the possibilities to get to the truth. If one looked at the intricate design of the universe, Sagan points out the chaos and wonders, if God is all-powerful, why did he design it with exploding galaxies? Another argument is the fact that man is a moral being and needs a God, but Sagan quickly points out that animals show compassion and show other forms of moral behavior. Sagan explores the presence of evil and pain in the world and brings up questions regarding an all-powerful God. Sagan is always looking for reasonable answers to life’s difficult questions. Finally, he wonders why there is not a final tangible sign of God’s presence, something unmistakable, like “putting a crucifix in Earth’s orbit” (167). Sagan puts all his trust in the scientific method, he asks the questions, and then looks long and

hard for a reasonable answer. He is agnostic, but his search for the truth makes him religious in a modern sense because he is relentless in seeking truth.

In the novel *Contact*, Ellie Arroway eventually has an extraterrestrial experience that she cannot prove; she again has another conversation with Joss. She relays her experience to him and tells him she is working on discovering hard evidence for the existence of God based on information she received from an extraterrestrial. Ellie thinks no one will believe her encounter with an extraterrestrial without evidence; Joss tells her this is not true and encourages her to tell her story. He recalls Jacob's story in the book of Genesis and tells her "your witness is right for this time, for our time" (421). The word "witness" is someone who sees something, who is present for an event, in this case not just physically but mentally, emotionally, and spiritually as well. Ellie's witness involved an understanding of what had happened. Joss's words convey how faith has survived for so long. He encourages her to tell her story to help others know and believe life exists on other planets. Carl Sagan has his own revelation. He is awed by astronomy and gives witness to this in his life. He wants everyone to know and understand how grand the universe is. His witness of the truth in his life inspired others. His reverence for the world was obvious throughout his life, and this reverence extended to all in the world. Carl Sagan spoke his truth, and his love for astronomy served to increase his concern for the planet Earth. His scientific mind understood the harmful effects of nuclear war to the planet and its inhabitants (Davidson 359-360). Because of his reverence for the planet, he became an outspoken opponent of President Reagan's defense buildup, and he was arrested twice for demonstrating against nuclear testing in Nevada (Kalosh 99). He co-chaired the Joint Appeal by Religion and Science for the Environment to bring more attention to Earth's environmental issues ("Clergy and Science..." 624). He joined ranks with the traditional religions for a common cause, a cause he believed in. Defense buildup, nuclear testing, and environmental issues are all controversial issues with opposing views; Sagan firmly believed his side of the issues and thought that citizens needed to know these views to influence public policies. He gave a lot of energy to these issues for the sole

purpose of wanting to make the planet a better place for its inhabitants. Sagan spoke the truth as he saw it and contributed immensely to the world in many ways by serving as witness to the truth. Witnessing to the truth can be difficult because it requires a person who is passionate about a truth and willing to go against popular opinion or authority to make the truth known for a greater good; this is an aspect of the modern definition of "religious."

Riggs writes that Sagan was narrow-minded in his thinking about science and points out that spiritual questions cannot be answered by the scientific method, and that almost 40% of scientists have a "personal god" (213-226). Though Sagan was irritated by religious institutions, Davidson reports in his biography that at his memorial service, Rev. Joan Campbell said, "Carl Sagan was one of religion's most severe critics and best friends" (420). She commented on how his demands of the religious to be clear, honest, and excellent were good for them. Because Sagan questioned everything, it made others carefully consider the answers. Carl Sagan was never able to combine science and a belief in God, but he was very knowledgeable on all religions, which points to the fact that he gave this subject great consideration.

Outside of science, Sagan had concerns about injustices. A religious person advocates what is good and morally right. Sagan could clearly see injustices to other humans. Davidson's biography recalls Sagan to be a feminist, and several people interviewed remembered him being outspoken on women's rights (405-406). His son Jeremy spoke at his memorial service, and called him an "avid anti-racist" (Davidson 421). "The Path to Freedom" in his book *The Demon Haunted World* addresses some racist views. Sagan was a critical thinker in all areas of his life. He spoke out on injustice in ways one would expect of traditional religion. This concern for others and wanting to contribute to the world fits into the definition of modern religion, because it shows awe for the world and its inhabitants, a desire for the truth and a willingness to let truth be known.

When Ellie and Joss talk in *Contact*, Ellie confesses how small people are in the universe. Joss replies that it "makes God very big" (420). "Very big" can be incomprehensible, such as a trillion dollars, or 26 light years away. It can mean that it is just too big to truly

grasp the significance. When the characters in the book talk about God, they speak in ways they can comprehend. They say God could have been a better designer, he could have given more proof, or he could have created humans to be more obedient. Since Sagan wrote these words, he may have an understanding that God may be too big for humans like himself to comprehend. Humans can only speak about what they know to be the truth in their time and for them.

Truth is universally recognized to be a good thing. Ellie in the novel speaks her truth. She loved astronomy and helped to advance science for humankind. Carl Sagan spoke what he knew to be true in his life. He loved astronomy and was a believer in the Cosmos to such an extent that Geisler wrote a book entitled *Cosmos: Carl Sagan's Religion for the Scientific Mind*. The book takes Sagan's thoughts and compares them to modern Christian beliefs. Where Christians would answer "God" to questions of creation and salvation, Sagan would give answers of "the Cosmos." Truth is universally recognized to be what is sought in all religions, and seeking the truth is a thoughtful, often demanding process. Some truth seeking, especially those seeking bigger answers to life's questions, can be religious in nature. Carl Sagan was a seeker of larger truths and religious in the pursuit of answers. The human quality of seeking truth and honesty is religious in a modern way, because truth is desirable.

Carl Sagan wrote Ellie's character to represent his own interests and beliefs. Both are intelligent critical thinkers awed by space and interested in extraterrestrials. According to Davidson, both sat through uninspiring classes at school, and both abandoned the faith in which they were raised (350). They find religion to be irritating and hindering the progress of science. They both seek the truth, and rely on the scientific method to find their truth. Neither has found any compelling evidence to believe in God. They believe the universe evolved from dust particles. Ellie is a female version of Carl Sagan. Interestingly, Carl Sagan has Ellie have an experience that has no proof, and according to Davidson, "the only surviving reason to believe the reality of her alien encounter—sheer faith" (350). Faith is such a foreign word to Ellie and Sagan because faith requires belief in something when there is no evidence. Sagan goes further

and eventually gives Ellie the proof she needs to believe in a Creator. Although Sagan remained a life-long agnostic, Davidson comments that Sagan "offered one of the most religious science fiction tales ever written" (350). One wonders if this represents Sagan's continuous search for proof of a creator.

Carl Sagan's personal life had its ups and downs, but his third marriage seemed a turning point in his life. He was greatly influenced by his wife Ann Druyan. Her writings give an insight into the religious feelings of Sagan. Druyan wrote, "Science is nothing more than a never-ending search for the truth. What could be more profoundly sacred than that?"...this mechanism for finding bits of reality. No single bit is sacred. But the search is" (27). Carl Sagan's life was spent searching for answers. This search according to Druyan's explanation was holy and sacred. This is living a religious life.

Carl Sagan was a life-long agnostic. His sense of wonder and awe was found in the world. It gave him a religious feeling. He contributed greatly to his profession and worked hard to promote the advancement of astrology and the study of the universe. He lived a full life, actively sharing his knowledge with many. He wrote many books, explained science through the television show *Cosmos*, and gave many interviews. He was concerned about people. He was outspoken on women's rights and fought racism. He loved the Earth and worked on environmental issues. He was outspoken on nuclear testing and strategic military defense build-up. He had a scientific mind and used it well until the end of his life. He was a witness to the truths he found in his life. He contributed so much to the world. The modern definition of religion, which represents human qualities of being awed by the world, seeking the truth, and serving as a witness to the truth, are present in Sagan's life. Perhaps Sagan was talking about himself when he has Ellie explain, "an agnostic is a deeply religious person" (169).

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Evaluation: *Janice's essay is characterized by her passion to understand her own research question: how do we define religion? The question was inspired by her curiosity about Carl Sagan's portrayal of religion as a mystical form of questioning. Janice's paper is sophisticated in that she must define "religion" in her own terms before she can investigate it in Sagan's work. Her paper is philosophical, inquisitive, and well researched.*

Interpreting at Church: A Review and Response

Mary Beth Grammer

Course: ITP 110

(Consecutive Interpreting:

English to American Sign Language)

Instructor: Joan Fiske

Assignment: Students were required to engage in a professional development activity outside the classroom, relating to the art and science of sign language interpreting. Individuals could choose from workshops, seminars, webinars, or additional reading. Mary Beth read a book entitled Interpreting at Church and wrote a report about it.

The author of *Interpreting at Church*, Leo Yates, Jr., holds two certifications from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. He is a professional interpreter and was the pastor of a Deaf church. He is the child of Deaf parents. He is also a mentor to interpreters as well as a teacher of religious interpreting workshops. The book begins with a broad synopsis of what will be included in the chapters following. It describes a religious interpreter's role in various religious settings, though it is slanted toward Protestant services. It foreshadows some good advice and insights offered to new interpreters and strongly emphasizes professionalism, training, preparation, and mentoring. It gives a brief history of Deaf congregations in the United States and some information about Deaf worship services themselves; for example, the use of American Sign Language (ASL), an emphasis on drama rather than music, and perhaps the use of a drum during the music to enhance the experience for the Deaf worshiper.

Yates feels it is important for interpreters to know about the history, progression, and advancement of the interpreting profession. He explains how the certification process for interpreters came about and how it has changed through the years, as well as how interpreter training programs have evolved. He cites changes through the law (The Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]) and how that law has and will continue to change the need for interpreters. The author next addresses the topic of ethical issues when interpreting in a religious setting. His purpose is to alert new interpreters to issues that may arise or may be similar to a variety of situations

one may find him- or herself in. He states an interpreter's role is a serious one, and the interpreter needs to be held to standards of accountability, such as those that are found in the Code of Professional Conduct put forth by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Yates then goes on to give more specific mandates for the sign language interpreter in a religious setting. He feels the interpreter needs to know when a situation is too much to handle, especially if one's own faith traditions clash or contradict those of the interpreter's clients. He recommends researching this area before accepting an assignment that may be questionable. The author exhorts the interpreter to realize that he or she is not a pastor or counselor, and he urges the interpreter not to take on those roles or slip into them without being aware of it happening. Instead, he advocates maintaining some professional distance, especially during emotional moments, of which there are many in the course of religious interpreting.

Yates continues to discuss some of the more practical aspects of a religious interpreting assignment. He discusses fee payments (it is a personal decision between the interpreter and the church or faith provider); modes of proper dress (he recommends to dress in a fashion similar to the clergy); multiple roles an interpreter may have in a faith setting (communication facilitator being the top priority); and whether an interpreter can or should participate in the worship service as a worshiper (this varies on a case-by-case basis). He points out that along with professional competence and capability, there is most certainly a specialized vocabulary used in religious interpreting.

The author also suggests using a model based on the questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how, and solution possibilities when making ethics-oriented decisions. He suggests using the aforementioned questions to think through several possible scenarios before the situations ever arise. He feels that if and when these stated circumstances or similar issues do arise, the interpreter will be much better able to handle the situations, with a great deal less stress than if one is thrust into a situation completely unprepared. The book then goes on to give ten different possible scenarios of ethical dilemmas an interpreter might face in a religious setting, and their possible solutions.

Yates then gives the reader some insight into the unique characteristics each congregation possesses, as well as insight into church dynamics and some observable distinctions between congregations. He stresses that in

these and many other settings, the interpreter needs to exhibit flexibility, diplomacy, patience, and good manners. The practitioner in a religious setting may find him- or herself in a variety of sub-settings: a worship service, a Bible study group, a pastoral counseling session, a wedding, a funeral, a retreat, a meeting, a trip, and so on. In these instances, the interpreter must work to make the particular environment utilized by the participants accessible to all parties involved. Included in a list of environmental concerns would be lighting, visual distractions, visual barriers, assisted listening devices, and many other concerns. The practitioner must be aware of these and a myriad of issues and work to resolve any impediments to good communication.

The interpreter may also be asked to help access resources for the worship provider or for the Deaf congregants. Information about the ADA, textbooks about Deaf culture, a listing of various interpreting agencies, and video relay services are but a few of the references a practitioner may be asked to assist in providing.

The author also gives insight and advice on working with Deaf-Blind individuals. He gives nine helpful tips for a practitioner or any person not familiar with relating to Deaf-Blind people. He stresses the importance of touch and maintaining contact with the client. He discusses communication options, and reminds the practitioner of the need to often use extra signs in place of facial expression and other such grammatical markers normally used in signed languages. Yates holds that it is the interpreter who can lead the rest of the congregation to be open and inclusive with a Deaf-Blind worshiper. He then lists the following terms and their definitions, with which he feels interpreters need to be familiar: legal blindness, macular degeneration, glaucoma, and Usher Syndrome.

The text then goes on to discuss whether one should accept or decline an assignment, and whether those decisions should be based simply upon professional competency or solely upon faith-based reasoning. The conclusion rendered by the author is that it is very much a personal choice, and there is no one criterion for all interpreters. The assignment needs to be ethically acceptable to the practitioner and not be in conflict with his or her belief system, as this can affect the interpretation.

In the next segment of his book, Yates discusses what he states to be especially vital to a good interpreting experience. When the interpreter accepts an interpreting assignment, preparation is of utmost importance.

Yates emphasizes the need to gather as much material beforehand as possible so that the practitioner can do as much research and practicing as possible. Learning what the order of the worship service is, knowing what scripture will be referenced, and knowing the lyrics of the songs are all ways in which the interpreter can prepare in advance. Preparing in advance then allows more time for the interpreter to focus on other aspects of the process as he or she is doing the actual interpretation.

The author also includes a section pertaining to possible questions a prospective interpreter might be asked during an interview. The author touches upon subjects such as certification, professional organization affiliations, educational background, experience, the interpreter's role, and the individual's relationship to the Deaf community. Along with that is information one may need after accepting an assignment. Issues such as what time and for how long, when, where, attire, contact person, rehearsals, materials provided, and so on, are all discussed as well.

This book also contains a great deal of information found in the textbooks used in Harper College's sign language interpreting program. The following is a list compiled from the book, of subjects covered by both:

- Mastery of skills in two languages
- Extra-linguistic knowledge
- The interpreting process
- Mental agility
- Consecutive interpreting
- Simultaneous interpreting
- Register
- Expansion of texts
- Expansion techniques
- Errors and omissions
- Monitoring
- Signing goals
- English goals
- Message accuracy goals
- Team interpreting
- Cumulative motion injury

While these subjects are not dealt with in great detail, they are presented in such a way as to be understood and to be deemed of importance by the interpreter.

Yates puts great emphasis on understanding the text in religious settings. Because of the use of figurative language in many faith-based situations, the author urges the interpreter to use commentaries, parallel Bibles, and study Bibles to understand the context and main ideas for much of what is to be interpreted. His words to the

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practitioner are “Practice. Practice. Practice” (95). He issues the same advice for the music presented. In this case, he further recommends observing role models of interpreted music in order to learn to integrate rhythm, melody and tempo. He again mentions the importance of keeping a song conceptually accurate.

The author gives information about sermons and how they are a discourse but also a speech of exhortation. He gives examples of types of sermon frameworks one can be aware of and reminds the interpreter of the often difficult task of matching the speaker’s affect during a sermon. In discussing prayers, Yates differentiates between prayers that are read or memorized and those that are extemporaneous. Those that are read or memorized are often done so at a more rapid pace, and one can prepare for them in advance. Those that are created as they are spoken are often slower, but with personal names and terms to be fingerspelled, creating their own sets of demands.

The book also has a section on weddings and funerals. The author reminds the reader that these events are emotionally charged and require great patience and often much confidentiality. If the situation is one that is perhaps too close to the practitioner, he or she may want to recuse him- or herself from the assignment. Yates goes on to state, “Because of lack of preparation time and emotional intensity, novice interpreters should avoid interpreting funeral services” (110). He also points out that because of the legal issues involved in a wedding, the interpreter should most certainly be certified and highly qualified to participate.

Mr. Yates comes to the conclusion that it takes time to become a proficient interpreter. He feels that the interpreter is a part of the ministry team in a church setting, one whose role is quite valuable. He says, “Religious interpreters are vastly important, because of their gifts, their calling, and their willingness to be a bridge between two languages and cultural communities; with that said, their work needs to be done responsibly and professionally” (122).

The remainder of the book is a listing of references and other useful tools. They are as follows:

- List of references (123-125)
- List of Deaf and/or interpreting organizations (127-130)
- List of church Internet sites to research doctrine, history, etc. (131-134)

- List of suggestions for new interpreters (135-139)
- Glossary of interpreting terms (141-144)
- Glossary of theological terms (14—152)
- Glossary of church terms (153-157)
- Religious sign dictionary (159-232)
- Manual alphabet (233-236)

Insights that could come only from one who has experience. While there was much information I already was acquainted with, there was also much that I learned. The ten situations requiring ethical considerations were a good reminder that there are more ways to look at an issue than first may appear. Reading and thinking through each scenario was a helpful exercise that I can hopefully put to use some day in the future. Thinking through the possible interview questions was a good discipline for me as well. It forced me to be sure I had thought carefully and thoroughly about how I am to fit into the interpreting profession. It gave me encouragement to think in more realistic terms, not just in terms of a long-range, goal-setting exercise. The sections on weddings and funerals were full of thought-provoking ideas and advice. I appreciated the author’s candor and suggestions about novice interpreters and how such emotionally laden events might be too much for one with little experience. I may have jumped right into such a situation without giving it much thought had I not been presented with this information.

This book was well worth the time and effort it took to read and digest. It will also be quite useful as a reference if I ever decide or have the opportunity to work in a religious setting. As a person of faith, it is something I have considered but have not actively pursued. Now I can look upon this area of interpreting with more knowledge and make more informed choices when considering my future. Amen and amen.

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Evaluation: Mary Beth wrote a clear and engaging summary of the book she read. Her personal reflections detail how the book was of benefit to her. Her observations could be beneficial to budding interpreters as they pursue opportunities in religious settings.

Liu Xiaobo: China's Loyal Human Rights Activist

Ginny Hanson

Course: Literature 208 (non-Western Literature)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *One option for the final course paper, dealing with modern Chinese literature, was to write a paper on 2010 Nobel Prize winner Liu Xiaobo, explaining some of his works and significant events in his life, while clarifying his positions and current status. The use of research was required for this paper option.*

Liu Xiaobo is a Chinese scholar, writer, poet, social commentator, and an advocate for peaceful, political change. Liu is also “the most famous of numerous Chinese government critics languishing in prison for peacefully expressing their views” (“China: Q and A on Nobel Peace Prize...” par. 10). Liu was an activist during the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy movement and a key negotiator for the student protestors. He’s been condemned, interrogated, arrested and convicted by the Chinese government, expelled from his university, held under surveillance, in and out of jail, and sentenced to work camps to be “reeducated” through labor. His publications have been banned in China, and his name blocked by the Chinese firewall on the Internet and Twitter. He’s been invited abroad for speaking engagements, interviews, and documented on film. He has been awarded various honorary titles and received numerous awards. He is notorious, yet his name is unknown by the majority of Chinese locals. Despite Chinese punishment throughout his adult life, Liu has remained loyal to China and has always returned home, to continue his writing and to further his human rights work.

It is not only the Chinese who do not know of Liu Xiaobo and what he believes. To many Westerners and people across the world, Liu’s efforts and writings remain unknown. Many are unaware of what he has done to make the Chinese government censor and sentence him to prison, nor do they know why he rose to the heightened point of publicity that he did when he won the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. It was only then, to some, that his name became recognizable.

What kind of upbringing and education in China does it take to produce a man like Liu Xiaobo? According to writer Jianying Zha, Liu was born in 1955 in Changchun, Jilin Province, to “provincial, intellectual parents.” He was educated through middle school, but “spent his teenage years in Inner Mongolia, where his father had been sent as part of Mao’s ‘Down to the Countryside’ movement” (64). He farmed in the countryside and then “became a worker at a construction company in Changchun City” (“Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life...” par. 3). At the time, Mao’s “Countryside” movement was established to disperse unrest and those youth during the early Cultural Revolution, when millions of Chinese were killed and many more starved to death. Most commentators call this group of forcibly moved youth China’s “lost generation,” because so many lost the opportunity to attend university. However, Liu Xiaobo came of age at just the right time in China’s history to receive an education.

After Mao’s death in 1976, college entrance exams were restored and Liu, twenty-two, was among the first group of students to go to college in 1977. He attended college at Jilin and graduated with a B.A. in literature in 1982. In 1984, he received his M.A. in literature, and according to Liu, “after graduation, I stayed on as a lecturer at Beijing Normal University [BNU]. On the podium, I was a popular teacher, well received by students” (“I Have No Enemies...” par. 1). After finishing his postgraduate studies, he married, and had a son. (He later divorced his wife in 1989, however, it is presumed, to protect his family.) Liu started his doctoral study in 1986, and “became well known as a ‘dark horse’ for his radical opinions and sharp comments on the official doctrines and establishments to shock both of the literary and ideological circles...” (“Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life...” par. 3). In 1987, Liu published his first non-fiction book, *Criticism of the Choice: Dialogues with Li Zehou*. It became a best seller “for his profound capacities in philosophy and aesthetics. . .to comprehensively criticize the Chinese tradition of Confucianism and frankly challenge the Prof. Li Zehou, a rising ideological star with the most influence on young intellectuals in China at the time” (“Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life...” par. 3). He then completed his doctoral work at BNU, where he obtained his Ph.D. in literature. Liu was “the very first under Communist rule in China, with his doctoral thesis, ‘Aesthetic and Human Freedom,’ which passed the examination unanimously and [was] published as his second book” (“Free Liu

Xiaobo Now! Early Life..." par. 3). Liu was a quick study, and he described his career from undergraduate to PhD as a "smooth ride" ("I Have No Enemies..." par. 1). After his education, things ramped up quickly for Liu.

During the mid 1980s, Liu was frequently invited to speak, and he traveled abroad as a visiting scholar. Liu deemed himself a "public intellectual: in the '80s I published articles and books that created an impact" ("I Have No Enemies..." par. 1). He took his role seriously and published with authority: "What I required of myself was: to live with honesty, responsibility and dignity both as a person and in my writing..." ("I Have No Enemies..." par. 1). Liu found himself front and center as a Chinese social and political commentator.

It was clear Dr. Liu was taking full advantage of the end of the Mao era. While he attended college, changes in China were underway: The U.S. and China exchanged diplomacy, Deng Xiaoping reinstated purged writers and intellectuals of the Cultural Revolution and stressed modernization reforms, and during the 1980s, China adopted a "Responsibility System," meaning, farmers and factories producing a surplus could sell the excess on the open market. As the government liked to believe, class struggle was no longer relevant. A new era in China was born and became known as "Reforms and Opening Up." According to Liu, "Reform and opening brought about development of the state and change in society. In my view, it began with abandoning 'taking class struggle as the key link,' which had been the ruling principle of the Mao era. We committed ourselves instead to economic development and social harmony..." ("I Have No Enemies..." par. 5). Liu was playing a role, just as the Chinese Government itself had played a role, in the gradual change of Chinese society.

During this era, artists, writers, and journalists were now encouraged by the Chinese government to take a more critical approach, although critical attacks on party authority were not permitted. "In the mid-eighties, Liu caused a sensation with scathing critiques of prominent scholars and intellectuals of the previous generation, whose work he dismissed as derivative and mediocre" (Zha 64). He also called Confucius "mediocre" and criticized writer Gao Xingjian, a 2000 Nobel Prize winner in Literature, as a "rank imitator" (Zha 64). In the same

article by Zha, Liu continued his rant: "He claimed that there was 'nothing good' to say about mainland Chinese authors, not 'because they were not allowed to write but because they cannot write'" (64). Among many, Liu was considered loud, lofty and self-aggrandizing. Yang Jianli, a close friend of Liu's now living in exile, describes Liu during this time: "In the 1980s, he alienated people with his outspoken remarks and abrasive, some thought arrogant manner...My old impression of him was that he [didn't care] how other people felt when he made comments" (qtd in Branigan par. 13).

During the late 1980s, when China experienced *Wenhua re-*, or "Culture Fever," and "Emancipating the Mind" was the official Party slogan, Liu embraced his role at the podium. In Liu's declaration, "I Have No Enemies: My Final Statement," he described the Chinese mentality during this time as "Externally abandoning 'anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism,' and internally abandoning 'class struggle.' [This] may be called the basic premise of the continuance of China's Reform and Opening to this day" (par. 5). Again, Liu was defending his role as simply part of the current Chinese movement.

In April 1989, the popular, liberal Party Secretary, Hu Yaobang, died, and 150,000 students gathered in Tiananmen Square to mourn Hu, while Chinese leaders mourned in the Beijing Hall of the People. The gathering, however, turned into a pro-democracy demonstration of students and non-governmental groups totaling one million people. According to journalist Jianying Zha, "Liu Xiaobo was on a fellowship at Columbia University at the time; when he learned of the protests, he promptly gave up the fellowship and flew back" (64). This was also the year Liu published his third book, *The Fog of Metaphysics*, a comprehensive review of Western philosophies.

When the 1989 Tiananmen Square movement began to reach its climax—massacre—Liu "initiated a four-man, 3-day hunger strike on June 2, ...to earn the trust of the students. He published a joint statement called the "June 2 Hunger Strike Declaration," that called on both the government and the students to abandon the ideology of class struggle and to adopt a new kind of political culture for dialogue and compromise" ("Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life..." par. 5). A young activist, Robin

Munro, recalls the early morning of June 4, 1989, post massacre, when he, Liu, and just a few hundred students were still left standing in the square: “The streets nearby were bloodied by the authorities’ brutal crackdown. With troops surrounding the last protesters, it was Liu and a handful of fellow intellectuals who brokered a peaceful exit” (Branigan par. 3). The protesters were willing to lay down their lives for democracy, but according to Munro, “In the final moments it was Liu who took the microphone and said, ‘We have to leave: this is it... We have done everything we can.’ I will always be grateful to Liu Xiaobo...He may have saved my life” (Branigan par. 4, 5). From another perspective, Liu was described honorably, and as having played a key role in avoiding even more bloodshed:

Liu soon became one of the most impassioned voices within the movement calling for moderation; he strove to persuade the most militant students to avoid taking steps that would box the authorities into a corner and make it hard for any kind of compromise to be negotiated, even one that could be seen as a partial victory. In the end, Liu was among the last protesters to leave Tiananmen Square in the wee hours of June 4; as soldiers were firing on civilians nearby, he helped broker a deal that provided safe passage out of the plaza for many of the students who had remained there with him. He was later jailed for his alleged role as one of the inspirational “black hands” behind the movement. (Cunningham and Wasserstrom par. 2)

For his participation in the 1989 Tiananmen Square movement, Liu was imprisoned on June 6, 1989, and sentenced to Qincheng Prison for one and a half years. In 1991, Liu was finally “convicted on the offence of ‘counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement,’ but he was exempt from criminal punishment for his ‘major meritorious action’ to have avoid[ed] the possibly bloodying confrontation on the TAM Square” (“Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life...” par. 6). As a result, Liu was condemned by the government media, and the authorities banned all of his published works, including his fourth-coming book, *Going Naked Toward God*. In Liu’s “I Have No Enemies...,” he described June, 1989 as “the major

turning point in my 50 years on life’s road,” and said he was “simply...expressing divergent political views and taking part in a peaceful and democratic movement” (par. 1). In 2009, he was never allowed to speak publicly or publish his works in China again.

After his release from prison in 1991, Liu resumed his writing on human rights and political issues, and published three different types of books: political criticism, literary critiques, and a compilation of poems, published in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and in mainland China, respectively (in China, he co-authored under an anonymous pen name, Lao Xiao.). Ever resilient, Liu was never deterred from expressing his opinion. The writer, Jianying Zha, first met Liu celebrating his release from prison in 1991. Zha recalls, “the glee with which he mocked various cultural luminaries....He could be overbearing, and at times unbearable. But his critical lance was accompanied by genuine courage and political conviction” (65). Liu later critically summarized the massacre in one of his books that, according to Zha, exposed “the movement’s moral failings, not least his own....Liu detailed the vanity, self-aggrandizement, and factionalism that beset the student activists and their intellectual compadres. He put himself under a harsh light, analyzing his own complex motives: moral passion, opportunism, a yearning for glory and influence” (65). His writing is important to Chinese history, and he has kept the memory of those who died in Tiananmen Square alive. One of Liu’s oldest friends, Liao Yiwu said, “Because of him, Chinese history does not come to a stop. After 1989, many people chose to forget what had happened, chose to go abroad, chose to divert themselves into doing business, or even to work with the government – but he did not” (Branigan par. 8).

On May 18, 1995, Liu was again taken into custody. Not willing to let the memory of the Tiananmen movement fade, he was held “for launching a petition campaign on the eve of the sixth anniversary of [the] June 4th massacre, calling on the government to reassess the event and to initiate political reform” (“Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life...” par. 8). This time he was held under residential surveillance in a Beijing suburb for nine months from May 1995 to January 1996. In his article, “Civil Society and the Chinese Reform Process,” Liu summarized what the Tiananmen movement meant to China:

For society, the largest meaning of the 1989 pro-democracy movement is the following: it shook the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy and ushered in, at a very high cost, the awakening of the people to universal rights. Once this awakening had taken place, the spontaneous defense of rights by society was inevitable. In this sense, the blood of the butchered has not been shed in vain (127).

After his release from residential surveillance in 1996, he married Liu Xia, who continues to be his "source of strength: '[she] gives him force to stand against the pressure,' said Liao Tienchi, another friend in exile" (Branigan par. 15). Liu Xia is Liu's source of inspiration for the published poems and love letters that he wrote to her while he was imprisoned for three years in 1996. Heavily monitored by the Chinese government, Liu was arrested again on October 8, 1996, "for an "October Tenth Declaration," co-authored by him and another prominent dissident Wang Xizhe, mainly on [a] Taiwan issue that advocated the peaceful unification to oppose [the] Chinese Communist Party's forceful intents toward the island. He was ordered to serve three years of reeducation through labor [from Oct. 1996 to Oct. 1999] [for] 'disturbing public order' for that statement" ("Free Liu Xiaobo Now! Early Life..." par. 8).

By this time, as a long-time member of the United Nations, China was being pressured to acknowledge its citizens' human rights. Liu believes that it was the gradual process of "the dilution of the mentality of enmity [that] made the political powers gradually accept the universality of human rights. The Chinese government [under Jiang Zemin,] promised the world in 1998, that it would sign the two international human rights conventions of the UN, marking China's recognition of universal human rights standards" ("I Have No Enemies..." par. 6). Liu is addressing China's hypocrisy: human rights are acknowledged, yet they do not allow freedom of expression of political viewpoints.

In his 2003 article, "The Rise of Civil Society in China," Liu describes the growth of social movements through a gradually maturing Chinese society. He explains that the authorities have lost credibility, and populism and people's champions have risen to aid in the protection of individual rights. Nongovernmental organizations such as underground religious movements, and anti-corruption

movements have secretly formed. Independent and official trade associations and cultural institutions have brought together a large number of intellectual leaders, making them self-sufficient, viable civic associations. However, Liu concludes that it is up to the Chinese Communist regime to initiate political reform.

In 2004, Liu, in "I Have No Enemies..." evoked the fact that "the National People's Congress for the first time inscribed into the constitution that, 'The state respects and safeguards human rights', signaling that human rights had become one of the fundamental principles of the rule of law. In the meantime, the present regime also proposed 'putting people first' and 'creating a harmonious society', which signaled progress in the Party's concept of rule" (par. 6). This reminder was addressed to the Chinese government during his final public statement of defense that Liu wrote prior to being sentenced to eleven years in jail for, "inciting subversion of state power." His crime? Co-writing and promoting "Charter 08" in 2008.

"Charter 08," according to Human Rights Watch, "was signed by more than 300 people from a cross-section of society, and by several prominent figures including retired party officials, former newspaper editors, members of the legal profession, and human rights defenders" ("China: Q and A on Nobel Peace Prize..." par. 11). It was also partially released in the form of an Internet petition drive on the eve of World Human Rights Day. According to *The New York Times*, "The manifesto was on the Internet only briefly before it was pulled by censors, but it still garnered more than 10,000 signatures" (par. 2). It is described as "a pro-democracy manifesto that called on the Communist Party to enact political reforms and uphold the constitutional rights of Chinese citizens" (Zha 60). "Charter 08" was patterned after "Charter 77," devised some thirty years earlier by Václav Havel and other Czech dissidents. "Charter 08," as explained by Bristow of the BBC, calls for a series of reforms that, "if its suggestions were introduced, it would mean the end of the current political system" (par. 5). "Charter 08" directly criticizes the Chinese Communist Party, saying that their "approach to 'modernization' has proven disastrous" (par. 2), and reiterates the words of Abraham Lincoln: "Democracy is a modern means for achieving government truly 'of the people, by the people, and for the people'" (par. 8). "Charter 08" created such a stir that, according to Bristow, the authorities "put pressure

Student Reflections on Writing: Ginny Hanson

In school, we are taught a structured method for writing essays and research papers “in five easy steps”: Pre-writing, drafting, revising, proofreading, and publishing. I don’t write in a methodical way, so a research paper is a Herculean effort. After battling through the procrastination, I start reading and formulating ideas. I agonize about whether or not it will look like what I have formulated in my head. I know the animal needs taming, especially if the animal is a 500-word assignment with citations. As humbling as it is, I have resigned myself to the fact that I need help. Most do. Much help can come from within, employing simple processes to try to get the writing done. Knowing where you are located within the writing process can help you to carry on.

For me, prewriting is free-writing. Prewriting includes the topic, my initial ideas, brain-storming, determining audience, and addressing the question, “What do I know and what do I need to know?” When I am stuck “staring at blank pages,” I brainstorm, or write whatever comes to mind, as if I am writing a journal entry. This is how I started this entry. It gets something—anything—on paper.

After research, I identify several main topics that I know I need to cover in the paper, and I decide on an order for those topics. Creating a simple outline gives me the skeleton of the paper. In drafting, I use my main topics as headings from which to form paragraphs in my own words, and I paste my research content in, roughly, to illustrate those ideas. I assemble and blend my writing and the research with transitional sentences, and I check my outline often, as it helps me visualize the order of my paper as I build my content. My writing doesn’t have to be perfect here.

Once it’s all down on paper, it’s time to make it *better*. I reread to myself and out loud, and I rearrange content and make sure it flows, watching for repetition and editing awkward sentences. I clarify, reduce, and/or elaborate where needed. I feel like I could edit forever. The value of proofreading, multiple times, for complete sentences, correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and correct word usage, cannot be overlooked, nor can the value of having someone read your work before it is finished. Staying open to constructive criticism is a good idea.

The “finished” piece is the evolution of thoughts that have been taken from mere fragments to something viable. We give it life. We make some sense of it and share it with others. And in sharing or publishing something we’ve written, whether in a journal like this or some other medium, we inspire others, provoke thought, and transmit ideas. We communicate and educate. Our ideas live on. How inspiring!

on many of those who supported it. Some were simply asked to withdraw their signatures. But Liu Xiaobo, as one of the authors, was given a harsher sentence” (par. 24-26). Liu is currently in isolation in a Jinzhou, Liaoning Province, north of Beijing until 2020.

Even while incarcerated, Liu Xiaobo’s name was nominated for the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize by three men: Vaclav Havel, Dana Nemcova, and Vaclav Maly. They were the authors of the 1977 anti-communist Czech manifesto, “Charter 77” (“Nomination for Nobel Prize” par. 2). Despite severe warnings from China that “presenting its Peace Prize to a Chinese dissident would ‘pull the wrong strings in relations between Norway and China, it would be seen as an unfriendly act’” (“Nomination for Nobel

Prize” par. 1), the Norwegian Nobel Committee decided to award the Prize to Liu Xiaobo “for his long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China” (“The Nobel Peace Prize...” par. 1). China immediately went to work to silence the announcement, and forever blocked Liu Xiaobo’s name. According to Watts, a writer for *The Guardian*, “More than 30 Chinese intellectuals [were] detained, warned and placed under house arrest in a crackdown aimed at stifling celebration” (par. 1). Following the announcement of the award, Liu’s wife, Liu Xia, was placed under house surveillance and her phone line cut. “Censors blacked out foreign broadcasts of the announcement and police were mobilized to choke any sign of domestic support for Liu” (Watts par. 7).

At the ceremony, because of China's efforts to quell Liu's recognition, the award was made even more visible globally. *The Washington Post* described how, "Jagland [Nobel committee chairman], then placed the medal and certificate normally awarded to the laureate in the empty chair upon the stage, triggering another ovation" (Wilgoren, Richburg, and Richards par. 5). Text from Liu's "I Have No Enemies: My Final Statement" was read by Norwegian actress and movie director, Liv Ullmann. Some of the text chosen included, "I have once again been shoved into the dock by the enemy mentality of the regime...but I still want to say to this regime, which is depriving me of my freedom, that I stand by [my] convictions...I have no enemies, and no hatred" (Wilgoren, Richburg, and Richards par. 6,7). Liu's lawyer, Shang Baojun, contends that, "the charge is against the Chinese constitution, because in the constitution it says that Chinese people have the freedom of speech, publication and demonstration...It is just an argument about the form of the state, it is not trying to overthrow the government" (Branigan par 18). Chinese government stands firm, however, and denounces the Nobel Prize as "a Western plot to destroy China. 'We are firmly against attempts by any country or individual to use the Nobel Peace Prize to interfere in China's internal affairs and infringe on China's judicial sovereignty'" (Wilgoren, Richburg, and Richards par. 31).

Will the Prize have any long-term affect on the human rights of China? According to Human Rights Watch, "The prize is likely to prompt a groundswell of interest in "Charter '08." Many ordinary Chinese people...are going to want to know who Liu Xiaobo is and why he was sentenced to prison. The writings of dissidents have so far been limited to those Chinese who know how to circumvent Beijing's extensive Internet censorship" ("China Q and A on Nobel Peace Prize..." par. 5). If anything, the Prize will continue Chinese officials' debates between hardliners and moderates, whether or not to allow their people more freedoms in order to release tensions. Certainly, freeing Liu Xiaobo will be an issue to come, when new Chinese leadership is due to take over in 2012.

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Evaluation: *I am impressed by the thoroughness of this writer's research and her careful attention to detail. Her sensitivity to a general reading audience is also worth noting, as she carefully guides us toward a greater understanding of this man, his works, and his beliefs. This is a very purposeful and readable expository piece, reflecting a great deal of research and careful concern for making the facts clear to an uninformed public.*

A Spirit Who Would Not Bend or Break

Alex Kaempfen

Course: Literature 221

(American Literature: Colonial Days to the Civil War)

Instructor: Richard Middleton-Kaplan

Assignment: Write an essay in response to the following question: in Frederick Douglass' *Autobiography*, does learning how to read ultimately turn out to be, as he says at one point, "a curse rather than a blessing?"

"It's a blessing, and a curse."
—Adrian Monk

The television program *Monk* featured an ex-detective with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). When asked about it, usually in reference to some feat of crime-solving that utilized the OCD, he would provide the aforementioned answer. The OCD turned out to be the source of his greatest strength, his incredible attention to detail, and simultaneously his greatest weakness, his litany of job-halting phobias. Frederick Douglass was a real person, but he too suffered from the dichotomy of having a cursed blessing. And yet, like Adrian Monk, despite Douglass' beliefs, it is clear that the blessing benefits Douglass far more than its cursed trappings would suggest.

The story of Frederick Douglass is told by himself in his autobiography *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*. The epic saga is an enthralling dissection of the evils inherent to slavery. Douglass recounts the tale of his youth, adolescence, and early adulthood, leading up to and vaguely including his escape to the North. He even provides a brief glimpse into his life seven years into his freedom. However, most pertinent to this discussion is the time he spent in Baltimore as a youth of twelve years.

That part of his story begins four years earlier when he was approximately seven or eight years old. It was the first time Douglass was sent away from what had

been his "home" on the Colonel Lloyd plantation. It's an important moment for him as it sets him on his trajectory toward freedom. He had experienced a relatively fortunate early childhood via a friendship with one of his masters, Daniel Lloyd (Douglass n.p.). His transfer to the household of Captain Thomas Auld came before he was old enough to do just about any of the field work. Thus with a fresh mind, body, and will, Douglass was exposed to the cosmopolitan metropolis (by Southern standards at least) that was Baltimore.

It was in Baltimore that Douglass was taught to read. His education began under the auspices of Mrs. Lucretia Auld (Douglass n.p.). After being forbidden to continue in her education, Douglass took to learning via some of the local boys on the streets. Here is where the "curse" began to emerge. Douglass was engaged in an activity that was outright illegal: teaching a slave to read. He managed to carry on these secret studies for approximately six years until he was recalled back to St. Michael's (Douglass n.p.). By that point, he had learned to read and write and could well be said to be literate.

Now, the narrative of his coming into literacy complete, we arrive at the point where Douglass's literacy proved both his greatest asset and simultaneously brought him into the most grief. At this point in his life, Douglass's life was like a prospective fire. A fire requires what is termed the "fire triangle," three essential elements, of which the absence of any one will doom the fire. Douglass himself was the fuel, the wood. It was strong and the source of where everything else would take place. His literacy introduced the oxygen, the agent which allows the reaction to happen. All that was needed was heat, a spark of some kind, to turn Douglass into a raging fire, one that would be hard put to extinguish. St. Michael's would provide more than enough opportunities for Douglass to combust.

The curses that literacy brought to him began years earlier, however. Douglass mentions that one of the first books he read was *The Columbian Orator* (Douglass n.p.). Upon reading it, he was roused toward the siren song of freedom. It was when he tried to contemplate the idea of freedom that it offered, that he muttered the quote that it was "a curse rather than a blessing" (Douglass n.p.). Rebutting his own belief about literacy began the moment

he uttered those words. Douglass wrote this about a boy of twelve, as a man of twenty-seven years, who would live for another fifty beyond that. The benefits of literacy had hardly begun to accrue when he had completed but one-sixth of his life.

No doubt the realization of the cruel nature that he and all slaves were in was a terrible thing to be aware of, but his relocation to St. Michael's would provide enough evidence of that. In this regard, Frederick Douglass is a true idealist in that he believes education stems from essential, and eternal, ideas passed on through history. Those ideas are learned by reading. It is the antithesis of modern education, whose philosophy of pragmatism says that people "learn by doing." Douglass would quite quickly learn the terrible nature of slavery by experiencing field work himself. It is incredulous to believe that Douglass would have felt any better about slavery after experiencing the fieldwork that he did had he not read *The Columbian Orator*.

Douglass was brutally whipped, worked to exhaustion, broken in spirit. Even upon his return to Baltimore, he was beaten, berated, and bereaved of his earning by his supposedly kinder (the "-er" is the essential part) master. His literacy played no part in any of that, nor did it lead to his employment as a calker. There is no direct relationship between Douglass's literacy and the brutality he suffered as a slave. However, it can be argued that Douglass's attitude was affected by reading *The Columbian Orator*; and that that spirit got him into a great deal of trouble and suffering. Perhaps the best example is when Douglass fights back against his treatment: "but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose" (Douglass n.p.). He rose his hand against the symbol, his master, and was positioned to easily strangle Mr. Covey, actions which could easily bring about death as a punishment. Those actions did not, however, and indeed Douglass looks back at them fondly as the moment where he rekindled his spirit and desire for freedom. The fire that was Frederick Douglass had almost been extinguished but was again burning strong. If literacy led to his uprising, then Douglass should not be grateful for it, and if it did not lead to his uprising, then Douglass'

personality was that combustible on its own. Either way, during his tenure as a field hand, literacy did not hurt him.

The benefits it would bring, however, are far more clear. From the moment Douglass read *The Columbian Orator*; he kindled and nurtured a dream of being free. That dream would occur when he was approximately twenty years old in September 1838 (Douglass n.p.). He would go on to live another fifty-seven years, during twenty-seven of which he was still an escaped slave. There is nothing so precious as one's freedom. Thomas Jefferson knew it when he said that King George III had violated life's "most sacred rights of life and liberty" via promoting and sustaining the slave trade (Jefferson 34). Douglass himself knew it. It was the only thing that kept him going for a portion of his life: "I often found myself regretting my own existence, and wishing myself dead; and but for the hope of being free, I have no doubt but that I should have killed myself, or done something for which I should have been killed" (Douglass n.p.). There are things worth dying for and there are things worth living for. Human freedom is the most basic of them. If you are not free, there is nothing to lose by trying to achieve freedom. If you die in the act of achieving freedom, you die free. And if you should achieve it, as Douglass did, your life is your own, to do with as you see fit. That alone is worth more than avoiding any number of whippings.

And by the end Douglass, knows it as well. He was able to legally marry his wife Anna, and they were able to live without fear of being involuntarily separated (Douglass n.p.). He worked and earned his own way for him and his wife. Douglass was quite right when he said that he recognized that, "it was to me the starting-point of a new existence" (Douglass n.p.). Finally, Douglass' literacy makes another positive, and immense, contribution to his life. He began to read the *Liberator*; and as he says, "The paper became my meat and my drink. My soul was set all on fire" (Douglass n.p.)! Those are the same feelings he had when he first learned of freedom, and they are what spurred him to tell his story.

It is hard to figure out a way in which his story would have been told, or even that his story would have happened, without his education. That initial taste, beginning to learn his alphabet, of what freedom could offer, sparked all of Douglass' later efforts. Perhaps that

temporary pain when he longed for the freedom he did not have was indeed excruciating. Perhaps it made each moment of his adolescence feel like an eternity. Perhaps it was at fault for many of the ills of his life. But it was also responsible for setting him on the path toward a new life, liberty, and his successful pursuit of happiness. Each of those is a blessing worth having at any cost, and Douglass achieved all three. Ultimately, then, literacy is a blessing, and whatever ills befell Douglass because of it were far outweighed by the fruits it brought him. There is no question Frederick Douglass was better off having learned how to read.

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Evaluation: *Mr. Kaempfen finds an ingenious way into this topic with a surprising analogy. Beginning with the concept of a "cursed blessing," he moves systematically through Douglass' experiences to arrive at an emphatic conclusion. This is an eloquently written essay that testifies to the value of Douglass' struggles in particular and education in general.*

Misogyny in Richard Wright's *Native Son*

Benjamin Kleeman

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Catherine Restovich

Assignment: *Write a literary research paper.*

Richard Wright's *Native Son* was a groundbreaking novel. Published in the 1940s, it was one of the first widely recognized pieces of African-American literature that, in Wright's words, didn't represent "prim and decorous ambassadors who went a-begging to white America" (Wright x). Instead of catering to the interests of whites, it criticized and challenged racism and white supremacy. Though the novel is intended to be read as a text of liberation, the characters in *Native Son* have managed to actually reinforce structures of oppression—particularly misogyny—and perhaps most importantly, misogynist actions perpetrated against black women by black men. Though many have written this novel off as being entirely misogynistic, and others have simply ignored the magnitude of the portrayals of misogynist actions and attitudes towards women, I intend to do neither. I contend that though the novel does articulate and depict misogyny, it is not purely articulated *from a place* of misogyny; rather, it intends to highlight a multitude of social problems through a story that must be in many ways deconstructed and closely analyzed to understand its meaning.

The main character in the novel, Bigger Thomas, is a young black man, struggling through poverty and moving against the current racism in everyday life. This racism is manifested through overt prejudice and hate, as well as more covered up practices, policies, and interactions with white people—even some who think they have good intentions. Though Bigger has little access to institutional education, he is a free thinker. He is very critical of white supremacy and has visions of black people coming together in solidarity, resisting white power in a fight to liberate themselves and each other from oppression and

domination. However, he does not really see his goals as something that can truly be achieved; Bigger feels little actual sense of camaraderie with his peers and does not know how to change that. Despite his ideas, Bigger is driven to inaction by his experiences in the world and by the lack of solidarity and ambition he sees in it and in his heart.

Though Bigger hates and wants to challenge the power held by whites (and often just hates white people, acknowledging them not as human beings, but as an omnipresent, all-powerful force), his misogynistic thoughts and actions, combined with his relative place of power as a man, keeps liberation from the patriarchy nearly impossible for black women, which reinforces their oppression by black men. It can be found through several examples that Bigger, as a character, has some deeply rooted, very negative perceptions of, and attitudes toward, women; his treatment of, and interactions with, the women around him directly reflect those perceptions. This novel as a whole has been criticized for being entirely misogynistic itself, but a deep analysis of the work asserts that this is not true and is a hasty conclusion.

Alan France's writing on the text is an example of a shallow critique that falls short of a truly comprehensive analysis of the misogyny depicted in the novel. France's critique does not mention any of the actual physical violence against women, nor does it even attempt to make any distinction between the varying impacts and forms of misogyny based on differentials of race. However, this article does focus on the characterization of women in the story as "property, valuable only to the extent that they serve as objects of phallic status conflicts" (France n.p.). France also mentions some of the more subtle ways misogyny is manifested in the writing of situational dynamics and focuses specifically on the opening scene where Bigger kills the large rat (said to be a phallic reference) and then uses it as a weapon to strike fear into his sister, Vera.

It must, of course, be acknowledged that there is not a single strong female character in the entire book. The female characters do very little, if anything, against the wishes of their male counterparts (lest they have their bodies violated and/or their brains smashed or detached). In fact, they are all known only in relation to the men in

the story. Bigger is the lead character, and the story (for the most part) revolves around his experience. His mother and his sister are portrayed as doing nothing but nagging him, and he can't stand them because they remind him of his responsibilities. In contrast, his younger brother, Buddy, is portrayed as a friendly little boy who gets along with Bigger quite well. Mr. Dalton is one of the richest men in the city and owns plenty of real estate, charging far higher rent for black people than for white people, and confining them (black people) all to one corner of the city where many of the buildings are literally falling apart and have very small rooms. In contrast, Mrs. Dalton is portrayed as an old, frail woman, who literally clings to her husband and nearly faints in complicated situations, while he handles the serious matters (such as the situation right after they discover the ransom note). Mary Dalton tries to quickly adopt the views of her Communist boyfriend, Jan, without putting much consideration into her own hobbies or interests. She is also literally suffocated by a *pillow*, right after being carried up the stairs by a "big, strong man." However, it ought to be noted that Mary defies the traditional role of the white woman as indirect, quiet, distant and chaste, as she is quite forward, outspoken, and spends plenty of time out with men.

There are myriad obvious phrases used in the novel that articulate the point of view of a misogynist, and the shaping and positioning of the female characters in the novel seems to support that claim. It is a consistent theme throughout the story that women are "silenced and thrown away" as soon as they "step out of line"—that is, as soon as they defy the wishes of the men in their lives. Clearly, it would be irrational to ignore these aspects of the book or dismiss them as trivial. However, Sondra Guttman's "What Bigger Killed For: Rereading Violence Against Women in *Native Son*," provides an analysis of the novel that takes a new direction, specifically focusing on the distinct ways in which women are treated based on race, and the relationship between violence against women and class struggle.

After Bigger spends a night out drinking with Mary (his employer's daughter), and her boyfriend Jan, Mary is quickly "silenced and thrown away." When Bigger and Mary arrive back at the Dalton residence, Mary is so intoxicated that she cannot stand on her own to walk

up the stairs or communicate effectively. Bigger is still sober enough to drive a car, so he is hardly mentally or physically incapacitated; he carries her up the stairs to her room because she is unable. After manipulating Mary's intoxicated body into a sexual situation, though done out of a desire for consensual interaction rather than acting with a violent intention¹ (Wright 83-85), Bigger tries to hide and escape the room, as Mary's mother—a frail, blind woman—approaches the doorway. Bigger tries to quiet Mary by putting a pillow over her mouth, so as not to draw attention from Mrs. Dalton, and winds up suffocating her by accident. After Mrs. Dalton leaves the room, Bigger takes Mary's body downstairs to shove it into the furnace to be burned. In a final attempt to fit the body in, Bigger cuts off Mary's head (a body part which contains the brain, which can be considered a woman's number one *thinkingmechanism*) and throws it in on top of the rest.

Angela Y. Davis refers to the myth of the black rapist, arguing that this social narrative "controlled white women, terrorized the black community with the threat of lynching, and kept white and black working classes at odds" (Guttman 171). This social construct labeled all black men as potential rapists who might be falsely charged at any moment, and created an illusion that white men (even if they are working class or poor and own little to no property), must protect the white women in their lives from black, working class, poor men, with whom, if not for racist prejudice and fears, they might share

¹ In saying that Bigger's manipulation of Mary's body is done out of a desire for consensual sexual interaction, as opposed to intentional violence, I do not mean in any way to excuse the fact that the interaction was nonconsensual, due to the fact that Mary was intoxicated beyond any point of consciousness and Bigger is not; Mary's head remains tilted back and motionless until the movement of Bigger's hands up her back directs her lips toward his. Rather, I mean to highlight, as stated in Guttman's text, that, "Through this simulation... Wright makes it clear that Bigger desires consensual sex... This scene makes Wright's point that Bigger's desire to transgress social boundaries... is sexualized" (178). With a white woman's body standing as a symbol of capitalist power, Bigger wants to contravene the boundaries of race and class by having a consensual sexual interaction with a rich white woman.

class solidarity. Guttman continues, "...the emphasis on protecting white womanhood [also] concealed the sexual victimization of black women. The invisibility of black women's rape was a product of those stereotypes of female sexuality that, in part, supported the myth of the black rapist" (171). In Davis' writings on the myth of the black male rapist, she tells us that the "fictional image of the Black man as rapist has always strengthened its inseparable companion: the image of the Black woman as chronically promiscuous. For once the notion is accepted that Black men harbor irresistible and animal-like sexual urges, the entire race is invested with bestiality (182). The same so-called logic is used to justify and make invisible the rape of black women, categorizing them as inherently sexual and always willing beings, in some way incapable of being raped. This idea is linked to the history of white male slave-masters' rapes of their black female slaves as being socially acceptable, thus treating their suffering and the horrific actions inflicted upon them as something that does not deserve any attention.

This assertion of rape applied as a tool of racism is reified in *Native Son*, as it is shown that black men (Bigger) are accused and convicted of raping white women (Mary, whom he did not actually rape), while the actual rape they [he] commit[s] against black women [his girlfriend, Bessie] is ignored by the white society that runs the "justice" system. Guttman's analysis tells us: "While *Native Son* illustrates the violence that occurs when the white female body is figured as a symbol of capitalist power, the novel also makes it clear that it is the black woman who suffers sexual violence because of it (170-171). Through Mary's night out with the communist Jan and Mr. Dalton's new employee, Bigger Thomas, she defies her father's wishes by not going to school, as well as crossing socially constructed barriers by associating with a communist (whose political doctrine stands antithetically to her father's work as a capitalist), as well as a poor black proletariat.

As Bigger realizes that someone is coming into Mary's room while he is there, he knows that he will be labeled "rapist" if he is discovered. He must do whatever he can to keep from being discovered. His murder of a rich, white woman pushes him into a long, drawn-out process of trying to remain innocent in the eyes of those

he considers "blind" to his actions, and later being outed by the media and forced into hiding. Further in the story, he involves a black woman (his girlfriend, Bessie)—aggressively and against her will—in his plot to make money after his murder of a white woman gains social attention. After he feels that he has failed and all is lost, he rapes Bessie and does so knowing that her plight is invisible; the newspapers would not report the rape of a black woman.

The book *Aberration in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique*, by Roderick Ferguson, is a critical text that analyzes dominant sociological discourses and influential texts that the author understands to have potential for radical emancipation (including *Native Son*), from the point of view of queer people of color. In her review of Ferguson's text, Lori Saffin says that the author "exposes African-American culture as both a site of struggle and a space for potential alliance between blackness and homosexuality." The text also suggests that "many efforts to forge alliances around race result in fragmentation and reify hierarchical structures." Ferguson aims to show that race, class, gender, and sexuality intersect, and are thus all in some way related and ought to be considered and understood in all struggles for liberation. Ferguson also contends that "the subordination of black women through gender and sexual regulation in the Black Panther Party allowed the Black Power Movement to collaborate with U.S. nationalist agendas instead of countering them [by] focusing solely on racial exploitation without complicating how race is also gendered, classed, and sexualized" (Saffin n.p.). In *Native Son*, Wright illustrates that though Bigger desires liberation for black *people*, his actions against black *women* reinforce patriarchy and white supremacy. This is shown through his treatment of Bessie as inferior; someone he can command and force into anything he desires, and ultimately, an object that he can rape and murder, rather than an equal black person is his same struggle.

Safiya Bukhari-Alston speaks to this same issue in her essay, "On the Question of Sexism within the Black Panther Party." Bukhari-Alston states that "It is extremely crucial that, as we struggle against our primary enemy, we remember that ours is a collective struggle, a struggle for human rights for all of our people, men and women,

and as long as one of us is oppressed, none of us is free.” In saying this, Bukhari-Alston acknowledges that the struggle against oppression is not just the struggle against one oppression—our differences and the impact that these differences have on our lives must be acknowledged in any struggle for liberation. In relation to *Native Son*, Bigger—a lumpen proletariat—commits acts of violence against women, most detrimentally toward black women, reinforcing their oppression under the patriarchy as enacted by black men, and such actions cause his desire for liberation from white supremacy to fall short of liberation for all black people from oppression.

Wright illustrates Bigger’s disassociation of the word rape from an act of sexualized violence, by saying that rape is “what one felt when one’s back was against a wall and one had to strike out...to keep the pack from killing one. He committed rape every time he looked into a white face.... But it was rape when he cried out in hate deep in his heart as he felt the strain of living day by day. That, too, was rape” (Wright 262). Bigger admits, in a way, to having raped Mary (which technically, he did not do). What he means by this is that what he did to Mary would lead white society to take out the same action on him that they would if he had physically raped her—they would kill him. Guttman states that “[when] Bigger *does* rape...he is in the same state of mind that he is when he kills Mary; he is sexually aroused by the fact that he is defying white supremacist society. In this way, *Native Son* demonstrates that while white and black women alike are victims in the struggles between men, the myth of the black rapist ensures that black women, not white women, are most often the victims of rape” (186).

Wright carefully illustrates the social conditions that were created by the overtly racist society of his time. He uses different forms of oppression to show ways in which classes and social groups of people were (and are) kept divided. He represents multiple forms of misogyny to show the impacts that white supremacy has on the minds and bodies of black women and men, and to do so, he has to accurately represent the terribly violent fate of black women in the specific context. This analysis of the text calls into question the legitimacy of critiques of the book that dismiss it for even depicting such misogyny, and surely kicks those who would ignore any misogynist

elements to the curb. Hopefully, if anything, it begs a more critical approach to writings that stir up controversy in general.

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Evaluation: *Ben clearly outlines the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality in Wright’s novel, and he speaks passionately for the female characters whose voices were silenced.*

Formation of Voice through Sound, Imagery, and Form

Melanie Knippen

Course: English 222 (Poetry Writing)

Instructor: Anne Davidovicz

Assignment: *For this project, students were to present two hundred or more lines of polished poetry. Also, they were required to include a lengthy metacognitive essay that addresses and analyzes what they think are the key literary elements that drive their poetry. Finally, they needed to respond to goals they set for themselves in their midterm essay.*

“Poetry is the music of the soul,
and, above all, of great
and feeling souls.”
—Voltaire

This collection of five poems explores the creative process, exemplifies the emotional catharsis of writing, and explores conscious and unconscious ideas through repetition of sound, development of imagery, and experimentation with form. A consistent formation of my poetic voice is evident within these poems, and its qualities define this selection of work. These elements of voice include a sense of urgency and psychic weight, a balance of order and chaos, musical and rhythmic sounds, and surreal imagery.

A sense of urgency characterizes the tone of several poems, including “Compulsive Repetition,” “The Eraser,” and “Monochrome Manifestation: Mirrors of Mindsets.” This sense of urgency relates to an underlying emotional core. It is the compulsive need to transform overwhelming thoughts and emotions into words through the act of writing in order to focus creative energy and release consuming psychic activity into tangible, controlled forms.

In the villanelle, “Compulsive Repetition,” the cyclical repetition of lines is reinforced by the content, namely the concept that “notions ring ‘round my head” (1). The form reflects the urgent release of spinning

thoughts and its role in the creative process, which the speaker concludes is merely “repeating shapes / speaking compulsively” (20). This repetition of symbols, such as words in writing or images in artwork, are attempts to “capture space, connect concepts” (4) for the speaker, “held captive / by purpose, obsession, creative release” (4-5). The sense of being driven to verbalize thoughts, emotions and experiences as a method of establishing purpose and liberating creative energy reveals a determined voice that, through its confessions, gains control over an “active mind” (16-17).

The process of cathartic release and exploration of consciousness uncovers a voice that balances order and chaos within the creative process and internal experience. The balance of order and chaos within the creative process is evident in the sestina, “The Eraser.” The order of form and the content of perfectionism and correcting mistakes parallels the chaos of emotion that underlies compulsions that nearly burst out from the constraints of structure. The emotional chaos lies beneath the ominous, urgent tone of the poem as a whole and peers from behind lines such as “make / no mistakes” (10-11), “repress wrong thoughts; erase / regrets” (18-19), “brush flashbacks of flesh and failures aside” (21), and “Practice makes / perfect” (30-31). There is a sense of pressure and building tension throughout the poem that is relieved when the speaker pauses, “take a breath: take some space--- / I am three” (27); the time shift into the past offers an opportunity for escape from anxiety, but ultimately returns to ideas of perfection by ruminating on repetition, “Repeat the alphabet” (31), and reflecting on the speaker’s original introduction to the concept of mistakes, “Erase / when your fingers fumble or mind muddles; mind mistakes!” (34-35). The sestina form allows for a structure to contain this chaos but ironically reinforces refinement by challenging the poet to face perfect word placement and carry concepts while repeating words.

Order and chaos inherent in the speaker’s internal experience is discernible in “Monochrome Manifestation: Mirrors of Mindsets.” This two part poem juxtaposes two emotional experiences / mindsets manifested in part one: black (“darkness” [1], “caves” [9], “charcoal” [12], “burning black triangles” [15]), and part two: white (“hot white” [26], “spotlight” [28], “bright eye whites” [33], “skylights” [37]). This contrast creates two voices within the poem. One speaks of pain (“pain-filled, bare” [8]),

the primal (“back to caves again/ I am drawing charcoal circles/ within circles, on the walls; / face lit with fire” [11-14]), and emptiness:

I bask in darkness
amnesia and empty mirrors;
up above it’s gray,
barely any rays;
below, a hollow shape (1-5)

The second voice speaks with manic energy (“spinning in star showers, / gleaming, seeping in spotlight” [27-28]), wakefulness (“light across my irises, / open wide, bright eye-whites/beaming neon shines / unstoppable insomniac [31-35]), and ego elevation (“urgency, resurgence,/ garrulity, spontaneity / I’m audacious/ I’m delirious” [40-43]). The two-part form allows order in the juxtaposition of two mindsets with each part containing the chaos of emotional experience.

Musical quality and rhythmic sounds also typify the voice of these poems. According to Denise Levertov (“Origins of a Poem”), “Writing poetry is a process of discovery, revealing inherent music, the music of correspondences, the music of inscape.” My deep appreciation and connection with music and sound is externalized in my poetry, but I have also discovered my “inherent music,” or the sounds and rhythms of my inner self, and the music of my “inscape.” As Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself” utilizes rhythm within free form to produce lyrical landscapes in order to depict and discover his personal and poetic identity, my poetry reveals aspects of my identity through its sound structure. This concept is illustrated in “D.C. al Fine,” a poem about music that applies musical terminology to create a surreal landscape based in the speaker’s perspective of a world composed of and from music. The poem exhibits how I see music in everything, which is conveyed by positioning the speaker in a natural landscape built from music:

Standing on sharp
atop flat white plains; I see
cliffs and trouble in the space
between treble sky
and bass earth (1-5).

In addition to musical diction and imagery, the poem

creates musical sensations through sound patterns:

until sunset, a cadence
to accent the chromatic score;
unlocks night’s ebony door
with ivory keys (19-22)

The sound patterns used in this excerpt include alliteration/consonance (“cadence,” “chromatic”), assonance (“night’s,” “ivory”), rhyme (“score,” “door”), and off-rhyme (“sunset,” “cadence,” “accent”). This gives the poem lyrical quality by creating similar sounds within stanzas and at the end of lines, while also creating a musical rhythm that carries words and captures a whimsical voice.

This whimsical voice evolves from surreal imagery that gives it a mystical or enigmatic tone which exposes the unconscious. Exploration of symbolism provides a road to the surreal; our tendency to relate to archetypes, myths, and analogies to express emotion and experience links directly to the unconscious process of grief. In “The Poem as Reservoir for Grief,” Tess Gallagher describes how “Poems often remake the grief-causing experience in terms of myth or analogy so that the unconscious and the conscious meet. Myth mediates between conscious and unconscious minds. It moves from ego release to psychic and spiritual embrace.” By letting go of ego and attachment to thoughts, memories, and experiences via the process of writing, we may embrace psychic experiences of human suffering and ultimately transform them into spiritual experiences.

This process often involves the metamorphosis of conscious ideas into unconscious symbols and imagery, such as that in “A Fool’s Odyssey.” This three-part poem uses the archetypal symbolism of tarot cards to explore the unconscious. The speaker becomes the Fool, the character in the tarot deck that makes a journey through life’s major themes, from the naivete and innocence of birth to the wisdom and regeneration of death. The line, “The Fool is smart, she takes the path / that winds” (24-25), depicts the speaker as the Fool and suggests that her life’s path is unconventional but has offered more opportunities for experience, growth, and wisdom. Along this journey that is depicted by tarot cards representative of “past, present and future,” that were drawn from a

spread, surreal imagery reveals reflections on spirituality that arise from experiences of contemplating perceptions and illusions (“conversing with a blue fish / that swims in ponds of nonsense/ singing, “Foolish Eye! Illusory sky!” (32-34), human suffering (night terrors, she wakes in cold sweats / wanders carmine deserts naked, / blindfolded” [38-40]), and beliefs concerning the soul’s rebirth:

when I die,
the Fool will reincarnate;
stroll down another path;
another odyssey;
the same Fool’s soul. (69-73)

Because of its in-depth exploration of uncon-scious symbolism and underlying emotional core, “A Fool’s Odyssey” is one of the stronger poems in this collection. Additionally, it utilizes sound patterns such as in the lines “she spends mornings in courtyards, whistles/ to cockatoos that speak in syllables and soliloquies/ about seagulls, envious devils; hover and screech” (50-52), which uses “s” and “l” sounds that slide off the tongue and create a sense of flow, and words relating to sound and speech (“speak in syllables and soliloquies”; “screech”) that convey sound references. Onomatopoeia (“screech” [52]; “ding dong” [14-15]; “gong” [59-60]), also allows resonance of sound to come through the poem. “A Fool’s Odyssey” is an experimentation with form, by creating a three-part poem in which each part depicts a period in time and links concepts using images and symbols. The three parts tie together to create the narrative of the Fool’s journey.

“The Eraser” is also one of the stronger poems in this collection. Its ability to carry the concept of a single object, the eraser, through the entire poem without being overly redundant was a success in the challenge of exploring the sestina form. Not only does it conform to a set form, but it also contains strong sound patterns with use of repetitive end-words, word play, and variations (“if I pen in pencil” [6]; “easy erasure. Pencils / ensure” [17-18]), and assonance (“White Out suffocates; heavy, opaque; apparent mistake” [14]). The poem reflects personal experience (“I am three; smell saw dust; the pencil / slides between novice fingers, smooth” [28-29], carries psychic weight (“I want it disintegrated. I want it dead. Make / no mistakes---” [10-11]), and contains surreal imagery (Fissured volcanic terrain, fresh smeared

ink; letters cave, smothered / in ruled lines and sable pools” [15-16]). The combination of technical and expressive details throughout “The Eraser” makes it a successful achievement.

The poem that I view as a work in progress is “Monochrome Manifestation: Mirrors of Mindsets” because it is less clear in showing the underlying emotions and thoughts intended. This poem challenges me to convey concepts about emotional experience that are difficult to express because of their abstract, fleeting nature. Comparing the emotional manifestations of “black and white” that are not in themselves concrete is somewhat difficult, but I aim to find imagery to represent certain qualities and ideas that remain undeveloped in this draft. I find that as it is “Monochrome Manifestation: Mirrors of Mindsets” sometimes tells more than it shows, and I would like to work towards more descriptive imagery to replace simple statements (such as “I am burdened” [24], or “I’m audacious” [42]).

My goals at the midterm were to experiment with subject matter and technical aspects, and to cultivate connections between concepts and language; I believe that these goals were accomplished in this selection of poems. I attempted to use more personal and emotional experiences to fuel my subject matter (especially in “Monochrome Manifestation: Mirrors of Mindsets,” “The Eraser,” and “Compulsive Repetition”), and I experimented with different forms (a villanelle, sestina, and section poem). I related notions with language in “D.C. al Fine” through the combination of musical language and concepts into poetic language, and I connected content to form in “The Eraser” and “Compulsive Repetition.”

I believe I have been making progress through experimentation; by experimenting with content, form, and language I have developed a clearer and more consistent voice. Writing more directly about personal experience pushes me to channel emotional chaos into form and language. Adapting ideas into more formal structures challenges me to be more creative and concise with my choices. Reading the poetry of Ann Sexton and Diane Wakoski for the midterm provided insight into narrative poetry writing and the craft of confessional expression, as well as strengthened my preference for myth and surrealism while informing me of ways to convey archetypal and surreal imagery through form and structure.

As of now, I still strive to experiment with different

forms and technical aspects of poetry, such as syllables and meter. My passion for and confidence in writing has grown throughout the semester, and I plan to continue pursuing poetry, not only for my personal motives but to share my love of language and poetic expression with others. I hope to proceed in studying creative writing, especially poetry, as I find the craft to be one of my life callings. As I develop my voice as a poet, I find myself developing in mind and spirit. The power of language goes beyond formations on the page, influences more than eyes and ears, and sings to more than our senses. Our perception of the world inspires poetry; poetry, in turn, inspires and transforms both self and world.

Compulsive Repetition

Notions ring 'round my head; active
pictures, spun tapestries; spiderweb masterpiece;
repetitive shapes speak compulsively,

capture space, connect concepts, held captive
by purpose, obsession, creative release;
notions ring, around my head, active

voices converse passively;
comprehension falters; mouths honk, geese
repeating shapes, speaking compulsive

words in similar languages; furtive;
unable to translate what's said; then sudden peace---
a single notion rings around my head, actively

spinning thread; the weaver pushes the wheel's pedal, gives
little notice, merely rocks, keeps time
with rhythm, feeds spools of fleece.
Relatively, repetition shapes speech; active

minds, sheathed with intricate associations; often pensive,
verbalizing thoughts until they cease.
Notions ring 'round my head, actively;
I'm repeating shapes/speaking compulsively.

The Eraser: A Sestina

Its sides are balmy and smooth;
smudged dim lead stains hold mistakes.
Pandora's box, locked; a weight the eraser
takes--letters cease to exist, repetitive space

all the words replaced; it makes
a difference: I'll lose everything if I pen in pencil.

Wood splinter, whittled utensil, pencil
ash; it tempts, forgives, talks smooth.
Painless, crafty maiden lets you use her, then erase
her. I want it disintegrated. I want it dead. Make
no mistakes---
it shaves pages, and in centimeter spaces

narrow tombs where new letters settle, there's no escape.
White Out suffocates; heavy, opaque; apparent mistake.
Fissured volcanic terrain, fresh smeared ink; letters cave,
smothered

in ruled lines and sable pools. Crumple, toss away. Forget it,
make

it disappear; compartmentalize; easy erasure. Pencils
ensure we stay in check; repress wrong thoughts; erase

regrets. All this gummy residue does is make a mess. Every
erased

memory amassed in one space
brush flashbacks of flesh and failures aside, pensive
stand-still seconds make
room for flawless lines and smooth
circles; I could be mistaken

it seems I mistook
this simple eraser
for perfection; take a breath: take some space---
I am three; smell saw dust; the pencil
slides between novice fingers, smooth;
hold gold; number two. Practice makes

perfect. Repeat the alphabet; make
your print r's with curved tops; Space
symbols; make your cursive r's with sloped crests. Pencil
marks fill rows, careful--keep in the lines! Erase
when your fingers fumble or mind muddles; mend mistakes!
Two decades later, my paper's still not smooth.

Pencil scribbled, sharp point digs in; smooth
over mistakes with my wrist; what remains makes
ghost prints; worn thin by the eraser.

Monochrome Manifestation: Mirrors of Mindsets

I. Black

I bask in darkness
amnesia and empty mirrors;
up above it's gray,
barely any rays;
below, a hollow shape
with a bitter glare;

never fulfilled,
pain-filled, bare;
from caves
to big buildings,
back to caves again

I am drawing charcoal circles
within circles, on the walls;
face lit with fire,
burning black triangles of trees
with beet-red bark
that turns purple in blue fire

I am a slab of meat,
I throb with blood,
cursed with emotion
and having something to say;
human, but holding it in

I am beneath night
I am burdened
self-aware

II. White

I'm hot white,
spinning in star showers,
gleaming, seeping in spotlight
luring, alluring
seismographic, laughing

graphic images at the speed
of light across my irises,
open wide, bright eye-whites
beaming neon shines

unstoppable insomniac,
there's always grandeur
in deluded skylights

and lust in the attic;
mark all this euphuistic nonsense
as urgency, resurgence,
garrulity, spontaneity

I'm audacious
I'm delirious
a saboteur

D.C. al Fine

Standing on sharps
atop flat white plains; I see
cliffs and trouble in the space
between treble sky
and bass earth;
horizon; line for rests.

The raindrops staccato;
notes resound,
crescendo in caves;
leap into the sea, who sings
l a r g o repeated rhythms;
climbs up the beach
in half steps, hailing
the great metronome in the sky

fermatas sit in trees
indefinitely; singing
allegro attacks: notes
diatonic and diabolic

until sunset, a cadence
to accent the chromatic score;
unlocks night's ebony door
with ivory keys;
the moon sings
jet-black sonnets
in a soprano voice.

Feel music fly past
zephyr's scales;
the coda's the cosmos
i n f i n i t e.

A Fool's Odyssey

Cards Past

The moon holds hands with Jupiter,
concealed behind an ominous jellyfish
that swims in the sky; deep space creature;
luminous lunar middle, gleaming eyes;
cloudy tentacles split and drift in wind;
leaves trails of life in its wake; breathes
energy into tree veins

The orbiting duo sings old tunes to nightlife;
a dead leaf grows a severed hand-
shadow on my doorstep;
echoing footsteps
duet up steps, rest
and ring the bell

Ding.

Dong.

With my wide eye at the peephole
she divulges, "Moon here!"
I open my mind;
she sends waves and whims,
whispers, "The witch is dead!"
Slips a deck of strange cards on my wrists
and disappears in clouds of star-mist; while
I spread them out on my palms, a whole tale

The Cards Present

The Fool is smart, she takes the path
that winds; the skies are blue and gold
she carries ten walking sticks
lined with vines, serpent tongues twist
around bark. She collects seven cups
of hallucination, one from a cloud's hand
as she leans against the knoll's only birch

She plays hide and seek
at the shore, conversing with a talking blue fish
that swims in ponds of nonsense
singing, "Foolish Eye! Illusory sky!"
That afternoon an eclipse cancels disks
that still beckon as she trudges west to the river bank;
cowers beneath a pitch black cloak of coal bits

Night terrors, she wakes in cold sweats
wanders carmine deserts naked,

blindfolded, painted red with clay and ochre;
the next night ten swords pierce her spine;
her heart splits in three;
she dreams; a bold woman in white, still blind
sits back to brackish lake beneath the blue,
crescent sliver; arms crossed, blade in each hand

Autumn rusts the sky, the Fool gazes
into crystal balls and juggles infinity
while skipping steady on the path,
then pauses
she spends mornings in courtyards, whistles
to cockatoos that speak in syllables and soliloquies
about seagulls, envious devils; hover and screech;
she stays and waits
for the next card.

Future Card

Lion burning blue, ethereal sea eagle,
bull encrusted in mud, invisible angel
four creatures appear at my doorstep;
a gong resonates

gong gong

gong gong

I open my mind; they speak in unison:
"The wheel turns as the World."
I reply, "Who are you to say?"
"We are everything in all directions;
We go around just the same."

They went as they came, a spin of elements;
I wrap myself in laurel wreaths
and write lines between spaces
of time. When I die,
the Fool will reincarnate;
stroll down another path;
another odyssey;
the same Fool's soul.

Evaluation: *In her metacognitive response to her poetry, Melanie provides an analytical overview of the key features of her writing. Her evaluation highlights the importance of sound, imagery, and emotional weight in her poetry. Her prose is literate and fluid and proves that her skills in academic writing are as well-honed as her skills in creative writing.*

Extended Summer Break

Milica Kukic

Course: English 101 (Composition)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: Write an essay, drawing on personal experience, which reflects on a time when you were caught between forces much larger than yourself.

It was the middle of the March, and I remember having a talk with my friends about politics. We were 13 or 14 years old, and we did not know a lot about politics, but we knew how to interpret what our parents were talking about. Our country was already broken in pieces from previous wars. My friends and I heard on the news that some European countries supported Clinton's idea about bombing Serbia. At first, it was an exciting idea because we were only thinking about not having school in the time of war. The coming months changed my life, and they also changed the lives of all of Serbia.

Since I was born, my country has changed her name three times, and I am just 25 years old. Yugoslavia was a home for Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, Bosnians, Slovenians and many more nationalities, but these were dominant and large groups. All wars that happened over there, happened because each group of people wanted their own country, besides Serbs. If you look through my eyes, you would see that all Serbs ever wanted was just to keep their land and country in one unity, no matter what nationalities were living there. Through a long period of years, Albanian people had been crossing the border of Albania and Serbia illegally. That part of the land where they were crossing a border is called Kosovo, and it is holy Serbian land. My mom was born in Kosovo, and she lived over there until she got married and moved to the north of the country, but her whole family stayed in Kosovo. My sister was happy when she got accepted to the medical school at Pristina, which is the capital city of the province of Kosovo. She never could imagine that one day she would need to leave her friends, boyfriend, and her apartment with just her purse and never come back.

It was a Wednesday, on March 24, 1999. I came home

from school, and my mom told me that my sister heard some rumors about a crisis in Kosovo, and she was in a bus driving to our hometown, north of the country, where all of us should be safe if something happened. It was a long drive, so we expected her to be at home at nighttime. She did not have a direct line to our hometown, but to a town one hour away from our home. We could already feel a panic and fear among the people. It was hard to breathe because the air was filled with tension. At six o'clock, my dad went to his usual night shift at work. I did not think, and I did not believe, that something was going to happen, so I was surprised when my mom did not let me go out. My mom never learned to drive a car, and my dad was at work, so my mom called her friend to drive her to Novi Sad, where they were going to meet my sister. A little bit before 8, my best friend, who had satellite channels, called me and in an almost crying voice told me, "It started." First, I was in shock, and I did not comprehend what started, and what she was trying to say. Then she told me, "they bombed Pristina, I saw it on the news, and they are planning to bomb Novi Sad and Belgrade tonight." The situation was very clear; the NATO pact with the US had declared war on Serbia. However, my country was already devastated by a decade of imposed sanctions and was ineffective in protecting its people. At the same time, the US and NATO bombed innocent people throughout Serbia, and their ground troops were sent into the region of Kosovo. Even though some Serbian people never lived in Kosovo, they had to pay with their lives for political disagreements. Serbian soldiers on the ground were helpless against the raging airplanes. These were our invisible enemies.

Swarms of thoughts were passing into my head, and the word Novi Sad was pounding in my ears. I had an urge to find my brother, and I started to cry and scream at the same time, not being able to repeat what my friend had just told me. At that moment, we heard sirens, and that was a sign of warning for air attacks. I panicked, and I started crying even more. My brother and I were alone at home, and it felt like he was going to be the last person I would see before I died. I did not know then how long this siren was going to scream, but it felt like it was never going to stop. The sound was high-pitched, and I had a feeling my ears were burning. Scared for our lives, we

started running out, but the door was locked. My brother's fear was stronger than the plastic doorknob, so he broke it. When I think back, I realized that adrenalin and basic human instinct to survive were not blocked like our brains were blocked. We ran out, but then we realized that we did not have anywhere to go and hide because there is not one shelter in our whole town.

Meanwhile, my mom was on her way to Novi Sad. She and her friend were driving for 45 minutes before they approached Novi Sad's suburbs. Her friend did not know what was happening, and actually she was not aware of possible danger. As soon as they approached, they saw a long line of cars leaving Novi Sad. As a matter of fact, their tracks, which led to the city, were empty. Her friend started panicking and asking questions. At that moment they saw a cloud of flames and smoke, in the shape of a mushroom. Her friend wanted to turn her car and get away as far as possible, but my mom knew her child was going to be stuck between falling bombs in that case. My mom started telling some random stories, and she was trying to keep her friend's mind from the unexpected fires and detonations that were happening in front of their eyes. My mom said the fire was probably from the power plant, and that maybe they had some minor breakdown. The power plant was burning, but that fire and those flames were from the first bomb dropped on Novi Sad. They picked up my sister from the bus station, and they headed toward our hometown. They made it back safely, but somewhere on the road, my mom's friend started to feel numb and she could not talk anymore. They thought she was just scared and in shock. She drove them back, and as soon as she tried to exit the car, she passed out. She had had a stroke. Emergency technicians could not do much for her. As a result of the bombed power plant, we were without energy and water. The closest hospital was in Novi Sad, where they had come from, but the city was in flames from the falling bombs, and nobody wanted to go there. Help eventually arrived, but not soon enough. She had suffered a stroke. (She survived that attack, but died a few years later.) My brother and I were shaking in the dark of our hallway. I heard my sister's constant screaming and sobbing. I was relieved she was safe with us, but I knew her thoughts and her heart were still at Kosovo.

On the second day, I tried to go to school, but school was closed as we expected. I was walking on the almost empty streets, but still everything looked the same. Bombs were dropped on five locations, and the closest location to us was one hour away, so basically we continued with our lives. I was thinking how awesome it would be if our school did not start until September. That way, I would have an extended summer break of five months. I was still a child, who was just happy to be free of school and teachers. Now I see how silly I was, and now I see how that experience changed me. I was not scared anymore, my closest family was safe, and I was thinking, "no, this is not going to last that long, it was probably just one attack." At that moment I heard sirens, and again my heart started beating extra fast. I was alone, unprotected, on the street. I ran as fast as I could back to home, like that was a safe place to be. Nowhere was safe. That run seemed longer than any other run I had in my life. As I reached my home, my mom told me that those sirens were not warnings, and that they were actually a sign of no airplanes in the air. For a few days, I was confused with recognizing types of sirens. We had to continue with our usual lives. After some time, we started doing everything like nothing was happening. We could hear sirens sometimes just once, but usually a few times during the day. The night-time was the worst because that was when attacks were happening. Every night, I could hear airplane noise, and every night I would pray to God just to save my family. The airplane noise was unbearable, and I remember imagining them as coal-black birds able to spread a black deathly powder.

That summer, my friends were going to the swimming pool or to the river every day because our summer break had started. I was not that fortunate because I had to work all summer on my parents' farm. Most of the days, I had to pick fruit. Apricots were my least favorite because I had to pick them up from the grass. The war was going on, but I still had to work hard the whole summer because I was not in school. I learned then how peoples' lives are different. All of us lived in the same country, but some people were dying, some people were enjoying their break, and some people were working. My mom's family survived, but they moved to the north of Serbia, except for her uncle. He just disappeared one day, and we

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knew we were never going to see him again. My sister never went into her apartment again, and she actually was happy to lose just her belongings but to stay alive. A lot of people died, and even when the bombing stopped, the war was still going on.

Today, there is maybe just a 10% Serbian population in Kosovo. Even after 12 years, “accidents” are still happening every day. As I am writing this essay, Serbian people in Kosovo are living near the barricades that they formed, to stay united with Serbia. Two weeks ago, American and German soldiers fired on unarmed Serbs and emergency vehicles. Personally, I think Kosovo is not under the jurisdiction of Serbia any more, but Serbian people living there are not ready to accept that yet. One picture is stuck in my head, and that is a picture of a broken bridge on which there are two abandoned cars—one blue and one red—months after everything ended. I spent many summers playing under that particular bridge, and I spent six years after those attacks living right next to that bridge. They built a new bridge, but it was not the same. Something felt so odd and weird, or maybe it was a problem in me, that I was not able to see a shiny new bridge as something nice and good anymore. Probably every sane person would ask me why I came to the USA then, but the answer is simple: a normal and secure life in Serbia is a dream for every Serb. On the other hand, my coworkers think I am funny because I am scared of thunderstorms. They do not know that I spent a lot of nights trembling in my bed because of the sound of airplanes passing over my house. I learned that life is not fair, but I still cannot learn to accept the fact that something has been stolen from me. That stolen part of my land is going to stay forever in me, along with the people who died trying to protect my country.

Evaluation: *Milica speaks frankly and poignantly of how it was to be stuck in the middle of the Kosovo-Serbia conflict. This paper is a meaningful historical record of the effect of nationalism and other political and social forces on humanity.*

The Crown and the Crown Prince: Henry IV and Hal: Father and Son

Don Linder

Course: Literature 210 (Shakespeare)

Instructor: Josh Sunderbruch

Assignment: *Write a brief research paper engaging one or more of the plays read in class. Try to place the work into a broader context.*

“If I can’t help my sons then they can kiss my ass. I make no apologies to anyone. There are many men in this room whose fathers helped them, and they went on to become fine public officials. If a man can’t put his arms around his sons, then what kind of a world are we living in?”

—Richard J. Daley, Feb. 14, 1973
(qtd. in Cohen and Taylor 526)

You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me;
Then plain and right my possession must be,
Which I with more than with a common pain
‘Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.
(2H4 4.5.222-5)

With these words in the final reconciliation scene with his dying father, Prince Hal succinctly summarizes his father’s accomplishment and the important responsibilities of any good king. Win it – and become king by whatever means; wear it – in a way that the people and the country flourish; keep it – safe from internal and external attack; give it – in legacy to your heir to preserve the nation. This transition of the crown from father to son happened about two centuries before these plays were first presented.

At Richard’s deposition, the Bishop of Carlisle prophesied, “The blood of English shall manure the ground, / And future ages groan for this foul act” (R2 4.1.128-9), and Richard predicted that Northumberland would again become unsatisfied and rebel (R2 5.1.55-68).

Even through peaceful succession, replacing a king is an unsettling event for a country. The new king has different friends and confidants. He may pursue new policies that seriously impact the aristocracy as well as the common folk. Shakespeare heightens the tension of this moment in English history by portraying Prince Hal as a fun-loving pleasure-seeker who seems to be at odds with his father, King Henry IV. As a father, I am moved to look at the development of Hal through the eyes of King Henry, his own father, replaying the age-old drama of father and son relationships. What should a father expect from a son? What should a father do to help his son? What can a king do that is best for the country? These questions and others are addressed in the drama of King Henry and Prince Hal.

A character in dramas such as these may utter a few thousand words throughout the entire play. In Part 1, Hal has 525 lines of speech, with only 111 of these in the presence of his father. Others speak several lines about Hal, but the total information is a fraction of the typical two-hour production of a staged drama. How can we possibly “know” someone with so little information? Marshall Grossman indicates that we make a character into a person by the act of reading, adding much of ourselves to fill in the huge gaps in the exposition. A psychologist might say that we impress upon the character a set of qualities and beliefs that are within our own experiences and expectations. Our brains have a marvelous capability to see a sketchy picture and turn it into a fully detailed reality. Perhaps this comes from our primal need to recognize family versus “others”; perhaps from chasing game through a dense forest where the quarry is partially obscured by tree trunks. From a few thousand words read or spoken by an actor, we each imagine that we know that character as a person, yet each of us has our own similar but not identical set of experiences and expectations that round out and color the picture of the man. Looking at Hal through Henry’s eyes entails examining the text to see what Henry sees and hears, and what Henry and Hal say to each other. Usually we will see Henry as a king; at a few times, we will see Henry as a father.

Prince Hal’s behavior has been analyzed by numerous scholars looking for ways of understanding and explaining Shakespeare’s portrayal of the madcap Prince. People want to know how this fun-loving prankster

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could change, seemingly instantly, into a worthy king who unites the country and inspires his army to great victories. Opinions critical of Hal range from careless hedonism, to personal self-deception, to premeditated Machiavellianism. Others see the prince's underlying virtues temporarily cloaked by frivolous behavior. Elsa Sjoberg defends Hal's character with evidence that shows he has prepared himself to be ready when he is really needed; "being wanted" in the time of crisis are key words she takes from Hal's first act soliloquy.

George Chapman (1559-1634), a contemporary of Shakespeare's, highlights father-son expectations in these lines from his 1615 translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. Minerva (Athena) in the guise of Mentor speaks to Telemachus, who prays for guidance as he sets out to seek his long-wandering father Ulysses (Odysseus), king of Ithaca: "Thou wilt not ever weak and childish be, / If to thee be instill'd the faculty / Of mind and body that thy father grac'd" (Chapman Bk II 412-5). Minerva assures Telemachus that he will be successful if he has the qualities of his father. In apparent contradiction, she continues, "few, that rightly bred on both sides stand, / Are like their parents, many that are worse – / And most few better" (Chapman Bk II 423-5). This classically describes a parent's hopes and fears. A son should inherit his father's qualities, but few sons equal or exceed their fathers. Henry, like most fathers, hopes his son will be more successful than he has been, but according to Homer, the odds are against Hal even being his equal. *The History of King Henry IV* is not so much about Henry himself, but of the events during his reign and the growth and development of Prince Hal. When one is fresh from reading *Richard II* with the overthrow of Richard and the rise of Bolingbroke to becoming King Henry IV, there is a natural tendency to want to hear more about this new charismatic king. What one really finds in Part I is a story about Prince Hal and Henry Percy. As a king, Henry IV is no longer the man who became popular by winning favor with the Commons. He had hoped to lead a crusade to the Holy Land to atone for his sins against Richard and to distract England from civil wars, but opposition at home has been too persistent. The first we hear of Prince Hal is in *Richard II*, the first line of 5.3, when the new King Henry asks, "Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?"

The Elizabethan audience understood concern for the heir, as the Virgin Queen had for years delayed appointing her heir to avoid political intrigue (Sjoberg). (Twenty-first century England doesn't really know what useful role the monarch fills, but the recent marriage of Prince William and Kathryn Middleton has received worldwide attention. Elizabeth II has two generations of heir-with-a-spare in waiting, while the Archbishop of Canterbury prays for the heritage and gift of children to be bestowed upon the couple.)

Beyond just naming or producing an heir, Henry is concerned for a proper heir to assure the confidence and security of the nation. England has had her weak kings that couldn't keep order and lost territory, but my favorite example in early English literature tells of Danes and Geats in the story *Beowulf*. In the final lines of *Beowulf*, the aging hero succumbs to the poisonous wounds he received from the dragon that he and Wiglaf have killed. Beowulf led a heroic life, was fearless in the face of monsters, was selfless in support of Hygelac's sons, and he himself ruled fifty years as a strong and fair king of the Geats. Young people reading this story focus on Beowulf's heroics. A mature person might see Beowulf as a mentor to his cousins and a good king in his turn. One might criticize his feigned sleep while Grendel killed and ate one of his men or even his lack of prudence in fighting the dragon. If these were failings they did not compare to his failure to provide a strong successor. For the Geat nation, Beowulf's major failing was that he had no sons; nor did he adopt and mentor an heir. His land became soft under his protection and ripe for harvest by neighboring princes after his death. Wiglaf criticized his fellow Geats, saying, "Every one of you / with freeholds of land, our whole nation, / will be dispossessed, once princes from beyond / get tidings of how you turned and fled / and disgraced yourselves" (Heaney 2884-90).

Henry wants his son to be well respected so he can inherit the crown without controversy, but Hal carelessly mixes with low-class commoners. Henry advises Hal to withhold himself from public view so that he will seem more regal when the people occasionally get a glimpse of him. He envies Northumberland, praising the example of his son Hotspur, who is very successful in arms and battle, saying, "Whilst I by looking on the praise of him / See riot

and dishonor stain the brow / Of my young Harry” (*IH4* 1.1.83-5). Here, the author sets up a rivalry in Henry’s mind between Hal and Hotspur. Henry goes so far as to say he wishes they had been switched at birth.

Hal does the opposite of what his father recommends, spending his time in riotous living with old Sir John Falstaff, Poin, Peto, and Bardolph at Mistress Quickly’s tavern in Eastcheap. He is not an angry or rebellious teenager protesting the establishment. He just wants to have some fun while he has the opportunity: “If all the year were playing holidays, / To sport would be as tedious as work; / But when they seldom come, they wished for come” (*IH4* 1.2.182-4). Hal hides in plain sight by giving the nobles the false idea that he is harmless. He avoids intrigue and hostility toward the king, which often falls upon a crown prince (Sjoberg). He secretly plans to reform at some time in the future when his new persona will be more attractive in contrast to his current loose behavior. Until then, he says he will “...so offend to make offence a skill, / Redeeming time when men think least I will” (*IH4* 1.2.194-5). In this speech Hal reveals his plan to deceive all of England by playing a role, much as Iago reveals his devious plans in soliloquies and asides, and Richard, Duke of Gloucester does in his “winter of our discontent” speech. Of course, Hal isn’t revealing plans to foment murder as Iago and Richard do, just that he will masquerade as an under-achiever so as to manipulate public opinion. Even so, reports of Hal’s escapades cause Henry extreme stress and disappointment.

The first half of *I Henry IV* has scenes with Hotspur defying Henry and then plotting treason with Worcester, Glyndwr, and Mortimer. Hotspur is the model of a proud, high-spirited, upper-class warrior intent on securing honor and feudal justice. These scenes alternate with contrasting scenes of Hal and Falstaff drinking, robbing travelers, lying, and boasting. Shakespeare deliberately arranges these scenes to show us “bad” Hal and “good” Hotspur.

After the double robbery at Gadshill, Falstaff is relating his harrowing experience to Hal, when Hal plainly explains how he and Poin routed Falstaff and the others. To this, Falstaff replies, “By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye” (*IH4* 2.5.246). Sanchez Rodriguez interprets this line to mean that Falstaff knows Hal better

than his own father does, and that “I know the sort of people you and your father are” (Sanchez). We certainly see more of Falstaff and Hal together than of Hal and his father. Indeed, it isn’t until Act 3, scene 2 that Henry and Hal are on the stage at the same time.

Leading families for centuries assigned their sons and daughters to foster parents for training and education. Telemachus had Mentor; Shakespeare comically positions Hal and Falstaff similarly. Sir John seems to have great affection for Hal, but it is hard to consider him a mentor. Certainly, Henry would not choose a character like Falstaff to foster his son, and to consider him as such would add to the distress of the father. Yet, Hal and Falstaff rehearse a meeting between the king and the prince, wherein the main subject is the poor company Hal keeps, mainly Sir John. This is a comic opportunity for Falstaff to brag about his virtues and for Hal to criticize Falstaff’s faults.

HAL (as Henry IV). The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

FALSTAFF (as Hal). ‘Sblood, my lord, they are false. (*IH4* 2.5.403-4)

When Hal has a private meeting with his father, Henry says that Hal (“out of my blood”) must be God’s punishment for his past sins:

I know not whether God will have it so
For some displeasing service I have done,
That in his secret doom out of my blood
He’ll breed revengement and a scourge for me. . .
To punish my mistreadings. (*IH4* 3.2.4-11)

Henry recites a long list of disappointments and concerns about Hal’s behavior, comparing it to Richard’s manner of self-centered over-exposure to the public. He says Richard “Grew a companion to the common streets, / Enfeoffed himself to popularity, . . . And in that very line, Harry, standest thou” (*IH4* 3.2.69-85). Bolingbroke deposed Richard largely because of Richard’s extravagant behavior. To have his son appear to be like Richard is to refute Bolingbroke’s justification for the deposition. He is so wrought up by this encounter that he begins to weep. Henry, who has been stalwart and cool in battle and in

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politics, here as a father shows an aspect that we have not seen before.

As in the rehearsal, Hal suggests that some of what has been reported to Henry is false, but he apologizes for his lax behavior and promises to do better saying, "I shall hereafter, my thrice-gracious lord, / Be more myself" (*IH4* 3.2.92). Henry continues his criticism of Hal, praising Hotspur even as he is plotting rebellion. Hal assures his father that he will reform and gain honor and respect by defeating Hotspur and taking glory from him:

This in the name of God, I promise here,
The which if he be pleased I shall perform,
I do beseech your majesty may salve
The long-grown wounds of my intemperature. (*IH4*
3.2.153-6)

This exchange between the two seems quite sincere. One wonders if the two have ever before had such a heartfelt conversation. Henry, encouraged by Hal's commitment, appoints him to lead the troops saying, "A hundred thousand rebels die in this. / Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein" (*IH4* 3.2.161-1). At this moment, Henry hopes, but is not certain, that Hal will become a "good" son, fulfilling his duties like his brother John, already on the march with Westmoreland.

Act 4 is the preparation for armed confrontation. Rebel armies are supposed to gather at Shrewsbury. The superstitious Glyndwr can't make the rendezvous for reasons unspecified, but "overruled by prophecies," (*IH4* 4.4.18) is mentioned. Illness prevents Northumberland from bringing his forces. Thus, Hotspur has many fewer troops than he expected to have. Foreshadowing Henry V's band of brothers speech before the St. Crispin's Day battle, Hotspur excuses his father's absence by saying,

I rather of his absence make this use:
It lends a lustre, and more great opinion,
A larger dare to our enterprise,
Than if the Earl were here; for men must think
If we without his help can make a head
To push against a kingdom, with his help
We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down. (*IH4* 4.1.76-82)

This building up of Hotspur's reckless courage and imprudent determination makes him seem to be a more honorable and formidable, but not wiser foe.

In a parley with the King and with Hotspur's envoys, Hal praises Henry Percy's bravery, honor, and nobility while minimizing his own qualities, thus adding to the glory of his eventual victory by increasing the perceived strengths of the opponent. Hal offers to fight Hotspur one on one to settle the issue with less bloodshed. King Henry instead offers clemency and friendship to the rebels. His offer could be seen two ways: first, that he honestly wanted to save English blood, but also that he didn't want to risk his son in single combat with Hotspur. Unfortunately for English blood, Worcester and Vernon were the negotiators. Worcester didn't trust Henry actually to forgive him because of his history, so he and Vernon did not report the offer of clemency to Hotspur.

In the ensuing battle of Shrewsbury, "the" Douglas kills Blunt, Shirley, and Stafford, all disguised as Henry IV. Falstaff falls down and pretends to be dead, exercising discretion, "the better part of valour" (*IH4* 5.4.117-8). Finally Douglas meets the real Henry and has the upper hand, but Hal appears and repels Douglas, which greatly pleases Henry to have such support from his son: "Thou hast redeemed thy lost opinion, / And showed thou mak'st some tender of my life, / In this fair rescue thou hast brought me" (*IH4* 5.4.47-9). Then, Hal meets Hotspur, and they fight one to one with no witnesses except for the "dead" Falstaff. Hal leaves after killing Hotspur, covering his face out of respect. Falstaff arises, stabs the dead Hotspur in the leg, and claims that he has defeated him after both had revived from a swoon. Prince John thinks this is a very strange story, but Hal lets Falstaff get away with it. After his victory, Henry condemns Worcester and Vernon to be executed. Hal asks permission of the King to pardon Douglas because of his honorable conduct on the field of battle. Henry sees that Hal is becoming aware of the value of diplomacy.

Henry sends Prince John and Westmorland north to deal with Northumberland and Scrope, while he and Prince Hal go to Wales to fight Glyndwr and Mortimer. In *Richard II* (4.1.100), York reports that "plume-plucked" Richard has adopted Bolingbroke as heir, yet it is stated in *I Henry IV* (1.3.143-5) that Richard appointed Edmund

Mortimer, the Earl of March to be his heir. Mortimer descended from Lionel, Duke of Clarence who was Edward III's third son; John of Gaunt, Bolingbroke's father, was the fourth son. Ryan Joseph says that Shakespeare intentionally makes Mortimer weak and under the influence of Glyndwr to put forth the concept of being king by merit rather than by lineage. Thus the play shows Hal developing into the best person for the job versus Henry Percy or Edmund Mortimer.

The ending of Part 1 is controversial. If this is to be a coming-of-age journey for Hal, who regains his honor by the defeat of Hotspur, Falstaff illicitly taking the credit spoils it all. Perhaps this teaches Hal about the reliability of his low-life friends and explains the eventual banishment of Falstaff by Henry V. However, the audience knows the "truth," because we have witnessed it with our own eyes. So, for Shakespeare's purpose of showing the developing value of Prince Hal, it works just as well as if he were credited with the victory. Hal gets to continue his careless living for a while in Part 2. Like most parents, Henry has incomplete knowledge of his son's activities. He knows that Hal is alive and Hotspur is dead, but not his son's part. He has his private interview in scene 3.2, his rescue from Douglas by Hal at Shrewsbury, and a few nice speeches of Hal's to weigh against continuing doubts that his son will ever rise to the job of monarch.

Henry the Fourth, Part 2, like many of our modern movie sequels, is a weak echo of Part 1. Scenes of high intrigue are interspersed with scenes of Falstaff eating, drinking, and making deals for money. Although present in a few of these Falstaff scenes, Prince Hal seems more reserved, as if he were really thinking about his official duties under the mask of play. Again, a conflict arises between Henry and Hal, but it is invented by the author, being an issue of misunderstanding rather than behavior. The conflict is resolved again in a scene between just Henry and Hal. "Shakespeare contrives to make the scene serve as a reformation without really being one" (Schell).

Act 3 of Part 2 opens with a sick and troubled Henry suffering insomnia, and pleading for "O Sleep, O gentle Sleep" (2H4 3.1.5) to come to him as to the lowest in the kingdom. He concludes, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" (2H4 3.1.31) as Warwick bids him "good morrow" at one o'clock in the wee hours. We begin to see

here that the crown itself is punishing Henry, perhaps for being taken illegally from Richard.

Scene 5 of Act 4 is a very touching, almost too sweet, encounter between father and son. Hal finds his father finally asleep, breathing so quietly that Hal believes him to be dead. Hal criticizes the personified crown that has caused his father so many wakeful nights and has consumed his health. Hal puts on the crown and walks out of the room, vowing to keep the crown that has come to him from his father and to pass it on to his son. This leads to the need for a second "reformation" (Schell). Henry awakens, sees the crown missing, calls Hal back, and says,

Thou hast stol'n that which after some few hours
Were thine without offence; and at my death
Thou hast seal'd up my expectation.
Thy life did manifest thou lov'dst me not,
And thou wilt have me die assur'd of it. (2H4
4.5.102-106)

Even so near death, Henry has no peace; his doubts of Hal's qualities come surging to the surface again. He accuses Hal of not loving him. He predicts Henry V will reign over riot and disorder. Kneeling, Hal again begs forgiveness, swears his loyalty, and deeply expresses his sorrow at the thought of his father dying. Henry understands and then sees this incident as a God given opportunity "That thou mightst win the more thy father's love" (2H4 4.5.180). He then counsels Hal and advises him to keep the nobles busy with foreign quarrels so they forget the past.

Henry's reign has been beset by frequent challenges because he is a usurper. He hopes that Hal will have less opposition when he legitimately inherits the crown, as he states in this final scene with Hal:

By what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways
I met this crown; and I myself know well
How troublesome it sat upon my head.
To thee it shall descend with better quiet. (2H4 4.5.185-8)

Hal's last words to Henry beginning, "You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me" are Hal's confirmation to his

The Crown and the Crown Prince: Henry IV and Hal: Father and Son

father that he has been a successful king, and has done all that can be expected of a king. Hal deeply respects his father, but nowhere in either Part 1 or Part 2 can I find Hal telling his father that he loves him. The closest is in the scene where Hal thinks his father has died and he says, “Thy due from me/ Is tears and heavy sorrows of the blood,/ Which nature, love, and filial tenderness/ Shall, O dear father, pay thee plenteously” (2H4 4.5.37-40).

Henry has tried to overcome the civil strife rooted in his usurpation, but it seems that only by dying can he bring peace to England. Ironically, he must die for Hal to become king, so he will never know how well his son reigns. As we create the person from the character by the act of reading, so the character also has an impact upon us, making us more of a person through the same act of reading (Grossman). Seeing this relationship between Henry and his son teaches us all who read it something about the importance of our own relationships.

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Evaluation: *Donald did an exceptional job of digging into the play and understanding its historical and even political significance.*

John Searle

Hubert Marciniac

Course: Humanities 105
(Great Ideas of World Civilizations)

Instructor: Andrew Wilson

Assignment: Identify and synthesize the work of a contemporary great thinker or great contributor to the humanities who is active today in his or her field. Your main goal is to convince your reader that your subject merits the designation “great thinker” or “great contributor to the humanities.”

John Searle, born in 1932 in Denver, Colorado, is a recognized Professor of the Philosophy of Society, Mind, and Language at the University of California, Berkeley. He has published articles and books dealing with those topics, appeared on talk shows, and taught at Oxford University, where he was first a Rhodes Scholar, before returning the United States. Starting out at the University of Wisconsin, he was the secretary of “The Students Against Joseph McCarthy.” After settling into his teaching position at Berkeley, he became the first tenured employee to join the university’s “Free Speech Movement” – an unofficial, student-organized series of protests that stood against the university’s ban of students’ on-campus political activities and other academic freedoms. He has been awarded the Jean Nicod Prize in 2000 (awarded annually in Paris to philosophers of mind or cognitive science) and the National Humanities Medal in 2004 (a U.S. medal awarded for deepening the nation’s understanding of humanities). The weight of his published work, accomplishments, political action, and ongoing endeavors in the educational realm is more than enough to consider Searle a thinker. Still, the distinction must be made between a truly great thinker, and a fortunate individual who has been granted the privilege of higher education and the spare time in which to express intellectual commonalities in writing. In the field of philosophy, this distinction is not always clear.

Philosophy has been, and remains, an unceasing

dialogue that transcends generations, languages, and individuals. It is less difficult than one may imagine to trace an idea born in the modern Western World back to the observations of Plato and even further. Even if the ideas are in disagreement, it is likely that they will share a similar conceptual curiosity, structural orientation, or even linguistic expression. Rather than a science, philosophy has always been a forerunner to the sciences that branch from it sporadically as technical knowledge permits. From the Greek meaning “the love of wisdom,” philosophers seek to understand that which is unknown. Once a subject becomes measurable, quantifiable, and grasped by the intellect, it becomes a science. This does not mean that the questions in that field, for example psychology, are in anyway resolved and recorded for future reference. The modern scientist is left with questions paralleling the difficulties faced by philosophers, but the scientist has ascertained the appropriate tools or means with which to pursue the question. Thus, science may be called the love of knowledge. “The lovers of wisdom,” then, continue to ponder that which does not yet have the means toward an answer, besides bare human contemplation and the principles of logic. As long as history has flowed and as vastly as technologies have evolved, shadows in the intellect have lingered for which science has not yet discovered a functioning source of light. Therefore, the unceasing dialogue of philosophers continues in an effort to offer glimpses into those shadows and hint at methods by which knowledge of those depths can be acquired. It is his notable participation in the transcendent philosophical dialogue that separates John Searle from a well-versed intellectual and establishes his role as a great thinker.

Among the paralyzing topics of the philosophical dialogue is the discussion of the nature of our reality and, specifically, our relation to it as physical yet conscious beings. The dichotomy of the physical and the mental, commonly referred to as the mind-body problem or mind-brain problem, has been discussed since ancient times and became almost impenetrable during the scientific enlightenment when the intellectual world began a large shift toward objectivity and materialism as the fundamental approaches toward analyzing reality. With the continued exploration of atomic structure, chemical biology, and quantum physics, the world continues to be

reduced toward strictly physical relations, thus placing greater pressure on the question of the human condition. As Searle puts it, “[h]ow can a mechanical universe contain intentionalistic human beings – that is, human beings that can represent the world to themselves? How, in short, can an essentially meaningless world contain meanings?” (Searle 111). As science replaces spiritual beliefs, we are left with a gap between what our consciousness seems to be and a world that we are coming to understand as a collection of purely physical entities that interact causally.

The dialogue on this topic can scarcely be summarized by a work of multiple volumes, but some important inputs must be noted. In *The Republic*, Plato’s famous *Allegory of the Cave* describes the visible world as a base illusion at the bottom of the hierarchy of reality. In the allegory, he likens the objects we see around us to the shadows of puppets cast by a fire on a cave wall. The puppets themselves, if they could be seen, would still be but a representation of the objects outside the cave that inspired them. The objects outside the cave are analogous to ideas – eternal, unchanging concepts such as mathematics. Yet, even these “ideas” (or the “outside of the cave objects” within the allegory) rely upon the sun (the absolute) to make them visible. Accordingly, the basic physical existence we experience relies upon pure absolutes, which exist on a plain not easily accessed, in order to *be* at all. In the 17th century, Rene Descartes similarly proposed that the “true” nature of things is non-physical, with his well known example of the wax. He noted that upon applying heat to a ball of wax, it would melt and alter any observable, therefore physical, characteristics of the wax (the shape, smell, texture, etc). Yet, any onlooker would be inclined to call it wax both before and after the melting. He concludes then, that the essential property of the wax is nonphysical. Descartes also realizes that the only thing he can deduce for certain (until he proves the existence of God) is that he exists and is thinking. Therefore, he calls thinking the essence of the human being and declares thought to be nonphysical.

As the dialogue carried on, many began to question these nonphysical realities. Again, this skepticism increased along with scientific thought’s succession over the prevailing religious outlook on reality. A notable critique of the belief in higher realities came from the

Scottish philosopher David Hume, of the eighteenth century. Hume denied not only the higher level of realities that governed or spawned our visible reality, but even questioned the substantiality of the physical realm. He submitted that no real object exists, but only properties of objects. A tree is not really a tree but a phantasmagoria of greenness, brownness, thickness, branching, tallness, etc. Later, the German philosopher Kant of the late eighteenth century attempted to reconcile the opposing ideas of materialism and the duality of mind and body by asking the fundamental question that seemed to be ignored until then: instead of asking what we experience or what we can experience, Kant launched an inquiry into how experience is at all *possible* in the first place, allowing him to justify the existence of both the material and mental worlds and posit an explanation as to their interaction. Still, the dialogue had avoided a seemingly obvious question. Even in the present day, in which science has completely consumed certain individuals, this key question is largely ignored.

With advancements in the understanding of neurophysiology and physics, theories are developing that would strike a casual inquirer as apocalyptic. Paul Churchland, a contemporary of Searle currently teaching at the University of California in San Diego, is a proponent of “eliminative materialism,” which maintains that mental concepts, such as beliefs or feelings, are lacking in any real definition and will eventually be eliminated by a more objective understanding of neural interactions. Churchland likens beliefs and feelings to other “outdated” notions, such as magic. There are other variations of the purely materialistic view of reality, yet, as Searle points out, few have ventured a real guess at the question that should have been answered considering how sophisticated our speculations about reality have become. The question remains, what *is* consciousness?

As is obvious to even the superficial inquirer, a perilous consequence is bound to the mind-body discussion: the question of free will. As philosophy is a dialogue, both sides must be represented in order for the most organic progress to be made. Searle, while he may be viewed as more humanistic than Churchland, is still not the first choice of the romantic philosopher. Still, even the romantic, if he is a true lover of wisdom, will find

value in Searle's contribution to the dialogue and admire, even if in disagreement, his well thought out answer to that grueling question of just what consciousness is.

There seem to be two types of philosophers: the kind that find truth throughout the entire history of philosophy and in all philosophers, who build upon the ideas that have been passed down, amended, and expanded and, secondly, the kind that have been published. The latter may strike their audience as egotistical or even arrogant, but this is not the case. While Searle doesn't hesitate to refer to certain ideas that Descartes or Hume proposed as "mistakes," this does not necessitate that those thinkers do not have his respect as revolutionary during their time. For a healthy dialogue to take place, one must at times forgo excessive modesty (which then ceases to be a virtue) and attack those ideas that one feels are halting the dialogue. Searle is amused at philosophers' reluctance to address exactly what the mind, or consciousness, is. The discussion carries on about what it can do, how it relates to the physical body, whether it exists at all, and so on. But Searle finds the strict dichotomy of mind-body almost unnecessary, if not simply easily resolvable. In what may serve as terse summary of his view, he compares the mind-brain problem to a "stomach-digestion problem" (Searle 111).

Though they are spectacular thinkers, perhaps even greater than Searle when we consider the scientific knowledge at their disposal in their time, people like Descartes have not earned an eternal infallibility in the philosophical dialogue, and it is likely that no one will. Searle exposes the dichotomy that was brought about so long ago and crystallized by modern science:

Since Descartes, the mind body problem has taken the following form: how can we account for the relationships between two apparently completely different kinds of things? On the one hand, there are mental things, such as our thoughts and feelings; we think of them as subjective, conscious, and immaterial. On the other hand, there are physical things; we think of them as having mass, as extended in space, and as causally interacting with other physical things. Most attempted solutions to the mind-body problem wind up by denying the existence of, or in some way downgrading the status of, one or the other of these types of things. (Searle 111)

Here, Searle poses what may seem like an oversimplified and elementarily clever answer, but in reading his works one will discover that his solution was not realized without the intellectual labor such a difficult question requires. He believes that *the mental is physical*. The ostensibly unrelated ideas of consciousness and, say, a table, are not so distant. Using an analogy from "water," he explains that consciousness is a physical phenomenon like anything else. Just as one could not isolate a molecule of water and declare, "this is wet," one cannot isolate a neuron, or perhaps even a larger portion of the gray matter that is housed in the human skull, and declare, "this is conscious." Yet, the collective system of water molecules assumes qualities no individual molecule could. The water is "wet" and, another example, it is "liquid." By "liquid," we mean a higher-level state of physical existence that the individual molecule did not possess. Similarly, the vast system of neurons within the brain, collectively, assume a higher-level state that we call consciousness, but this does not mean that it ceases at any point to be physical. So although the table is far from achieving consciousness, it is composed, ultimately, of the same stuff.

Searle addresses in great detail each of the four features of mental phenomenon which he believes make his claim a difficult one to accept. Firstly, consciousness: the basic *awareness* that we experience almost constantly. Secondly, intentionality: the idea that consciousness is directed at something or that it always has a subject. Thirdly, subjectivity: meaning that one can only feel one's own mental states and they are not fully relatable to others. Finally, the idea of mental causation is perhaps the most threatening. Since we believe that our mental activity has a causal effect on our physical reality (e.g., if one decides to walk, one's feet will act; if one is sad, one's actions will be affected), we are left with the menacing notion that if our mental activity is merely physical, what we perceive to be conscious joy, struggle, suffering, and choice is only an illusion created by the mechanical track we find ourselves born onto. Here, our free will is threatened and, unfortunately for the romantic, Searle is not devastated by this notion.

Because of the language of these new concepts and our biases, these ideas sound cold and inhuman to us, but Searle is not one to trivialize the beauty of nature

and biological processes. Calling the brain mechanical or physical seems to reduce it to less than the poetic or noble context in which humans have often sought to locate their existence. However, this context has been under attack for almost as long as it has been sought, and Searle believes that the human machine can be as magnificent as the poets could hope for. In his famous thought experiment, known as the Chinese Room, he attacks the notion that the human intellect can someday be encapsulated by strong A.I. While some thinkers believe that the human brain can be reduced to the workings of a computer, Searle argues that that kind of “thinking” is that of a program and not an organic machine. In the Chinese Room experiment, a man is locked inside a room with no contact with the outside except for a paper thin slot. Through this slot he is given a sheet with Chinese writing that he does not understand but responds to using a text, supplying symbols corresponding to those he receives. This is the work of a program, because the man has given the world outside the illusion of organic communication without understanding either part of the exchange. It seeks to prove that while programs may become more and more sophisticated and appear to be thinking organically, they will not be functioning in the way a true biological being can. In this way, Searle defends our unique place in our reality and restores some of the beauty to organic life that may have been displaced by calling it merely physical.

Although free will is at risk when discussing Searle’s ideas, it should be remembered that he is but one participant in a dialogue with no end in sight. The theories he has proposed are worthy of long contemplation by all sides. They are innovative and therefore, even if incorrect (as Descartes may have been) have helped to advance the discussion by generating the urgent need for a substantive response. Most importantly, they bear a remarkable degree of knowledge and sincerity, which, in the pursuit of truth, are perhaps the most important tools we have available thus far.

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Evaluation: *This writer’s love of philosophy is apparent here, and so is his deeply engaged and curious mind.*

A Replacement for Heroin: Love in William S. Burroughs’ *Queer*

Laura Mulvey

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment: *What are the most interesting aspects of William S. Burroughs’ novel Queer, and why?*

It is difficult to imagine what kind of reaction William S. Burroughs’ autobiographical novel *Queer* would have had on the average person in the 1950s when it was written. Today, in the age of Charlie Sheen, when holing up with a passel of porn stars and a briefcase full of cocaine is all fun and games, until someone bites the two-million-dollar-a-week hand that feeds them, novels about homosexuality seem downright pedestrian. The homosexual lifestyle has gone mainstream. In an accidental, yet brilliant, nose-thumbing at right-wing conservatives, gay people have embraced traditional American values. Arguing over china patterns and, depending on their state of residence, who will stand up at their wedding or commitment ceremony, many gay people are just as conventional as your average heterosexual. After allowing for the different social perspective of the period, I thought after reading *Queer* I would come away with some idea of how difficult it must have been to be a gay man in the early 1950s. When I realized the story was set in Mexico City and other various locales in South America, I thought Burroughs’ protagonist, William Lee, and his love interest, Eugene Allerton, would suffer miserably at the hands of their native hosts. The Latin American culture, especially in the 1950s, was not known for its tolerance of homosexuality. However, Burroughs does not make any overt political statements about homosexuality. In 1952, writing a novel with a gay main character would be a political statement in and of itself, but that is no longer true today. While

Queer does address the difficulty of self-expression, as well as the loneliness and emotional pain of being gay in a straight world, this was secondary to the storyline. Lee and Allerton could have been straight, and it would not have substantially changed the narrative. *Queer* is about the effect of drug withdrawal on the addict’s emotional state, behavior, and intimate relationships.

Burroughs explains what withdrawal does to the addict’s mindset: “When the cover is removed, everything that has been held in check by junk spills out. The withdrawing addict is subject to the emotional excesses of a child or an adolescent, regardless of his actual age” (127). This “adolescent emotional excess” colors his entire relationship with Allerton. Early on in their relationship, Burroughs explains Allerton’s thought process in regard to his budding relationship with Lee. He writes, “It did not occur to him that Lee was queer, as he associated queerness with at least some degree of overt effeminacy. Allerton was intelligent and surprisingly perceptive for someone so self-centered . . . He decided finally that Lee valued him as an audience” (25). Had Lee not been emotionally damaged by heroin withdrawal, would he have even pursued a relationship with someone he viewed as self-centered, who thought he was only looking for an audience? Most emotionally stable adults would cut their losses at that point and move on to more promising opportunities.

Lee did not move on, and eventually, Allerton discovers Lee’s true intentions, and they enjoy a brief honeymoon period, which ends abruptly with Allerton trying to distance himself from Lee. In a desperate attempt to keep the relationship going, Lee tells Allerton that he is going to get Allerton’s camera out of hock for him, a gesture designed to make Allerton feel indebted to Lee, and hopefully, therefore, elicit warmer feelings from him. Allerton goes along with it and accepts the camera back, but it does not make him anymore affectionate, and he retreats even further from Lee. Lee is devastated by Allerton’s rejection. Burroughs writes, “Now Allerton had abruptly shut off contact, and Lee felt a physical pain, as though a part of himself tentatively stretched out toward another had been severed, and he was looking at the bleeding stump in shock and disbelief” (50). At this point, it is definitely time for Lee to let go of Allerton

and move on. But, like an addict, Lee has had a taste of what he truly wants from Allerton, and this only fuels his desire.

Lee tries to impress Allerton with more of the witty routines that managed to win him over initially. Lee tells a story, "Corn Hole Gus's Used-Slave Lot," about the purchasing of sex slaves, which betrays his desire to possess Allerton. Allerton, by this point, is indifferent and leaves before he can finish. Lee continues on with the monologue, still performing even though his "audience" has left the room, which is symbolic of their entire relationship. Undeterred by Allerton's cold response, Lee, in yet another cringe-inducing move, ups the ante and offers to pay Allerton's way on a trip to Ecuador he is taking in search of a hallucinogenic mind control drug called Yage, if Allerton will agree to sleep with him no less than twice a week. Allerton, Burroughs writes, "had a talent for ignoring people, but he was not competent at dislodging someone from a position already occupied" (20). Allerton agreed to go. Predictably, there are arguments about sex owed, or not owed, making it painful even to read.

Nevertheless, they troop through South America in search of the elusive Yage, which plays into Lee's desire to control Allerton. Lee fantasizes about the possibility of creating his own version of Allerton: "Think of it: thought control. Take apart anyone and rebuild to your taste. Anything about someone bugs you, you say 'Yage! I want that routine took clear out of his mind. I could think of a few changes I might make in you, doll . . . You'd be much *nicer* after a few alterations" (80). This is what Burroughs was talking about: the emotional regression of the recovering addict, like a child that has not yet realized his own insignificance in the world; he wants to control other people through sheer manipulation, or even mind-altering drugs, if necessary. He is unable to foresee, or is too damaged to care, that even if he gets his way in the short-term, he is only setting himself up for more pain down the road.

On the surface, it may seem like Lee's obsession with Allerton has little to do with his withdrawal from heroin. In reality, Lee's obsession with Allerton is a replacement for the heroin. It was Lee's way of blunting the self-loathing that comes with newfound sobriety.

Burroughs writes, "While the addict is indifferent to the impression he creates in others, during the withdrawal he may feel the compulsive need for an audience, and this clearly is what Lee seeks in Allerton; an audience, the acknowledgement of his performance, which of course is a mask, to cover a shocking disintegration" (129). So Lee *is* looking for an audience, not unlike a former smoker who overeats to ease the nicotine cravings. Lee is using Allerton to deflect attention away from his shattered self-image. Where heroin once distracted him from who he was, and his place in the world, he now needs Allerton to do the job. In his relationship with Allerton, Lee was still chasing the dragon. It was just a different dragon.

On April 15, 1997, shortly before Burroughs died, and nearly fifty years after he fictionalized his own struggle with heroin and unrequited love in *Queer*, Burroughs wrote in his journal, "Last night sex dream of Marker. Ran my hands down a lean young male body. Woke up feeling good" (*Last* 154). The character Eugene Allerton in the novel was based on Adelbert Lewis Marker. In the end, letting go of Marker, like heroin, was something he was never completely able to do.

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Evaluation: *I was really impressed with how Laura was able to clearly display Lee's "addiction" to Allerton as simply a substitute for his drug addiction, which was filling a void in his life.*

Different Visions of Apocalypse: Alfred Hitchcock's Re-Imagining of Daphne du Maurier's "The Birds"

Kimberly Pish

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *For the research paper assignment, students could compare du Maurier's short story "The Birds" with Hitchcock's film interpretation of it.*

The sky was hard and leaden, and the brown hills that had gleamed in the sun the day before looked dark and bare. The east wind, like a razor, stripped the trees, and the leaves, crackling and dry, shivered and scattered in the wind's blast. Nat stubbed the earth with his boot. It was frozen hard. He had never known a change so swift and sudden. Black winter had descended in a single night. (du Maurier 159.)

The passage above appears in Daphne du Maurier's short story "The Birds" after the main character and his family have experienced a night of terror due to an inexplicable attack on his house by wild birds. Defying the laws of nature, they came in the darkness, an army of tiny soldiers that normally would keep to their own kind and roost quietly at night. They came in through open windows and attacked Nat and his children, scratching and pecking at hands and eyes. Nat ultimately prevailed, but this was just one battle in the war to come. du Maurier wrote her story in post World War II England; this plays heavily into the psyche of her war veteran protagonist Nat. He has seen what a relentless campaign of attacks can do to an overconfident society: virtually destroy it. He alone is alert to the true threat the birds represent, and his warnings to everyone go unheeded. Arrogance toward nature will be humanity's undoing.

In the film adaptation of du Maurier's story, written by Evan Hunter and directed by Alfred Hitchcock, the

dominant theme is similar: nature has had it up to here with man, but the reason is dissimilar. The characters in Hitchcock's film differ from the short story. A war veteran and his family are under attack in du Maurier's story, while a badly behaved socialite and heiress attempting to seduce a handsome lawyer and confirmed bachelor are the protagonists in Hunter's. The young socialite, Melanie, aggressively pursues the lawyer Mitch to his family home in the small California coastal town of Bodega Bay, bringing a pair of lovebirds with her to present to Mitch's young sister Cathy for her birthday. She also apparently brings biblical wrath with her: it is as if God and nature have finally had enough of man's arrogant, self-centered, and amoral behavior. du Maurier's Nat is under siege; his and his family's survival are his priority. She paints a dark and suspenseful picture: as the bird attacks escalate and nightmares become reality, Nat becomes ever more resourceful, even trying to empathize with the birds to stay one step ahead of them. At the end of the story, she writes, "Nat listened to the sound of splintering wood, and wondered how many million years of memory were stored in those little brains, behind the stabbing beaks, the piercing eyes, now giving them this instinct to destroy mankind with all the deft precision of machines" (192). Hunter's imagery is less dark, and Hitchcock's direction deftly combines humor and sexual tension with the suspenseful bird attacks. Melanie is not the sympathetic character Nat is: she is cool and aloof and accustomed to getting her way. In both the short story and the film, the natural order of things is up-ended, and man must confront a new reality: he is no longer the predator, but instead the prey. Hitchcock adds a subtle twist: the Bible. Maybe it isn't just nature that has given up on man; maybe, after all, it's God himself.

du Maurier's characterization of Nat gives the reader a sense that he is calm and capable. Curt Guyette calls Nat, "...very much in tune with the rhythms of nature" (par.4) because he works part time on a farm. In fact, du Maurier has made nature a central character in the story, referring to "mellow, soft" autumn and "black winter." She also makes Nat's war experiences central to his persona and makes numerous metaphorical allusions to World War II and the Cold War of the 1950s. Curt Guyette notes:

Different Visions of Apocalypse: Alfred Hitchcock's Re-Imagining of Daphne du Maurier's "The Birds"

References to the "east wind" are frequent throughout the story. Ensuring that the significance of that is not lost on readers, du Maurier is even more explicit when referring to the source of this sudden cold. Mrs. Trigg, the wife of the farmer Nat works for, asks him specifically if he thinks the razor sharp wind is blowing in from Russia. Later in the story, after the birds have made their first attack, the farmer tells Nat, "They're saying in town the Russians have done it. The Russians have poisoned the birds." It is a stark example of the kind of cold war paranoia that was proliferating during the 1950s. (par. 6)

He adds, "From Nat's vantage point, the only weapon that might be of use is poison gas, which may kill the birds but would (like nuclear fallout) leave behind a world so 'contaminated that it would be uninhabitable'" (par. 8). Candace McDonald writes, "In addition to the boldness of the birds, it becomes apparent that some of the birds are selfless, attacking for the greater cause 'with no thought for themselves'" (par.3). These references clearly suggest World War II nuclear bombings and attacks by Japanese kamikaze pilots. Richard Kelly also likens the attacks to World War II when he writes, "Life within his (Nat's) small farmhouse takes on the character of Londoners during the air raids: the family huddles together, food is carefully accounted for, windows and other openings are sealed up, as they prepare for the invasion" (par. 5). Clearly, Nat is in post-traumatic survival mode.

du Maurier bestows intelligence on her birds; they are able to think and able to strategize. They attack the Trigg farm and kill the entire family but leave the sheep and cows unharmed. They also focus their furious attacks on the part of the human body most vital for survival: the eyes. Nat notes this during the first attack, and is terrified. "If only he could keep them from his eyes. Nothing else mattered," writes du Maurier (192). Nat believes they are intelligent; he is thinking, as a renewed attack begins, "The smaller birds were at the window now. He recognized the tap-tapping of their beaks, and the soft brush of their wings. The hawks ignored the windows. They concentrated their attack upon the doors" (192). Here, the leap to the belief that the birds are a coordinated

army is a short one. du Maurier's London radio announcer describes what the birds are causing as "dislocation in all areas," and Kelly states, "'Dislocation' is a key word in this story, for it identifies the fundamental disruption in the natural order of things. Man, who is ordained to have dominion over the birds and the beasts, suddenly has his authority threatened" (par. 4). Highlighting the ultimate irony, he writes, "The end result is that human beings are forced to act like animals themselves, with survival as their solitary goal" (par. 10). Nat and his family are caged in their cottage like captive birds.

In contrast to du Maurier's coldly calculating and premeditatedly murderous birds, Hitchcock's are sometimes comically mechanical and obviously simulated. Hitchcock chooses instead to focus on the human drama. The birds in the movie serve more as a counterpoint of unreality to the ugly realities of man's arrogance and amorality. Interestingly, while du Maurier chose a reliable family man for her main character, Hitchcock chooses a self-absorbed, spoiled female as his. Writes Gina Wisker, "The disempowering of Nat is an example of the grander, complete undermining of what we can take for granted as normal, rational and secure. It threatens patriarchy's hold upon sanity and order, and it threatens life as we know it" (par. 10). Melanie, on the other hand, appears at first in the movie as a powerful and independent woman, one in whose life men are playthings and not to be taken seriously. Presumably, Hunter and Hitchcock understood this would make their heroine difficult for the audience to identify with; this was, after all, the 1960s. We are introduced to her in a scene with Mitch, in which she attempts to take the role of the sexual aggressor. Mitch pays no attention, and she is infuriated. She tracks him down at his family home in a small coastal California town and appears unannounced with a gift of love birds for his younger sister Cathy. In his arrogance, he is amused by her actions and intrigued by her aloof demeanor and obvious beauty, and he is also aware of her reputation for bad behavior. It is here that the secondary characters of Lydia Brenner (Mitch's mother) and Annie Hayworth (town schoolteacher and Mitch's former lover) are introduced. Lydia's reaction to Melanie is clearly disapproval and reminiscent of Oedipus.

The two women immediately engage in a power

struggle for Mitch's attention. Wendy Perkins quotes Camille Paglia's analysis of the film, noting that Lydia and Melanie look "remarkably alike." Perkins also writes, "This description reflects the suggestion of an oedipal relationship between Mitch and his mother, who appears grasping and manipulative, and who appears obviously threatened by Melanie" (par. 5). In fact, as tensions between the two women increase, so do the bird attacks intensify. Annie Hayworth, on the other hand, has no power when it comes to Melanie. Her romance with Mitch is over, and she still cares so deeply for him she will do anything to keep him in her life, including befriending her latest sexual rival. Annie makes no secret of her intimate past with Mitch, nor her lingering feelings for him. Not surprisingly, Annie is the first and only woman killed in a bird attack in Bodega Bay. Biblically speaking, she is punished for her sins.

Hitchcock's life experiences included World Wars I and II and the Cold War, much like duMaurier. In critiquing *The Birds*, Dennis Perry writes that, "... Hitchcock's apocalyptic imagination was fueled by his moment in history" (par. 5). However, while du Maurier's metaphorical references to wartime fill the short story, Hitchcock appears to take a more Biblical approach. Perry continues, "While *The Birds* is Hitchcock's only explicitly apocalyptic film, Hitchcock agree(s) with Peter Bogdanovich that it is a "'vision of Judgement Day'..." (par. 3). In fact, Biblical metaphors are plentiful in Hunter's screenplay and Hitchcock's vision. Perry believes that, "...Melanie is identifiable allegorically as the whore of Babylon" (par. 18), with her playgirl lifestyle, fur coat, and expensive car. Her devolvement as a character can also be accredited to Biblical metaphor. A scene important to the establishment of Melanie's character is the Bodega Bay post office scene. Melanie is questioning the proprietor/postmaster about where she can find the Brenner house. She is cool and confident. He points out the house across the bay and she asks him about a back road. He replies the only way to get there other than the main road is by boat. He asks her if she has ever handled an outboard boat, and she replies "Of course." He orders a boat for her and she arrives at the dock, descends a ladder and guides the boat away from the dock with the boat rental man looking on with an expression somewhere

between wonder, awe, and amusement. Melanie appears self-confident and accomplished, able to do anything she sets out to do. As the bird attacks intensify, though, we see Melanie's character soften appreciably, becoming domestic and maternal. As the film unfolds, she is no longer the strong, self-confident woman who piloted the boat across the bay, but a victimized, traumatized, insecure archetypical female in need of male assistance and attention.

In a scene pivotal to the human drama and Biblical allegory that Hitchcock wants to create, an ensemble cast representing the residents of Bodega Bay is gathered at the Tides restaurant. There is a drunk at the bar who intones "It's the end of the world," and "Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places" (Hunter 96). The drunk continues, quoting Ezekiel, Chapter six and Isaiah, Chapter five. As the townspeople discuss the bird attack that Melanie has just witnessed at the school, Mrs. Bundy offers her opinion: "I hardly think either species would have the intelligence to launch a massed attack. Their brain pans aren't large enough for such..." and continues "Birds are not aggressive creatures, Miss. They bring beauty to the world. It is mankind, rather, who..." (95). Mrs. Bundy's initial arrogance regarding the birds' lack of intelligence is replaced by the human need to see birds as "...sweet, beautiful creatures. They serenade mankind with sweet songs and are a symbol of peace and love" (Kattelman par. 7). Mrs. Bundy's dialogue is able to cut to the heart of the terror: Kattelman explains that "When the known world goes awry, the impact can be shocking" (par. 8). Mrs. Bundy finally makes the statement that brings the tension in the room to its peak: "I have never known birds of different species to flock together. The very concept is unimaginable. Why, if that happened, we wouldn't have a chance. How could we possibly hope to fight them?" (Hunter 101).

Hitchcock employs one more character with a small but significant role to reinforce his biblical inference: the frightened mother of two small children having lunch at the diner. She is passing through and wants nothing more to do with Bodega Bay, but ends up trapped there when another attack begins. Melanie and Mitch return after he

Different Visions of Apocalypse: Alfred Hitchcock's Re-Imagining of Daphne du Maurier's "The Birds"

is forced to rescue her from a phone booth outside the diner. They find the patrons huddled in the back hallway. Dennis Perry describes the scene that, interestingly, is not in Hunter's screenplay:

While many citizens of Bodega Bay eye her with wonder, if not suspicion, the hysterical woman in the café virtually equates Melanie with wickedness: "Why are they doing this? Who are you? What are you? Where did you come from? I think you are the cause of all this. I think you're evil! EVIL!" (par. 20)

Later, literally adding injury to this insult, Melanie will have to endure a terrible attack when she investigates noises coming from a bedroom upstairs at Mitch's house. After this final attack, Melanie is broken. She is nearly catatonic with fear. Gone is the haughtiness and arrogance. She is torn and bloodied. Only then does Melanie earn the sympathy of Hitchcock's viewers and of Lydia. She, like humanity, has gotten her "come-uppance"; Dennis Perry suggests, "Perhaps we, like Lydia, are not reconciled to her until her purifying 'final ordeal' dismantles all artifice, makes her helpless and in need of care and love" (par. 21). Now, Melanie Daniels is no longer the strong, self-confident woman who piloted the boat across the bay, but a victimized, traumatized, insecure archetypical female in need of male assistance and attention. From a 2011 perspective, this type of character development is disempowerment rather than empowerment; from a 1960s perspective, Melanie became the docile and dependent non-threatening creature nature intended her to be.

du Maurier and Hitchcock chose to end their works differently, but with similar lack of closure. The short story closes with Nat sitting in his cottage while the birds renew their offensive; he smokes and listens to the fluttering of wings and tapping of beaks. Of du Maurier's ending, Beth Kattelman writes, "Adding to the horrific lingering effect of the story is the unresolved ending. Instead of providing a nice tidy conclusion to the story, she brings it to an abrupt halt and never provides a justification for why the events have occurred" (par. 14). du Maurier also chooses to keep her reader hanging regarding the question of Nat's survival. "Whether the Hocken family will prevail is something that's left to

doubt," writes Curt Guyette. He continues:

As "The Birds" draws to a close, the family is huddled inside their kitchen as if it were an air raid shelter, with food and firewood in short supply. The radio is silent, and they are shut off from the outside world as hordes of birds stab at the windows and claw at the roof with their talons. Indeed, the family's survival is very much in question. (par. 10)

Screenwriter Evan Hunter and director Alfred Hitchcock had differing visions for the end of the film. What was actually shot was a wide view of Mitch, Melanie, Lydia, Cathy and the love birds slowly driving away from the house with birds as far as the eye can see, calmly watching them go. However, Hunter had written one more climactic scene in which the survivors are forced to outrun one last attack before they escape. Hitchcock opted not to shoot this scene due to logistical difficulty. As written, Hunter's ending offers a more post-apocalyptic vision than Hitchcock's, but he admitted in a videotaped interview called "All about The Birds," added to the DVD version of the movie, "that ending would have taken a month to shoot. It would have been impossible, just impossible" (qtd. in *The Birds*, "About the Birds" n.p.). In an interview between film director Peter Bogdanovich and Hitchcock on the same DVD, Hitchcock revealed that he had also considered ending the film with a wide shot of the group approaching the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, finding it literally covered end to end with birds. Had this ending been employed, it again would have offered more closure, suggesting that the devastation was not local but in fact global, supporting the "Judgment Day" metaphor suggested by the scene in the Tides restaurant.

Thematically speaking, the short story and the film are parallel: Whether it is God or Mother Nature does not matter, they are not amused. The intended lesson will be a harsh one. But while the mood of the short story is dark and ominous, with foreshadowing of the "black" events to come in the opening passage, the film effectively entertains and terrorizes by comingling humor and sexual tension with human drama and apocalyptic imagery. The fact that there is no tidy Hollywood "happy ending" is not an accident; du Maurier's and Hitchcock's messages

are the same: man has gone too far and will suffer the consequences of his actions.

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Evaluation: *This comparison and discussion of these two related but dissimilar works simply excels. A reader of this paper gains a full sense of the short story and film, not only through Kimberly's own perceptive insights, but through her careful use of research materials in elucidating the ideas of both works.*

Syria under al-Assad Hitting Rock Bottom

Raluca Procopiuc

Course: English 101 (Composition)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: After completing a group research project, each group member was to write a separate argument about some aspect of the project, defending a claim of truth, value, or policy.

Since assuming the presidency of Syria following his father's death, Bashar al-Assad has led Syria on the path of further economic underperformance, political oppression, and human rights crisis. In the context of the early 2011 popular uprisings across countries in the Middle East and North Africa that encouraged similar manifestations in Syria, President al-Assad's regime has come under intense scrutiny for cracking down on the Syrian population, who in mid-March started voicing discontent on the downspiral state of affairs in the country. The issues of his influence in the region and his domestic policies indicate that the Syrian president has done very little to nothing to reform the national structures, ensure constitutional rights are being promoted, and improve the country's regional standing. Letting go of power is not only necessary for the future well-being of the country but is also imminent as more world powers close in with stricter sanctions, as a response to al-Assad's unjustifiable hold on power.

Hopes were high in 2000, upon Bashar al-Assad's taking over of the presidency. People were optimistic that the young Bashar, the Western-educated son of late Hafez al-Assad, would build towards a more open and prosperous Syria, but soon after witnessed a mere perpetuation of Hafez' ways. Corruption and the state debt were the first items on the agenda requiring Bashar's immediate attention. However, his efforts seemed rather superficial, with no in-depth effect. According to Anna Borshchevskaya's article "Sponsored Corruption and Neglected Reform In Syria," "whatever reduction in corruption occurred at lower levels of government, it was more than offset by increases at higher levels." Furthermore, al-Assad relatives have been associated with acts of corruption. His maternal cousin, Rami Makhluf,

achieved a monopoly over Syrian telecommunications, and when former Member of Parliament Riad Seif insisted on an investigation of the licensing process, and published a report documenting the corruption involved, he landed in prison for five years. Seif continued, after his release in 2006, to make a case of how the telecommunication companies SyriaTel and Ariba, with the support of the government, charged exorbitant prices, higher even than the U.S. ones, generating major revenues and paying little tax (Borshchevskaya 45). According to Mona Yacoubian's "Dealing with Damascus" report, Riad Seif was imprisoned again in 2008.

The banking sector, as well, has seen little change over al-Assad's approximately eleven-year tenure. Of the thirteen private banks in the country, six are state owned, and dominate, leaving little room for the other banks to grow. Among dominating banks are the Central Bank of Syria, the Agricultural Bank, and the Real Estate Bank. Borshchevskaya quotes a banker under anonymity, saying, "Unless you're linked to the regime, you have no power." This suggests that power and wealth have been concentrated within the regime at the helm of the country, and more specifically the Assad family and relatives, as in the case of Rami Makhluf.

Further evidence portrays the precarious state of the Syrian population. Poverty is widespread in Syria, according to the International Monetary Fund. Figures show that in 2005, more than five million people lived in poverty, while another approximately two million were in extreme poverty. The gross domestic income per capita was \$2,579 in 2009, compared with Lebanon's \$8,707, or even war-recovering Iraq of \$3,900. Little if any real growth or improvement in living conditions is shown, thus revealing that holding onto power, not economic reform, is really the primary interest of the Assad regime. With this goal in mind, Bashar al-Assad has carried through his political agenda in both domestic and regional territories.

Analysts argue that the Syrian involvement with regional politics is a tactic used by Assad to divert attention from its increasing domestic turmoil. Erik Mohns and Francesco Cavatorta in their "Yes, He Can: A Reappraisal Of Syrian Foreign Policy Under Bashar al-Assad" propose that Syria's role in the region is rather one of balancing of powers, and resistance to "externally driven political restructuring of the Middle East" (290). With the U.S. occupation of Iraq, Syrian - U.S. relations became more distant due to Syria's perception of the engagement as a

threat to their own interests in Iraq. According to Mohns and Cavatorta, the presence of the U.S. troops on Iraqi soil made further noise about a possible similar fate for Syria. Also forced by domestic and international pressure to end its occupation of Lebanon, Syria reacted by supplying support to militant groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Palestinian Hamas in the Gaza strip. These actions put Syria on the U.S. State Department's list of the five countries to be regarded as State Sponsors of Terrorism, since countries such as Canada, the Netherlands, Australia, and the United Kingdom, to name just a few, classified these groups as terrorist organizations. This shows that the Syrian regime has been rather seeking to obtain recognition or acknowledgement of its importance as a factor of control or influence in the region through different partnerships. With newfound confidence, Assad continued with his repressive policies in Syria, causing popular tension to mount and gain momentum in 2011, drawing from the other countries in the MENA region that had partaken in the Arab Spring.

The Syrian population has been severely deprived of fundamental liberties for decades. Hafez al-Assad enacted an emergency law, in effect since 1963, meant to address the unstable politics of the country following his military coup; it was justified to the population as a constitutional protection measure during the state of war with Israel. The law, "suspended basic constitutional rights such as freedom of speech and assembly. Article 8 of Syria's constitution, developed by the Assad regime, assigned all government posts to Baath Party members" (Borshchevskaya 42). The president would hold executive power and would be able to dissolve the People's Assembly, assume legislative authority, and call national referenda (Carnegie 4). There is no legal opposition party currently in Syria. Riad Seif, former Member of Parliament, provides details,

More often than not, the discussions were prefabricated by the speaker as if we were in a theatre rehearsing a play with a crew of talented speech makers....If any of the new members...insisted on going against the flow, he would be brought back to the "correct" path either through incentives if available or through terrorization and punishments if necessary. (qtd. in Borshchevskaya 41)

The ongoing unrest in Syria has claimed the lives of thousands of Syrians who either died through torture or being shot. Human Rights Watch identifies the city

of Homs to be most representative of police brutality. The organization documented incidents of violent police attacks on peaceful protesters, such as the testimony of a woman and her 3 year-old son in a Homs neighborhood.

We went out in a peaceful protest with the whole family about 10:30 or 11 p.m. It was calm, so everything seemed ok. Then two cars showed up suddenly and opened fire, targeting people even as they were ducking and lying on the ground. They were white Kia Cerato cars with tinted windows, like those used by Air Force intelligence. The guns were machine guns. My husband leaned over our son to protect him, but the bullet entered our boy's stomach. The doctors were able to remove the bullet, but it left a lot of damage. (qtd. in "Syria: Crimes..." par.6)

It is obvious that Bashar al-Assad's main concern is holding on to power and not the well-being of Syria. His repressive internal mechanisms, as well as his regional involvement, reflect intent to perpetuate the regime through the intricacies of alliances or through violent internal campaigns against the very people he is supposed to protect. Bashar al-Assad is truly following in his father's footsteps and for that reason, it is imperative that he is either removed or he steps down to allow much-needed reforms.

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Evaluation: *This essay is short but effective, using research well to educate readers about the political situation in Syria and to argue for the value of a proposed solution to the problems.*

Fumbling Body of Ineptitude: The Beginnings of the FBI

Mike Russo

Course: Literature 112 (Literature and Film)

Instructor: Kurt Hemmer

Assignment: *Set up an argument for the most significant difference between Michael Mann's 2009 film Public Enemies and the book Public Enemies, by Bryan Burrough, on which the film was based.*

The early 1930s was a time in America where to be rich was to be hated, and to be starving poor was as common as a cold. The worst of the worst economically had hit the country. To say this was a breeding ground for institutional resentment and anarchic activities would be a large understatement. It should come as little surprise, then, that some individuals, young men with previous law records, would remove all regard for law and order and start robbing the institutions that had failed the people—banks. It should also surprise no one that in this anti-establishment era of our country's history, these outlaws had a great deal of support from the people. As Bryan Burrough points out in his historical account of the most well-known outlaw gangs of the time, *Public Enemies*, one of them so well loved by the public that he was able to remain within the country's collective memory over seventy-five years after his death. That man was John Dillinger. While Burrough's information came from concrete sources, like eye-witness accounts, the finally declassified FBI files, and newspaper articles, Michael Mann's 2009 film *Public Enemies*, based on Burrough's book, is largely fictional. The most significant events from Burrough's book not depicted truthfully in Mann's film are the portrayal of Melvin Purvis, who was the Bureau's Special Agent in Charge (SAC) of Chicago, and the Bureau of Investigation in general, because this alters the audience's perception of just how effective Purvis and the FBI really were.

The Bureau of Investigation, as it would be known until 1935, when the "Federal" was added to the name, was largely a "nest of nepotism and corruption....Its agents...

were hired mostly as favors to politicians...the Bureau acquired the nickname "The Department of Easy Virtue" (Burrough 10). It was only after Hoover became interim department head in March 1933 that he would eventually lead the Bureau to look like it does now, but, in doing so, Hoover made some tragic mistakes. He only hired intelligent, clean-cut, young, white men with law degrees. Burrough writes, "In [the] Bureau, appearance, loyalty, and hard work were prized above law-enforcement experience" (12). This is where the film and the book differ quite clearly. In Mann's film, the FBI is mostly men who seem to know what they are doing, have lots of powerful weaponry, and carry their arms everywhere. In truth, throughout most of Hoover's "War on Crime," the Bureau's agents could not carry arms or make any arrests without local law enforcement present. The film gives a brief glimpse into how clueless the Bureau's agents really were, but by the end of the film, they are armed, trained, and ready to kill. In truth, it would not be until long after Dillinger was dead and buried that the men of the FBI would have experience enough to be adequate field operatives. The force that Hoover imagined and built of young men identical to himself was a nice idea, and the film tried to capitalize on this idea, but the real infant FBI was a clown car of calamities when it came to solving crime. Burrough mentions in his book how often safe houses and family farms would go unwatched, or a potential link to the outlaws, like a girlfriend, would go unmonitored: "In Late 1933, the FBI was still...a shadow of the professional crime-fighting organization it was to become....Hoover's college boys were long on energy, but short on experience...suspects...were found, then lost; tantalizing leads went ignored in file cabinets; most of the men were still learning how to use a pistol" (Burrough 147). This would not change for some time to come.

In Mann's *Public Enemies*, Purvis is introduced as a crack shot, an athlete, and a true man who was willing to get his hands dirty while enforcing law. The real Purvis was nothing of the kind. The scene where Purvis visits Dillinger in the Arizona jail cell, just before Dillinger's air transfer to Indiana, would be the truest representation of Purvis the film offers. And this encounter did not actually happen. Purvis is dressed in the sharpest suit money could likely buy, with a sharp white top hat, creased silver pants, and classic 1930s white bowler shoes. In truth, the detail

of Purvis' clothing marks the only veracity of that scene; Purvis never visited Dillinger in Arizona, and the FBI had nothing to do with Dillinger's crew being captured there. The Dillinger Gang was caught by lawmen who were actually competent at their profession—the Tucson Police Force. Burrough recounts in his book many examples of Purvis' and the Bureau's ineptitude: "In retrospect, Melvin Purvis's Chicago office was worse than most.... So far that year..Purvis and his men had solved their first two kidnappings...and in both it would turn out they had arrested innocent men" (Burrough 147). The movie, however, revolves around Dillinger and Purvis, as if they had been two dueling gunslingers, each one trying to read the other's face for a move, matched as equals in skill. In truth, Purvis was an incompetent lawman and marksman—and had no idea how to run an investigation. Further, not only was Purvis not a law enforcer, he was also completely inept at just about everything he tried to do while SAC of Chicago. According to Burrough, he would "forget" to follow leads, and throughout most of Dillinger's criminal career, Purvis failed to wiretap or place sufficient watch on Dillinger's father's farm.

The times where the Bureau under Purvis botched operations, which was often, are too numerous to mention in entirety, but the most notable one that is not portrayed truthfully in the 2009 film is the shootout scene in Manitowish, Wisconsin. The location was a now famous inn, known as Little Bohemia. Not the last, but possibly the most obvious example of the FBI's inability to carry out successful operations was the debacle at Little Bohemia. In Mann's film, the Little Bohemia shootout, except for the innocent federal worker killed by accident, was extremely inaccurate. No dying Dillinger gang member gave up the location, as happens in the film. According to Burrough, the FBI was informed through a telephone call by a relative of the wife of the man who owned the inn (304-05). The rest is mostly true, until the shooting scene. The lawmen did not kill any of the gang members. Tommy Carroll, Baby Face Nelson, Dillinger, and the rest, though not their women, escaped safely, and after the gun smoke settled, it was the most pathetic showing of the Bureau's lack of skills. Burrough writes:

Dogs began barking....This was the worst way the raid could begin....They 'had been unable to make plans because of the lack of time'....Worse...there

was a considerable confusion who was in charge... no one had thought to arrange roadblocks. The local sheriff had no idea the FBI was even in his jurisdiction...someone...a civilian, had been killed [by the FBI]....For the first time the enormity of the debacle hit Purvis...running the events of the night through his mind, as he would...for the rest of his life....Two men [one agent, one civilian] were dead, and Dillinger was gone. (308-22)

Burrough's account of Little Bohemia is long and is probably one of the only accurate accounts of just how awful Purvis and the FBI were at conducting a delicate operation. In fact, after Little Bohemia, Purvis was all but officially stripped of any important duties.

In hindsight, the government needed the robbers much more than the robbers needed the money they stole. Dillinger was just one man, disillusioned by authority, just like many other Americans; the big difference was Dillinger acted on his feelings. Once the outlaws were accounted for, the American people would accept the New Deal, and the country would eventually recover from the Depression. Unfortunately, the truth is that Hoover and Purvis had no idea how to do what they set out to do, and they got their outlaws mostly by luck. But like any other young creation, the FBI was bound to have growing pains, and it needed training to become a true police force. It is just a shame that so many innocent people were forced to pay the ultimate price for the Bureau's mistakes, which the Bureau has never truly answered for.

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Evaluation: *I was truly impressed with how Mike focused on Burrough's examination of the initial struggles the FBI had in its infancy and how he explored Michael Mann's transformation of these struggles into a fictional film of the FBI's strengths.*

Annotated Bibliography for a Research Paper on the Work of Tim O'Brien

Ben Sandholm

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Aaron Almanza

Assignment: *Students were to prepare a formal bibliography of at least nine entries for their research paper topics. Four of the entries were to be annotated with descriptive evaluations and analytic summaries of the claims of the author, as well as evaluations of the source's usefulness for the student's understanding of the subject and the writing of the paper.*

Heberle, Mark A. *A Trauma Artist: Tim O'Brien and the Fiction of Vietnam*. Iowa City: University of Iowa, 2001. Print.

Karon, Tony. "Vietnam: Lessons Learned, Lessons Lost." *Breaking News, Analysis, Politics, Blogs, News Photos, Video, Tech Reviews*. *TIME.com*. *TIME Magazine*, 26 Apr. 2000. Web. 13 Apr. 2011.

The article "Vietnam: Lessons Learned, Lessons Lost" was an article in the form of an interview with a former *Time* U.N. correspondent William Dowell. He was a former infantryman in the United States Army at the time of the Vietnam War. He speaks from his expert standpoint about the United States' role in the Vietnam War and if it was necessary that we were to get involved. Dowell states that the Vietnam War was unwinnable from the beginning because of many circumstances including an extremely difficult terrain to cover and the die-hard attitudes of the North Vietnamese soldiers that made it impossible to win. Dowell asserts that it was also a no-win situation because if we'd won it militarily we'd have lost it politically. He continues on about how the war did not strategically set back the United States and that it did not hinder us as a world superpower.

The article was originally published in the year 2000 in *Time* magazine. The person being interviewed was a former United States Infantryman in the Army during the Vietnam War and was also a radio journalist for four-and-a-half years during the war when he was not serving in the Army. William Dowell also has served as a correspondent for Vietnam with *Time* magazine for over 20 years. These facts attest to the credibility of the article and can allow it to be taken seriously. He does not offer any sort of political bias toward the Vietnam War or any sort of radical thinking that could tarnish the credibility. He knows his information, politics, and history of the time.

After reading the article, I believe that there is some information that I could utilize for my research project. Dowell offers many unbiased historical facts and opinions that could be used to help my paper. Although the article was published 11 years ago, almost all of the points Dowell makes are still applicable today and could be used to help my research paper.

Kovic, Ron. *Born on the Fourth of July.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976. Print.

May, Ernest R. "How Will History View the War?" *St. Petersburg Times* 26 Jan. 1973, sec. 186: 21. Print.

Mouer, Dan. "What Is a Vietnam Veteran?" *Vietnam Veterans Home Page.* 1996. Web. 8 Apr. 2011.

O'Brien, Tim. "The Things They Carried." *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama and Writing.* Ed. X.J. Kennedy, Dana Gioia. New York: Longman, 2010. 595 – 607. Print.

Price, Jennifer L. "Findings from the National Vietnam Veterans' Readjustment Study – National Center for PTSD." *National Center for PTSD Home.* U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, 1 Jan. 2007. Web. 8 Apr. 2011.

PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Dir. Paul Young. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Princeton, NJ, 2006. Harper Online Library. Harper College Library. Web. 8 Apr. 2011.

The video entitled *PTSD* is a 25-minute informational video about the psychological disorder known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The video includes insights from medical professionals and people who are afflicted with the disorder and how it has affected them throughout their lives. It is stated by the narrator, Dr. Kevin Soden, that PTSD has been around since there have been wars and other traumatic experiences but has been known by other names. After World War I, it was referred to as "shell shock." After World War II, it was known as "combat fatigue," and after the Civil War, it was called "soldier's heart." The individual with the disorder who is interviewed for the video is former United States Marine David Powell, who served during the Vietnam War in 1967 to 1970. He provides numerous first-hand accounts of how PTSD has negatively affected his life and how it took him many years of struggling before he obtained professional help.

The video appears to be an extremely credible source of information. The contributors for the video all come from either medical professionals such as doctors and psychologists like Dr. Glenn Schiraldi of the University

of Maryland and Terry Luper of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, or the information comes from first-hand accounts of PTSD such as David Powell, who has been diagnosed with the disorder. Dr. Kevin Soden provides expert narration throughout the video, which also helps to establish the credibility of the video. In all, the video runs roughly 25 minutes.

The video was extremely informative and provided details that are pertinent to the part of my research project that focuses on the aspects of what soldiers emotionally carried with them before and after the Vietnam War. Not only will I be using the information presented in the video for my paper, I will also use a short clip of the video for my presentation.

Schroeder, Eric James. *Vietnam, We've All Been There: Interviews with American Writers.* Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1992. 125-143. Print.

Sitikoff, Harvard. "The Postwar Impact of Vietnam." *Department of English, College of LAS, University of Illinois.* University of Illinois, 1999. Web. 14 Apr. 2011.

The article written by Harvard Sitikoff discusses the postwar impact that Vietnam had on America. Sitikoff states that by the 1980s, Vietnam had become a staple in popular culture and that scholars, journalists, and Vietnam veterans themselves started to produce writings and literature about their experiences while serving. He says that most of the literature is negative about the War, and that it has deeper lessons about foreign policies and American attitudes within the texts. He says that the U.S. paid a high political cost and that the mishandling of the Vietnam War weakened public faith in the government. Sitikoff goes on to explain that something else was happening that had never happened before during other wars: the shunning and terrible treatment of the 2 million returning Vietnam veterans. He goes on to say that more veterans committed suicide after the war than the amount of soldiers who actually died while fighting in the war. Sitikoff goes on to explain that nearly 750,000 veterans have become what is known as "the lost army of the homeless," which is a term used to describe homeless and jobless Vietnam veterans throughout the United States.

Annotated Bibliography for a Research Paper on the Work of Tim O'Brien

The article is a very well-written essay that was published by the English Department of the University of Illinois. The article is one of many that is on a website that is dedicated to different Vietnam War-era essays and articles. The article and author are credible because they were put on a major university's website as part of an online Vietnam War essay collection. The author's credibility is good because he provides reliable statistics. He does assert his opinion in a somewhat biased fashion, but if you can look past it, it provides some good information.

This article will provide me with a fair amount of information about the social and political ramifications that the Vietnam War had on the American public, which is another key point in my research project. Some of the essay is opinionated but when I look past the opinions and look at the facts I can find some good resources to include in my project.

Smith, Lorrie N. "The Things Men Do : The Gendered Subtext in Tim O'Brien's *Esquire* Stories." 1994. *Short Story Criticism: Criticism of the Works of Short Fiction Writers*. Vol. 74. Detroit: Gale, 2005. 236-48. Print.

The article "The Things Men Do: The Gendered Subtext in Tim O'Brien's *Esquire* Stories" is an essay that is critical of the collection of short stories titled *The Things They Carried*. The author, Lorrie N. Smith, is critical of O'Brien by claiming that his stories are gender biased against females and that he objectifies, excludes, and silences females from his stories therefore leaving them out of the picture of the Vietnam War. She also claims that he is trying to rewrite the Vietnam War in a masculine perspective. While she does claim that these themes are apparent, she notes that she believes that Tim O'Brien included them without the intentions of being sexist and objectifying the female gender.

The article is a very well-written essay about the unintentional sexism that is present in Tim O'Brien's short stories in *The Things They Carried*. The article was found in an anthology of short story criticisms that is located in the reference section of the Harper Library. After looking through some of the surrounding pages in the anthology, it became clear to me that there is a large

discussion going on about the unintentional sexism found in the short stories.

While the article was well written and very informative about a topic that I was unaware of, it doesn't seem to be useful for developing my research project. The topic she discusses does not in any way mention the emotional turmoil and the post-traumatic stress disorder that many Vietnam veterans experienced, which is the main topic of my project. The source itself was very credible but would have worked if my paper was more focused on a literary criticism.

Evaluation: *Ben did an excellent job of pulling from a variety of sources for this portion of his research project. His annotations were thorough, and he clearly covered all three elements to an annotation—summary, evaluation, and usefulness—the way they should be in this type of bibliography.*

Fool Me Once

Kelly Schloss

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Barbara Butler

Assignment: *Write a literary research paper.*

“If I could free my hands,” [Peyton Farquhar] thought, “I might throw off the noose and spring into the stream... and get away home” (Bierce 487). These are some of the final coherent thoughts that cross Peyton Farquhar’s mind before he is hung by Federal soldiers on Owl Creek Bridge. Later in the story, Farquhar fantasizes his escape from his untimely death, in very vivid detail. These thoughts, sadly, are only fantasies and dreams. Within this story, however, it seems that Farquhar is not the only one entertaining what later seem to be preposterous delusions. Readers, too, want to believe in the unbelievable right up until the end of the story and Farquhar’s life. In his short story “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,” Ambrose Bierce suggests to his readers that having a romantic and dreamy outlook on life, along with believing in what you are told without question, is frivolous and naïve and should be avoided.

Through themes of self-deception and time, Bierce informs readers, toward the end of “Owl Creek Bridge,” of Farquhar’s naïve and unrealistic perception of his deadly situation. These themes, however, blatantly show readers their own ignorance, too. They also make readers confront their aversion to the dark truth of what they are reading and that what they perceive to be true is nothing more than a dream. Considering the tight noose around his neck and the soldiers at every turn, Peyton Farquhar, the main character in “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,” should have realized and accepted that death was imminent. Instead, he clung to dreams of escape until death (Ziff 95). Farquhar, in the last few seconds of his life, was able to deceive himself about his death and believe that he made it to safety and home (Bierce 491). For his own peace of mind, he deceived himself until his last moment of life. This is quite understandable for Farquhar’s circumstances; however, readers are just as, if not more, self-deceptive in their own perceptions of what they are interpreting. Bierce uses numerous subtle hints as clues to the reader that what Farquhar is seeing, thinking, and experiencing are all in his head and not real at all. Some examples include when Farquhar is shot while swimming away and he “snatches out” the bullet from his shoulder while “swimming vigorously with the current” (Bierce 489-90). These inhuman abilities are farfetched enough that readers should realize

that Farquhar is imagining the things going on around him. No human could take a bullet out of their neck and then continue to swim with vigor. Another clue as to Farquhar's deceptive perceptions is his heightened senses. While he swam away from those shooting at him, Farquhar believes he can hear the "beating of the dragon-flies' wings" and that he could see "the veining of each leaf" on the shore (Bierce 489). His senses are heightened in an almost godly way and, therefore, his almost divinely heightened senses should be another clue to readers that Farquhar's point of view is not the most trustworthy because even though an escapee from death may be pumped full of adrenalin, no one would have, or take the time to notice, these kinds of effects. This story needs to be read very carefully because, as it turns out, the narrator's point of view cannot be trusted and, therefore, neither should the timeline presented (Ames 26). The entire story is based on perception and trust, and this is what Bierce uses against the readers. While they read, they hope and believe in Farquhar's escape, only to have what they discern turned on its ear.

According to Brad Hayden,

The story deals with two recurring Bierce themes: death and a character's perception of life... the success of the story relies upon the readers believing in the reality of the life-wish. Bierce creates effect when subjective and objective realities collide, when the reader perceives that what he has been led to believe is a distortion. (32)

Bierce uses themes of death and perception in such a way that readers believe in the literal account of what they read, and they do not think to look any deeper for any hidden meaning. This is precisely what causes the "realities" to "collide," and this, in turn, leads to astonished shock at the end of the story when Farquhar dies by the hanging he thought he has escaped.

Eric Soloman points out that Bierce also uses the theme of time and time manipulation in "Owl Creek Bridge" to "shatter" the illusion of romanticism. In part three of the story, Farquhar is released from the noose when the rope breaks and he makes it to land. He then travels to his home and sees his wife waiting for him. At this point, readers are violently brought back to reality and show the

illusion they let themselves believe (61). Through his use of the theme of time and how it can be manipulated as a consequence of stress, Bierce brings readers on a journey through Farquhar's delusional mind unknowingly. This, again, implies that because of the stress and the delusions, the narrator's point of view and the timeline cannot be trusted (Ames 26) because the narrator is in Farquhar's mind and is not an unbiased bystander. Bierce forces readers to confront their unrealistic hopes of a romantic ending and see the reality of the world by tearing apart their expectation. Bierce practically shoves the reader's naivety down their throats.

Additionally, Bierce uses irony through Peyton Farquhar's experiences to show readers that having a romantic outlook on life is unrealistic and that they need a more mature thought process. Farquhar had many unrealistic glorifications of war and Bierce uses many sarcastic descriptions of his views to show Farquhar's inexperienced and immature fantasies (Cheatham and Cheatham). Farquhar, a common farmer in the south, had the view that war allowed for "the opportunity of distinction" and he wished to take "service with the gallant army" and live the "larger life of a soldier" (Bierce 487). Bierce used a large amount of cynicism in his writing to show that he knew that war is not glorious at all, but is gruesome and brutal and not something to exalt. Farquhar's belief that war is glorious and wonderful, along with his wishes to join the fighting and assist in the war, was what ultimately got him killed. The irony is that he never even got to fight or do anything to help; he simply walked into a trap (Bierce 488). M.E. Grenander made note of the irony of Farquhar's entire "escape" in that "in... 'An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge'... the protagonist thinks himself safe in what is really a harmful situation" (53). Grenander points out that Farquhar, throughout the entire third part of the story, believe he will escape and know freedom once more. This is quite ironic because while he is entertaining these deusions of grandeur, Peyton Farquhar is plummeting to his death. The moment "the sergeant stepped aside" (Bierce 487), Farquhar might as well have been dead. Consequently, Bierce uses irony right up to the end: as Peyton walks to his home, he is greeted with the most beautiful vision of his wife, "looking fresh and cool and sweet", but as

he goes to her to meet where “she stands waiting, with a smile of ineffable joy” he feels immense pain and is, to a reader who does not read closely enough, quite suddenly dead (491). At the very end of his life, Peyton was allowed, briefly, into his own world of dreams, instead of staying in the dark reality (Powers). Bierce uses the irony of Farquhar’s last “sight” being the most beautiful thing he will ever see to show readers that dreams, no matter how vivid, beautiful, or wonderful, are only dreams and will be crushed by the world in the end.

Finally, Bierce uses his individual writing style to show how ignorant Farquhar and the readers are until they reach the end of the story. Most noteworthy is the use of short, descriptive sentences at the end of each of the three sections. Bierce puts down Farquhar’s ideal and irrational delusions at the end of each section with a simple but frank statement that leaves no room for impracticality (Cheatham and Cheatham). Bierce uses the following sentences at the end of each section as a specific, straightforward form of writing that informs readers of something important and true: “The sergeant stepped aside” (487), “He was a Federal scout” (488), and “Peyton Farquhar was dead; his body, with a broken neck, swung gently from side to side beneath the timbers of the Owl Creek Bridge” (491). Each of these sentences is unlike any other in the story in that they are to the point and have no hidden meaning; they are some of the few parts of “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” that tell the complete truth. Each of these final statements leads up to Farquhar’s death, and the blunt way they are written leaves no room for argument. Bierce uses his abrupt writing style to convey the cold, hard truth. Secondly, Bierce uses a more sophisticated diction through a third person’s point of view so that readers will trust the narrator and what he says. However, the other hints by way of exaggerations and figures of speech hint to readers that what they are reading may not be all it seems to be. The narrator of “Owl Creek Bridge” seems to be unbiased and objective at the very beginning of the story. This leads readers to believe that Farquhar’s dream-state is real. In the end, however “the reader... repeats Peyton Farquhar’s error” (Ames 25). The reader is just as surprised by the ending as Farquhar is (Ames 23-25). Bierce uses a more trustworthy projection of what is going on at the very beginning of “Owl Creek Bridge” when he first introduces

**Student Reflections on Writing:
Kelly Schloss**

I have always enjoyed the use of words. Finding that one word that makes a sentence flow or paints a picture has always seemed like a wonderful treasure hunt to me. I have always wondered why something should simply be “said” when it can be “declared,” “yelled,” “whispered,” or “exclaimed.” In grade school, I remember one teacher telling me to “Show, don’t tell.” It took me the longest time to figure out what that meant, but when I realized the variety of words at my disposal, when I realized that one word could paint a better picture than five if it was used correctly, I finally understood what my teacher meant when she said that showing was better than telling. It doesn’t mean using a fifty-dollar word that everyone has to look up in a dictionary to understand, but selecting a word that has life and feeling. This standard for choosing words has helped me in my writing as well as public speaking.

the narrator as a simple bystander relaying what he sees: “A man stood upon a railroad bridge...the man’s hands were behind his back...a rope closely encircled his neck” (485). All of these statements are simply observations delivered matter-of-factly, and by starting with trustworthy descriptions of what is truly happening, readers do not question the narrator, as they should, later in the story when his “observations” are dreams and he is no longer unbiased. This becomes Bierce’s lesson to readers: they should not take everything presented to them at face value, and they need to read deeply before drawing any concrete conclusions. Finally, Bierce uses common, almost romantic figures of speech when describing what Farquhar is thinking to suggest his naivety. For example, Bierce illustrates Farquhar’s beliefs about the combat occurring around his as a firm believer that “all is fair in love and war” (487). This romantic outlook is quickly shot down when readers learn that the soldier who has just given Farquhar information on how to “help” the

Confederate side is really a Federal soldier setting a trap. Bierce turns Farquhar's fanciful conviction that war is wondrous into a jarring reality where war is not fair at all, but a game of wits and deception. According to James Milton Highsmith, much of Bierce's work, including "Owl Creek Bridge," is quite dark and satirical and is the exact opposite of unrealistically happy short stories (92). By using this figure of speech to convey a romantic belief that Bierce finds unrealistic, he shows readers that poetic and romantic attitudes about life and war will only get a person taken advantage of and, eventually, killed.

In conclusion, Ambrose Bierce uses dark themes, irony, and style to attempt to persuade readers to understand that the world is not for the naïve, ignorant, and immature. He attempts to show his readers that by continuing to let the world fool you and believing in everything you see and hear, you are only setting yourself up for pain and deception. Bierce tries to convince his readers that there are dark realities and that the world is a harsh place for anyone, especially if you do not realize these realities. Death, physical or emotional, is all that awaits those that are willing and waiting to be fooled.

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Evaluation: *Kelly fashions a coherent analysis of Ambrose Bierce's engaging short story. She is able to tell the "complete truth" about the occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge, and her writing is both "vivid" and "wonderful."*

Transcending Caste through Spirit: Aravind Adiga's *Between the Assassinations*

Briana Shemroske

Course: Literature 208 (non-Western Literature)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *For the midterm take-home essay, on Indian literature, students were to analyze and discuss some aspect of class structure and social conditions in two episodes from Aravind Adiga's Between the Assassinations, a novel composed of interlinked short stories, published in 2008.*

In his 2008 novel, *Between the Assassinations*, author Aravind Adiga exposes the gritty realities of an India entrenched in transition and turmoil between the years 1984 and 1990 through a series of open-ended short stories. Set in the fictional town of Kittur, India, Adiga introduces the reader to a world of corruption and chaos, of DDT and Hinduism, of limble beggars and staggering riches—and the characters who must either succumb to or surpass their volatile surroundings. In the midst of this erratic and tumultuous time period, the underprivileged masses were overwhelmingly cast out, left to their own devices... and being the products of a culture riddled with conflicting values and a history consumed by judgment and class confinement, these devices weren't by any means very honorable. Yet, even in these bleakest of circumstances, Adiga hints at glimpses of hope, of strength and determination in the human spirit. Though exiled by centuries of India's rigid caste system and thrust into the dismal outskirts of society, Adiga's characters Chenayya and Xerox somehow feel an immense connectedness to their realities, a passion for the subtleties in the world around them, and they long for a dignity they may never know. While they are doomed to the cyclical nature of the lingering caste system and are both discarded and scrutinized by those above them, it becomes apparent

that Xerox and Chenayya can see the world and feel their surroundings in a way no one else can. Through unrivaled empathy, both Chenayya and Xerox are able to rise above the rich in the one way they know how.

Assigned the most menial and harsh of jobs, the poor and lower castes of India were subject not only to serving the unrewarding demands of the wealthy but laden with their direct burdens and glaring criticisms. Chenayya, the diligent delivery boy of Mr. Ganesh Pai, arrived in Kittur at the age of seventeen as an immigrant from a nearby village. Originally enthralled by the urban setting, Chenayya was soon thrust into a world of cruelty. Employed as a cart puller, Chenayya cycled about Kittur, delivering mass weights behind him, and "light" weights (including mattresses) simply atop his head. In return, he was granted minuscule amounts in tips, forced to pay gratuity to his employer for merely employing him, and permitted an alleyway and cart in which to sleep.

Years following his arrival, Chenayya proclaimed himself to be "bent and twisted...a twisted black rod of a man," (183) a man who must judge the time of year

Student Reflections on Writing: Briana Shemroske

There is an electric momentum in stringing together word after word, sentence after sentence. The pressure I put on myself before I eke out even one word onto the page is immense, and I move at a ridiculously slow pace once I get going...but I am certain there is no activity more fulfilling, no feeling more exhilarating. Writing allows me to collect my thoughts in a very illuminating way: I think I have come to more conclusions about the world around me when I'm writing than at any other time. Perhaps the most magnificent aspect of the whole process is the tiny revelations it allows – a small break in time – where for a moment the jumbled is made perfectly logical and the impossible is cultivated into some kind of extraordinary potential.

by rainfall, invest his hope in lottery tickets, and who is ashamedly unaware of his own age. Reflecting on his arrival, Chenayya comes to the realization that "...[He] had already been expelled from paradise the moment [he] walked into the city" (196). In this biting reality, Chenayya is taunted and despised by his clients, his fellow poor, children, prostitutes, and himself. Yet, even throughout the toughest of struggles, Chenayya simply refuses to give up. At one point, while cycling through a downpour for a delivery and wrapped in a plastic sheet for protection, Chenayya is patronized by a fellow cyclist. Chenayya, embittered by the boy's naiveté, thinks of him as a baboon. "'You've got no air in one tire!' the baboon shouted. 'You'll have to stop!' the boy exclaimed" (187). Rather than be disheartened, Chenayya is instead filled with determination. "*Stop? ...No, that is what a baboon would do: not me.* Putting his head down, he pedaled on, forcing his flat tire along: *Move!*" (187) While Chenayya's life is tainted by misery, it seems such obstacles stand only to fuel his will, his passion for the world around him. Such strain allows him to understand and appreciate the intricate and visceral details of the world in a way no one else possibly could, for he is its direct victim. He promises himself, "You will not break me, motherfuckers! You will never break me!" (176).

Xerox, the son of an untouchable, is also wholly susceptible to constant condemnation. The proud seller of bootlegged texts, "Xerox" Ramakrishna has been arrested twenty-one times in a nine year span. After unknowingly selling copies of a book banned in the Republic of India, *The Satanic Verses*, Xerox finds himself confined in a torturous prison stay. While he sleeps, the police station inspector, Ramesh, and lawyer, D'Souza, gulp down bottles of Old Monk while grudgingly observing Xerox's sleeping frame. "That fucking son of an untouchable. See him snoring," one remarks. "These people think they own India now...they want all the jobs...all the university degrees..." (46). Within seconds, both men begin beating Xerox. "The policeman and the lawyer took turns: they smashed the bar against Xerox's legs just at the knee joint, like the monkey god did on TV," Adiga explains (46). Here, Adiga presents a seemingly contradictory role reversal; the upper class relegated to the role of an animal, a monkey – and one threatened by the poor of society, at

that. Xerox, though hospitalized and eventually released from prison, is not at all threatened by the encounter. Upon his release, he confronts the policeman, grinning, "You can break my legs but I can't stop selling books. I'm destined to do this, sir" (47). Though Ramesh retorts by threatening to break more than just his legs next time, Xerox simply smiles, "...he bent low with folded palms and said, 'So be it'" (47). He then, hobbling on crutches, makes the two-and-a-half hour journey up Kittur's Lighthouse Hill to sell one book only, *The Satanic Verses*. His passion undeniably surpasses that of those around him, propelling him with a sense of strength and dignity in the midst of the corrupt and oppressive.

Taken in only to be spat out, ridiculed, and physically disconnected from society, both Chenayya and Xerox respond by emotionally clinging and connecting to the mundane splendors of a tragic world. While Chenayya's coworkers attempt to detach themselves from their harsh lifestyle through alcohol and prostitutes, Chenayya resorts to his conscience, vigilant awareness, and profound thought. Throughout this short story, Chenayya becomes entranced, observing his employer's water bowl, noticing "...how its sides were scalloped to make them look like lotus petals, and how the artisan had even traced the pattern of a trellis around the bottom of the bowl" (174). Upon defecating in public at the local train station, though he is ashamed, Chenayya is also entirely enlightened by the scent of basil lingering in the air, seeing it as "evidence that there were good things in the world" (177). Chenayya often looked to the sky for purity, for hope; enamored by pink streaks of sun... "Each time [Chenayya] saw a streak of pink in the sky," Adiga writes, "he thought he could detect some God of Fairness watching over the earth and glowering with anger" (180). From the collection of these excerpts, it is clear that Chenayya sees the world around him holistically: its imbalances, fallacies, and the treasures inherent within them. He is aware of himself as well as his surroundings. Second in despair only to the beggars of society, Chenayya is even able to form bonds with the animals around him. Spotting a kitten on a tree branch, he approaches it. "How beautiful its eyes were," he thought. "...Like a jewel that had fallen off the throne, a hint of a world of beauty beyond his knowledge and reach. He reached up to it, and it came to him" (199). Here,

Chenayya recognizes that beauty and riches need not be within his reach in order to be cherished – he accepts that an extravagant world exists parallel to his own. Rather than be discouraged by this fact, Chenayya is content closely observing the two worlds and finding value in both. Furthermore, perhaps he understands, that in his life, as with the kitten, every once in a while, by merely being willing to reach, (despite his circumstances), beauty and charm can unfold in the world around him. Through such deep introspection and determination, Chenayya’s mindset breaks through barriers, uplifting him far past the petty divisions of social boundaries.

While Chenayya uncovers gems in the overlooked, Xerox sparks intrigue and gratification from his career. “Xerox loves being around the machinery,” writes Adiga. “He strokes the photocopier; he adores the machine, the way it flashes like lightning as it works, the way it whirs and hums.” Ramesh and D’Souza drink and reflect on what could have been. “One had wanted to be a pilot,” Adiga details. “And the other – he had never wanted anything but to dabble in the stock market. That was all” (45). Xerox, on the other hand, is satisfied merely by the slow hum of a machine, living a life of pride rather than regret. In this humble sense of satisfaction, Xerox is unique. When he is first taken in for questioning, Xerox informs the policemen, “My father took out shit for a living...he couldn’t even read or write. He’d be so proud if he could see that I make my living from books” (44). Because Xerox’s history has been directly entwined with the bleak and backward, his outlook on even the most minuscule details of life has been illuminated; he is aware of his fortune as well as his progress through the slums of the lower castes. It is no coincidence that at the police station that evening, as the police inspector and lawyer babble and nag, Xerox lies fast asleep, at ease.

In both short stories, Adiga offers the reader hints of subtle optimism...a taste of hope for the immense capabilities of those deemed as untouchables or outcasts as well as their possible advancement through society. Through mental vigor and unwavering character, Xerox undoubtedly surpasses the questionable conditions surrounding him; he is challenging the upper class merely through his poise and passion. “The odd part,” writes Adiga as Xerox is arrested for the umpteenth time. “...Is that

[Xerox], the man in the handcuffs, seems to be dragging along the policemen, like a fellow taking two monkeys out for a walk” (41). In a dodgy world of misdeeds and abused power, Xerox rises above it, emerging mentally unscathed. Somehow, it is he, “that fucking son of an untouchable,” who manages to prove to the rich he is a force to be reckoned with. As for Chenayya’s story, Adiga concludes with yet another grueling bicycle journey back to Mr. Pai’s. “When the horns began to sound, [Chenayya] rose from his seat and pedaled,” he writes, and “Behind him, a long line of cars and buses moved, as if he were pulling the traffic along with an invisible chain” (200). Though loaded with the colossal burden of the wickedness of society and the injustice of history, for the first time Adiga portrays Chenayya as one in a position of power, for it is Chenayya who tows the load, it is Chenayya who holds the power of direction...and with it, the ability not only to appreciate life’s delicate intricacies, but generate them.

Works Cited

Adiga, Aravind. *Between the Assassinations*. New York: Free Press, 2010.

Evaluation: *Briana reads and writes with pinpoint, exacting accuracy, in her discussion of two key episodes from this novel. The syntax of this paper flows, the language is precise and diverse, and the writer’s vision is clear and empathetic. This is highly professional writing.*

Colorblindness

Sonia Sherwani

Course: Speech Team

Instructor: Jeff Przybylo

Assignment: *This persuasive speech was researched and written for the Phi Rho Pi National Community College Speech Tournament. The purpose of the persuasive speech shall be to convince, stimulate, or actuate (to win belief, reinforce conviction, or to ask for or move to action—speeches of eulogy, condemnation, inspiration, and problem-solving are equally acceptable). No more than 10% of the speech may be direct quotation, and the time limit in this event shall be ten minutes maximum, with no minimum time limit specified.*

I. Introduction

Attention Getter: As a first-generation Pakistani American, my parents taught me to be aware of cultural differences, but in the next breath, would tell me that no matter what the color of a person’s skin, deep down we are all the *same*. This always felt like a contradiction to me, to be *aware* of color or culture yet at the same time, be *blind* to it? I’ve always believed that race mattered, and that when we tell children, or even adults, that they should be *colorblind*, we are doing more harm than good.

Thesis: Kris Kieper, in the December 17, 2010 *Rockford Register Star*, explains that, “The notion of a color-blind society is unrealistic. It sounds [great] to say that we’re all the same, [but] the truth is we’re not, and that’s *not* a bad thing. It *becomes* a bad thing when we can’t talk about these differences.” Not only are we ignoring fundamental differences, but worse, we are erasing the fact that they exist at all. And, it turns out that *this* is a problem.

Justification: A 2010 study published in the journal of *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, found that people who work to suppress stereotypes often

demonstrate more **prejudicial** behaviors than people who accept them. In other words, by trying to be colorblind, we are preventing our biases from being challenged, and in turn, those biases become our actions.

Preview: In order for us to understand this cultural problem, we must first define colorblindness and consider its effects; second, we will analyze the causes; and finally, we will examine some solutions.

II. Main Point One

Problem/Definition: Ashley Doane, author of the 2009 book, *The Changing Politics of Color-blind Racism*, tells us that being colorblind means to not notice, or purposely ignore, race and diversity. People seem to think, “If I don’t see race, then I definitely can’t be called a racist.” So, then, what’s the problem? Well, understanding the three major effects of colorblindness...

1. Overgeneralized similarities,
2. Exaggerated differences,
3. And suppressed stereotypes

...we find out that the solution—being colorblind—*is* the problem.

Harms/Effects:

First, overgeneralized similarities. Bradford J. Hall, author of *Among Cultures*, published in 2009, writes that humans are not cultural robots, meaning everyone in a cultural group is not the same. Unfortunately, in an attempt to be colorblind, people overgeneralize similarities among groups and assume everyone is alike. The February 28, 2010 *Chicago Tribune* points out “that discussions about race don’t come easily. Parents, specifically white parents, talk in code, using ambiguous language such as, “Everyone is equal” or “under the skin, we’re all the same.” However, in a colorblind society, people try to teach themselves to ignore racial identity and ultimately ignore the essential questions of human existence: “Who am I?” and “Who are you?”

Second, exaggerated differences. Hall clarifies that once we assume everyone is the same, the differences

we face in our daily interactions become that much more exaggerated. The January 16, 2011 *Los Angeles Times* quotes Ryan Belk, an African-American, “Why does everyone assume that just because I’m black, I play basketball or can score you weed?” In *The Washington Post* on August 22, 2010, New York University psychologist David Amodio explains “Our brains are wired to make snap judgments on race....We can’t ignore these judgments...our brains will never be color blind.” This is because our brains are wired to create categories to sort information. But, the wiring is always there, so one stereotype will simply be replaced with another.

And third, suppressed stereotypes lead to prejudiced behavior. *The Lima News* of December 30, 2010 explains, “In America it seems we still like our identities in neat categories...whether one is black or white, straight or gay.” Stereotypes are assumed labels, and can be changed. However, they may be dangerous and turn into prejudices. In a 2010 study titled, *When Not Thinking Leads to Being and Doing*, by Natalie Wyer, we learn that, “Suppressing stereotypes often results in more stereotype use...and thought suppression can lead to unintended outcomes.” People act on their misconceptions, instead of talking about them.

III. Main Point Two: Causes.

With an understanding of what colorblindness is and its harms, we can now look at three reasons why some people still consider themselves colorblind.

First, we have been taught to play it safe since the civil rights movements. Ashley Doane also tells us that colorblindness emerged after the Civil Rights Movement. Lamar Smith from *FoxNews* of July 22, 2010, says, “Being racist means treating people differently because of their race.” Colorblindness started with the best of intentions. Simply not thinking about race would eradicate racism, but study after study has proven this idea wrong.

Second, we fear unknown differences. Americans have been taught that noticing race is wrong and bigoted. However, *Time* on September 6, 2010 quotes Douglas Hartmann, “Americans prefer to talk about colorblindness. For one, it’s impossible. For another, it’s offensive. It blurs the real problems communities are dealing with.”

He goes on to say that the way you experience the world and what perspective you bring...is essentially determined by your race. Sometimes this comes in the form of little things. For example, *I* will never know what it’s like to get a sunburn...I’m brown.

Third, we don’t know how to have a racial dialogue. Over the last 5 years, we have been faced with breaking news stories involving public figures making racist or prejudicial statements. *New York Daily News* on October 25, 2010 explains how “Juan Williams had been fired from NPR for stating to Bill O’Reilly that the sight of Muslims as fellow passengers on a plane made him nervous.” We forget how to discuss race in a respectful manner. According to *Newsweek* of September 5, 2010, “Out of 17,000 families with kindergartners, nonwhite parents are about three times more likely to discuss race than white parents; 75 percent of the latter never, or almost never, talk about race.”

IV. Main Point Three: Solutions.

With an insight to colorblindness and the reasons behind it, we can now regard three solutions to avoid the effects:

1. Be color conscious,
2. Have conversations,
3. And, don’t be afraid.

First, be color conscious. Acknowledge race. Make an effort to get to know people different from you. Perhaps share your food from home, listen to others’ music, learn a new dance, have a multicultural party, or simply watch a movie from another perspective (with subtitles if you have to). The *Brown Daily Herald* of February 25, 2010 quotes comedian Ahmed Ahmed, “If we can laugh at each others’ close, sacred rituals while respecting them at the same time, we’re able to appreciate other people’s funny-looking rituals better, and approach our own rituals with a little humor.”

Second, have conversations about the unfamiliar. Understanding a new concept can be hard, but we need to explore and have conversations about race. For example, actors Ron Jones, an African American and Larry Tish, a

Jew, perform their two-man show called The Black Jew Dialogues across the country. According to *The Courier* of November 17, 2010, “[They] encourage people not to try to be colorblind, but to, instead, embrace differences.

Finally, don’t be afraid to go outside your comfort zones. Let go of the fear of appearing racist. Governor Jan Brewer of Arizona signed the nation’s toughest bill on illegal immigration. Its aim is to identify, prosecute, and deport illegal immigrants. Discriminating against Hispanics is a sign of fear and staying in the confinement of our comfort zones. So, go outside and take a class on culture, ask honest questions, talk about your race, go to a religious service. And most importantly, don’t be offended and don’t make assumptions.

V. Conclusion and Summary

Review: First, we defined colorblindness and its harmful ways, then focused on some of the reasons why some of us are colorblind. And finally, found some solutions.

Tie back to attention-getter: People differ, and they differ in important ways, which contributes significantly to the rich diversity of American life. Only when we are color-sighted can freedom flourish vigorously. So, go ahead, taste the rainbow.

Evaluation: *This speech went through nearly twenty revisions. Each part of the speech is labeled to make it easier for the students and coaches to work on a specific part of the speech on any given day. Word choice and format are carefully chosen, to maximize effect, since the time limit is ten minutes. The language choices were made with oral presentation in mind. This text was designed to be read out loud.*

Scarred, Scared, and Singing

Ashley Simon

Course: Literature 208 (non-Western Literature)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *One choice for writing a paper on African literature involved writing an analysis of the main character of Nigerian writer Sefi Atta's novel Everything Good Will Come, published in 2005.*

Enitan Taiwo is the protagonist of Sefi Atta's novel *Everything Good Will Come*. In the novel, we experience Enitan's transformation from an eleven-year-old girl to a thirty-five-year-old woman. Enitan acts as an extension of her environment, the culturally rich and multi-faceted country of 1970s-1990s Nigeria. Although the Nigerian background does anything but stay in the background, Enitan's more immediate environment, primarily her life at her childhood home, sets the precedent for how Enitan behaves for the majority of her adult life. Prompted also by the general Nigerian atmosphere, Enitan's tendencies to deny suffering and recreate painful situations are motivated by childhood traumas and her subsequent flawed insight garnered from and toward the events.

As revealed above, the Nigerian backdrop behaves as more of an active, volatile character than as a passive setting. Nigeria gained its colonial independence from Britain the year Enitan was born: 1960 (Atta 330). This ended a long British reign that began in the latter half of the nineteenth century. After the overthrow of its civilian government in 1966, Nigeria has been marked by three military governments, two successful military coups, countless failed military coups, and a devastating civil war, all of which occurred during Enitan's lifetime. It should be noted that there was a short attempt at civilian government, which unfortunately resulted in corruption and ended predictably in a military coup.

Nigeria's largest city, Lagos, is grossly overpopulated, with a severely uneven distribution of wealth. Enitan and

her parents live in a somewhat removed suburb of Lagos, by Lagos Lagoon, with her subdivision representing a small microcosm of the Nigerian privileged (7). We are first introduced to Enitan at age eleven, the only child to her parents Arin and Bandele Sunday Taiwo, a homemaker and lawyer, respectively. Enitan is intelligent, as evidenced by her acceptance to one of the premier boarding schools in Nigeria, but she is lonely, prompting her to accept the friendship of her neighbor, Sheri Bakare, at the risk of her mother's disapproval (15, 25). After a severely traumatizing event involving Sheri, Enitan leaves for school in England and returns to Nigeria only nine years later. The novel then primarily concerns itself with Enitan's transition and emergence from a broken and scarred young girl to a Nigerian woman, coming to grips with her harrowing childhood through failed romantic relationships.

Enitan's youth is frequented by disturbing emotions and events, and, unfortunately, the events are not discussed in any significant manner pertaining to Enitan's understanding of them as anything but a child. Enitan's trauma cycles begin at age five with the death of her brother, then three. The trauma, however, began before his death due to the amount of care needed for his illness (sickle cell anemia). The great amount of stress and tension placed on the family completely changed the dynamics within it. Not only did Enitan lose an immediate family member to death at a very young, formative age, but she lost her mother as well. Although the novel strongly suggests and sometimes even explicitly states Enitan's partiality to her father, Enitan does have fond memories of her mother before her brother's death, providing a stark contrast to the passive-aggressive behavior that Enitan exhibits to her mother when we first meet Enitan at age eleven (24). Regrettably, Arin's personality is severely affected by the loss of her son, drastically altering the way she interacts with everyone, especially her immediate family members (10). Not comprehending the reasons for the substantial changes in her mother, Enitan most likely sought emotional strength from her father, attaching herself to him from then on.

Arin's emotional shift gives way to the dysfunctional relationship of Enitan's parents. Even though Enitan's home life is hostile (to the point where Arin uses the

withholding of food as a weapon against Sunny), and Enitan knows about her father's extramarital affairs, she is still quite visibly shaken at her father's announcement of her parents' divorce (144, 75). Enitan's reaction to her parents' divorce is also the first instance of the common refrain of Enitan assuming some sort of blame for trauma that occurs in her life, which she admits to later in the novel. Upon hearing her father's news, Enitan wonders to herself whether or not she had been an impetus for the end of her parents' marriage. While Enitan's train of thought is quite normal and natural for children of divorced parents, her thoughts go unchecked by her father and mother, who have the power to immediately dispel any such irrational notions garnered by children.

The foundation for Enitan's irrational thoughts is solidified with Enitan's witnessing of her friend Sheri's rape, arguably Enitan's most traumatic experience. When Enitan comes upon Sheri being forcibly held down by two boys, one of them raping her, Enitan's first urge to laugh seems quite dissonant with the situation at hand (62-63). Enitan's reaction is not prompted by lack of reverence for the gravity of the situation, but rather her mind being unable to grasp the violence in front of her. Although Enitan is not actively involved, Sheri's rape is Enitan's first sexual encounter. She and Sheri, both young adolescents at age fourteen, were on summer break at a party to see Enitan's crush, who is associated with the boys strapping Sheri down. Enitan's only other sexual knowledge comes from the discussion she had with her mother regarding her menstrual cycle and sex, which left Enitan crying, concluding it was better to die young (23). Her understanding of sex is ambiguous, slanted, and quite understandably, childish. Albeit her lack of knowledge regarding intercourse, Enitan can grasp that the scene before her is horrifically wrong.

After the rape, when they arrive home, Enitan bathes Sheri (who is quite visibly disturbed), and then ignores Sheri in the direct hope that the situation will vanish (63, 64). Sheri and Enitan do not tell anyone what transpired. Alas, Sheri becomes pregnant from the rape and deliriously tries to end the pregnancy by taking a coat hanger to herself. Sheri suffers severe injuries, landing her in the hospital and unable to ever bear children. Enitan's parents come to know of Enitan's connection to

the rape, and both of them decide to punish her for her "involvement." Enitan's punishment for her association with Sheri's rape is all that is evidenced regarding her parents' views on Enitan's traumatic experience. Similar to a doctor letting a broken leg heal at a crooked angle, Enitan's parents' carelessness in addressing Sheri's rape scars Enitan's emotional and logical reasoning.

Another trauma that Enitan suffers is the constant, ongoing human cruelty and corruption that occur in Nigeria. Just one instance of what Enitan encounters throughout her life in Nigeria is characterized in the vicious assault that she witnesses on the way to her punishment regarding Sheri's rape (69). Enitan and her mother are driving to church when a military truck suddenly appears on the road, the driver shouting for other vehicles to pull over to let them through. When one man pulls over too late, members of the military jump down and brutally whip the man until it is uncertain whether he will survive. Sanctity of life and dignity for people do not exist in the Nigeria that Enitan knows. Coupled with the gruesome image of Sheri's rape in mind, this scene ends with a fourteen-year-old Enitan concluding that the world is a uniformly horrific place, a thought that goes unchallenged by her mother.

Enitan's subscription to denial is a passive choice for freedom. Her tendency to deny certain behaviors is evidenced in her interactions with her father, Sheri, and even her romantic partners. This thought pattern most likely developed during Enitan's youth and fermented after Sheri's rape. During that time, Enitan alone did not have the intellectual capability or exposure to more developed ideas of grief to accurately comprehend a trauma, let alone multiple traumas. This, paired with her father's and mother's neglect in enlightening Enitan to the fact that she is not culpable for the misery around her, creates a very dark, guilt-stricken world with no escape. Disregarding distress and accommodating everything else, however, gives Enitan a sense of freedom, albeit a false one. Discounting her ordeals leaves Enitan in a privileged world where she is part of an elite group of Nigerians.

Enitan's fear of helplessness provides ground for her adult re-creations of traumatic childhood situations. It is no coincidence that her first relationship in Nigeria

involved an unfaithful partner, when her father had also strayed. Enitan reconstructs circumstances in which people have the power to treat her with respect and affection, but also the power to hurt her. She does this in the hope that she will disprove the implications of her trauma (which she assumes culpability for), so that someday she can ultimately escape her past and fulfill her desperate desire to trust and care for people without fear of shame in return.

Enitan's conclusive thoughts regarding her traumas are in part due to her intense identification with her environment. Shortly before returning to Nigeria from England, Enitan describes the state of her mind in the following line: "I stood there listening to the wind, whizzing in all directions, colliding with my thoughts, which were colliding with each other" (78). First the wind is whizzing, then it is colliding with Enitan's thoughts, and then finally, Enitan's thoughts are colliding with each other. Most people might observe that their actions or thoughts are similar to their environment, but not everyone will explicitly state and explain the transition between environment and self as Enitan does. Another example of Enitan's distinctive association with her environment occurs when Enitan notes that she was born in the year of her country's independence and saw how it raged against itself (330). This behavior is mirrored in Enitan when she admits near the end of the novel that she alone held herself back (326).

Once Enitan has the understanding that she is preventing herself from thriving, she takes the opportunity that comes with the death of her mother and reincarnates herself (332-333). The idea that Enitan was dead is first introduced with Sheri's observation that Enitan's childhood home was like a graveyard (55). Enitan singing and dancing at the end of the novel are the ultimate symbols of her transformation. Evidence that she is going through a transformation can be established when Enitan states that she sang through the transformations of her country (46). Keeping Enitan's close identification with Nigeria in mind, her singing at the end of the novel is a demonstration of the revolution occurring within. Additionally, the last time we had seen an image of dancing in the novel is when an eleven-year-old Enitan gives herself freely to joy, dancing to music at the lively

Bakare household (55). Invoking the image of childhood delight confirms that finally, Enitan is not recreating a disturbing event of her youth, but choosing a new path and dancing to her own beat.

Works Cited

Atta, Sefi. *Everything Good Will Come*. Northampton, Mass: Interlink, 2008. Print.

Evaluation: *Ashley's insights into the psychological conflicts within the main character of this novel are both accurate and discerning.*

Descartes' Proof for the Existence of Material Objects

Jason Smart

Course: Philosophy 105
(Introduction to Philosophy)
Instructor: Brett Fulkerson-Smith

Assignment: *Students were to develop an original,
philosophical critique of Descartes'*
Meditations on First Philosophy.

The creation narratives of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam affirm that God created the world and everything in it in six days. There can be no doubt that René Descartes, educated at the Jesuit Collège Royal Henry-Le-Grand at La Flèche, would have been familiar with the Judeo-Christian narrative of creation found in Genesis. In fact, it is possible to read Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*, published in 1641, as a philosophical recreation of the world in six days. The book is made up of six meditations, as if written over six days; in them, Descartes sets himself the task of firmly establishing the existence of mind and body, God, and the external world.

In this essay, I will reconstruct and critically evaluate Descartes' argument for the existence of material objects offered in the sixth meditation. In the final analysis, I argue that this argument is unsound, as Descartes contradicts an important premise in his argument: namely, the active power that produces sensations is not inherent in any person. According to Descartes' discussion of the phantom limb, some sensations are caused by a person. To provide context for this analysis, I will begin with an overview and summary of Descartes' six meditations.

In the first meditation, Descartes undertakes to test the veracity of his beliefs. He resolves to suspend judgment on any of his beliefs that are even slightly doubtful. On the one hand, he discovers that beliefs founded on the senses are doubtful. But so too are those

founded on reason. He gives up all of his beliefs about the physical world and decides to continually remind himself to avoid habitually falling into accepting beliefs without support.

In the second meditation, Descartes lays the foundation for certain knowledge. If he is a thing that can be deceived and can think and have thoughts, then he must exist. "I am, I exist," Descartes proclaims (64). Upon this indubitable truth, Descartes attempts to erect an edifice of certain knowledge.

In the third meditation, Descartes argues that, based on his clear and distinct idea of God, God must exist. Descartes states only an imperfect being could practice deliberate deception. Descartes believes that God is no deceiver. Hence, what is perceived clearly and distinctly must be true. In the fourth meditation, he concludes that the correct way to avoid mistakes is to claim to know only what is clearly and distinctly perceived.

In the fifth meditation, Descartes offers another proof for the existence of God. God is defined as an infinitely perfect being. According to Descartes, perfection includes existence. Therefore, God exists. Lastly, Descartes argues for the existence of material things and distinguishes mind and body.

Descartes' argument for the existence of material objects appears in the last of Descartes' meditations (96). According to the argument:

1. People have a passive power of sensing.
2. This power of sensing is nothing unless something with an active power is producing the sensations.
3. The active power is either in Descartes, God, or material things.
4. The active power does not use any thought on its part.
5. Therefore, this power cannot be in Descartes, or others like him.
6. There is a strong inclination among people to believe that material things produce sensory perceptions.
7. God created people with this inclination.
8. God would be a deceiver if, although he inclines me to this belief, he is the source of my sensory perceptions.

9. But God is no deceiver.
10. Therefore, God does not transmit sensory ideas to any person.
11. Therefore, material things exist.

As this reconstruction shows, Descartes' argument assumes that the active power that produces sensations is not inherent in any person (and this faculty is distinct from that of imagination). According to Descartes, "this faculty surely cannot be in me [or others like me], since it clearly presupposes no act of understanding, and these ideas are produced without my cooperation and often even against my will" (97). If, however, it can be shown that some sensations do, in fact, come from within a person, then this premise is false. Since I believe people have an active power of producing sensations, I believe that this can be shown.

Although most people enjoy meeting a clown, people with coulrophobia, the fear of clowns, do not. Since the idea that the clown can produce sensations of both joy and extreme fear in different people is unfathomable, nothing in the clown causes a person with coulrophobia to be scared. The sensation of extreme fear that someone with coulrophobia has upon seeing a clown is a sensation that comes from within the person with the phobia. This reflex leads me to believe that some sensations come from the person's own active power. Hence, some sensations do, in fact, come from within a person.

Descartes himself seems to believe this, as he seems to acknowledge that sensory ideas of external objects can, in some cases, be caused by something other than the external object itself. As Descartes points out, some people can feel pain in an appendage that has been amputated. He discusses the plight of some people who have had a foot amputated, namely that some people feel the sensation of pain in a foot even though that foot has been amputated.

Descartes' explanation of the experience of the phantom limb is a mechanical one. "When any part of the body is moved by another part that is some distance away, it can be moved in the same fashion by any of the parts that lie in between" (101). He continues, "in a cord ABCD, if one end D is pulled so that the other end A moves, A could have been moved in just the same way if

B or C had been pulled" (101). According to this account, when you have a foot, nerves are being pulled in it that go up your central nervous system into your brain and tell the brain there is pain in your foot. If you do not have a foot, the pain or message of pain in a foot can start at your knee or waist and go up to the brain and tell the brain that there is a pain in the foot, even though a foot is not there.

Descartes acknowledges the sensation of pain in a foot that has been amputated. To this extent, he seems to be admitting that people do possess an active power of producing sensations. The *sensation* of pain in the phantom limb is, according to Descartes, caused by the person who feels the pain, even though the stimulus comes from an external object (other than the foot itself). Hence, even according to Descartes, some sensations do, in fact, come from within a person.

Although Descartes acknowledges the existence of sensations that are not caused by material things, he does not seem to be aware of how this admission affects his proof for the existence of material things. Descartes' argument for the existence of material objects is based on the premise that the active power that produces sensations is not inherent in any person. The phantom limb example makes this crucial premise false. The phantom limb is an instance of a sensory idea caused, not by the external object associated with the sensation, but by the person him- or her-self. Since this premise is false, Descartes' argument for the existence of material objects is unsound.

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Descartes, Rene. *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*. Trans. Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998.

Evaluation: *Jason's paper really delivers, arguing in a truly original way that Descartes' proof for the existence of external objects is unsound. To my knowledge, Jason is the first reader (professional philosopher or otherwise) to carefully examine the implications of Descartes' remarks on the phantom limb phenomenon on his argument for the existence of external objects.*

Society and Family in James Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues" and John Cheever's "Goodbye, My Brother"

Anthony Strissel

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Kris Piepenburg

Assignment: *Write a literary research paper, maintaining a consistent critical perspective and making effective use of at least seven secondary sources.*

"Sonny's Blues," by James Baldwin, examines the relationship between the unnamed narrator and his brother Sonny, a musician who's been arrested for heroin possession as the story begins. We follow the narrator as he moves through Harlem, grimly portrayed as a city of poverty, misery, and hopelessness, forced by his surroundings to detach himself emotionally but losing his bond with his brother in the process. The story comes to a head as the two slowly rebuild their relationship, the narrator trying to understand and accept that his brother has chosen the path of a jazz musician, a life the narrator had never approved of and partially blamed for Sonny ending up in prison, addicted to heroin. They finally reconcile when the narrator agrees to watch him perform at a nightclub, ordering him a drink and symbolizing the narrator's acceptance and personal growth. The story "Goodbye, My Brother," by John Cheever, is a study of a privileged New England family and its black sheep, the narrator's brother Lawrence. The family gets together for their annual vacation in Laud's Head, with Lawrence making an appearance after four years apart. Lawrence and the rest of his family have very different approaches to life and a troubled relationship as a result, but the narrator possesses enough insight to understand his worldview, though he can't really sympathize or connect with him. The two have a fight at the end of the story, which offers no catharsis and just drives the family further apart. "Sonny's Blues" is a story about what happens when feelings boil over and explodes, while "Goodbye,

My Brother" is passion in stasis. Unlike the Pommeroys and their empty façade of opulence, Sonny's brother feels close to his family and a desperate need to protect Sonny in the midst of a culture that has borne the worst society could throw at them. This family has meaning – tragedy has brought them together, and they are tight-knit and understanding (and forgiving, crucially) in a way the Pommeroys, complacently going through the motions of feeling and experience, can't be.

The families' respective socioeconomic classes and surroundings define the relationships in both stories. "Sonny's Blues" paints an ugly portrait of Harlem – early in the story, the narrator, a teacher, walks toward the high school, thinking:

These boys, now, were living as we'd been living then, they were growing up with a rush and their heads bumped abruptly against the low ceiling of their actual possibilities. They were filled with rage. All they really knew were two darkneses, the darkness of their lives, which was now closing in on them, and the darkness of the movies, which had blinded them to that other darkness, and in which they now, vindictively, dreamed, at once more together than they were at any other time, and more alone (Baldwin 319).

The narrator is alluding to the socioeconomic conditions that make it possible, and appealing, for a young kid like Sonny to turn to drugs as an escape mechanism from the grim reality of dead-end life in 1950s Harlem. The city represents the impossibility of hope in the face of institutionalized racism. Emphasizing this point in a flashback, the narrator's mother tells him about the death of her brother-in-law, who was hit by a car on the highway:

This car was full of white men. They was all drunk, and when they seen your father's brother they let out a great whoop and holler and they aimed the car straight at him. They was having fun, they just wanted to scare him, the way they do sometimes, you know. But they was drunk. And I guess the boy, being drunk, too, and scared, kind of lost his head. By the time he jumped it was too late. Your father says he heard his brother scream when the car rolled over him, and he heard the wood of that guitar when it give, and he heard them strings go flying, and he

heard them white men shouting, and the car kept on a-going and it ain't stopped till this day. (327)

The shadow of racism hangs over the whole story, but here is where the reader sees it at its most visceral. The car that “ain't stopped till this day” is essentially circling Harlem like a barrier – the highway is symbolic of escape, and the car is the reminder that escape is impossible. Harlem represents the flawed system as a whole, and the futility of trying to break away - we see that nothing is “as dark as that road after the lights of that car had gone away” (328), one of the bleakest images of hopelessness in a story full of them. Keith E. Byerman writes that:

The musically-talented uncle is Sonny's double and the helpless father is the narrator's. This parallel structure makes the point obvious to the reader, but the fact that it is *only* parallel justifies the continuation of the narrative. In his positivistic way, the narrator will not believe what does not occur to his immediate experience or what cannot be contained within his linguistic net. (Byerman 369)

The racism on display here is more than a barrier; it is an albatross, as the narrator struggles to keep from breaking through his self-denial, haunted by his father's failure to save his own brother and the pressure of the burden this places on him to do the impossible—to escape from what he must internalize as an inevitably, infinitely recurring sequence of events in an oppressive society.

Baldwin uses these images, and the setting of Harlem in general, to further illuminate the thought processes keeping the narrator from connecting meaningfully with Sonny. As John M. Reilly notes, “Agitated though he is about Sonny's fate the narrator doesn't want to feel himself involved. His own position on the middle-class ladder of success is not secure, and the supporting patterns of thought in his mind are actually rather weak” (Reilly 232). In the narrator's mind, to reach out to Sonny is to put himself at risk; the narrator is surrounded by reminders that his grasp on his social status is tenuous, and Sonny at worst is a cautionary tale, a toxic stereotype, and the narrator fears that to associate with him threatens all the narrator has built for himself in the face of adversity. In contrast, Sonny is portrayed as similarly confused but far more perceptive, with an understanding of his own identity and an ability to face his situation honestly, traits the narrator

doesn't seem to share yet (on page 323 of the story, an old friend of Sonny's tells the narrator “Don't worry about Sonny. Maybe I'll write him or something,” which Sonny's own brother, still distant and trying to remain in denial, can't bring himself to do). This realization marks a turning point, as it shifts the central conflict—we start to see that this is less a story about the redemption of Sonny than it is about the narrator's emotional struggle, who, wrongheaded as he may seem, is going through the admittedly wrenching process of accepting and forgiving himself and his brother, a process made more arduous in a context where the neuroses of the narrator must seem insurmountable given his race and his situation.

Though socioeconomic conditions provide more than their share of anguish in “Sonny's Blues,” they paradoxically help cement the bond that, even at its most strained, still exists between Sonny, his brother, and in a sense the entire community. Looking out the window late in the story, Sonny says, “‘All that hatred down there,’ he said, ‘all that hatred and misery and love. It's a wonder it doesn't blow the avenue apart’” (338). He is reflecting on one of the story's main themes—that the tension and ugliness that pervades Harlem, and the narrator's relationship with Sonny, still has a necessary undercurrent of love, a sense of family and community that makes up the essence of life. The narrator may have known this instinctively, but is coming to terms with it on a personal level, and this sets the stage for the final scene at the nightclub. The narrator watches Sonny's set, and in between songs, he orders Sonny a drink, watching as the band:

...talked up there in the indigo light and after awhile I saw the girl put a Scotch and milk on top of the piano for Sonny. He didn't seem to notice it, but just before they started playing again, he sipped from it and looked toward me, and nodded. Then he put it back on top of the piano. For me, then, as they began to play again, it glowed and shook above my brother's head like the very cup of trembling. (341)

Sonny's chosen path as a jazz musician, distinctly “lower class” in his brother's eyes, has appeared to the narrator to be the reason for his downfall, and after spending the story grappling with his emotions and trying to come to terms with Sonny's independence and way of life, he finally reaches a turning point. “The cup of trembling” is

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biblical imagery, and it represents the narrator's salvation, a symbol of the change he's undergone by sending this peace offering to his brother, tacitly showing acceptance where before he could only be desperately condescending.

The "cup of trembling" is not the only, or the most significant, religious imagery in the story. Earlier, as Baldwin describes the revival scene taking place in the middle of the neighborhood, the narrator recollects:

I saw Sonny, standing on the edge of the crowd. He was carrying a wide, flat notebook with a green cover, and it made him look, from where I was standing, almost like a schoolboy. The coppery sun brought out the copper in his skin, he was very faintly smiling, standing very still. Then the singing stopped, the tambourine turned into a collection plate again. (334)

Sonny appears messianic here, standing illuminated in the street with a revival meeting preceding him. In this scene, the residents of Harlem take solace in music and community, in songs of escape and salvation—whether or not they believe in it—in all of these things that "soothe a poison out of them" and provide some relief. Sonny's appearance as a Christ figure here foreshadows the music, theme of redemption, and religious imagery that accompany his reconciliation with his brother. Donald C. Murray furthers this train of thought:

Because of the enormous energy and dedication involved in his role as Blues musician, Sonny is virtually described as a sacrificial victim as well as an initiate into the mysteries of creativity. Somewhat like the Christ of *noli me tangere*, Sonny's smile is "sorrowful" and he finds it hard to describe his own terrible anguish because he knows that it can come again and he almost wonders whether it's worth it. (356)

Sonny is portrayed by Baldwin with a martyr's dignity, certainly an agent in his own undoing but a victim of inescapable circumstances as well.

Beyond illuminating relationships in "Sonny's Blues," religious comparisons highlight the differences between the Pommeroy of Cheever's "Goodbye, My Brother" and Sonny and his brother. It is not a stretch to say that all stories of sibling conflict can be traced back to biblical origins and beyond, and "Sonny's Blues" and

"Goodbye, My Brother" are no exception. Baldwin, a former preacher, draws parallels between Sonny and the narrator and Abel and Cain, respectively – according to James Tackach, who quotes Genesis 4.9, "By neglecting his younger brother, Baldwin's narrator has become a contemporary Cain. In Genesis, after Cain kills his younger brother Abel, God asks Cain about Abel's whereabouts: 'I know not,' Cain replies. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Tackach 114). "Sonny's Blues" is not, of course, simply a retelling of that story – the narrator is neither jealous of Sonny nor responsible for his perceived downfall, and has, by the end of the story, reversed the Cain archetype and become his "brother's keeper," leading both to metaphorical salvation. The comparison in a wider sense, then, serves to contrast the relationship of Sonny and his brother with the relationship of Lawrence Pommeroy and his brother, another Cain and Abel story with a decidedly more cynical ending. The narrator of "Goodbye, My Brother" and his brother, Lawrence, are a much more evident Cain and Abel parallel, superficially and otherwise – both relationship arcs end with an act of violence, one that signals the point in which tensions and resentment have boiled over to the point of no return, and a "blessed" or privileged lineage is clear in both families. However, in contrast to Sonny and his family, the elevated status of the Pommeroy in "Goodbye, My Brother," seems ironically to make them more miserable and incapable of understanding each other. Privilege cannot assuage the anger and jealousy seething below the surface of the Pommeroy family any more than lack of privilege can force Sonny and his brother apart.

The narrator opens "Goodbye, My Brother" by saying "We are a family that has always been very close in spirit. Our father was drowned in a sailing accident when we were young, and our mother has always stressed the fact that our familial relationships have a kind of permanence that we will never meet with again" (Cheever 1). From the first line of the story, the tone for the Pommeroy's relationship is set—they're a family "close in spirit," dedicated to maintaining appearances and suppressing emotions for the sake of their status. They attend a costume dance at a boat club where almost everyone is wearing a football uniform or a wedding dress, symbolizing their class' escapism to past lives. This is also reflected in the narrator's father's house, built to show artificial signs of age and antiquity. Lawrence, the cynic, is put off by this – "Imagine spending thousands of dollars to make a

sound house look like a wreck,' Lawrence said. 'Imagine the frame of mind this implies. Imagine wanting to live so much in the past that you'll pay men carpenters' wages to disfigure your front door'" (5). As Peter Mathews writes:

Within the sphere of Lawrence's values, the greatest crime seems to lie in the world's disrespect for stability. Lawrence values the things that last, which point to a fixed origin that can be definitely traced and located. He is disgusted by the modern, shifting world that he sees around him, and thus he spends much of the story—and indeed, much of his life—in a condemnatory pose. The narrator relays Lawrence's mindset to the reader, for example, via Lawrence's criticism of the family beach house. Lawrence is lamenting the fact that the house, built just over twenty years ago, has been constructed so that it appears to be much older. (3)

The house is symbolic of the veneer and insecurity that colors the family – their sense of wanting more, of trying to create an appearance that encourages self-denial and strains their relationships by forcing them out of reality and stability. The house speaks to a need to embrace a simpler time, a regression to the “good old days”—a view informed by race and class, as obviously, in Baldwin's story, the “good old days” do not exist for Sonny's family in this country.

The past and present surroundings of the Pommeroy's are more than just a benign presence, though—the world is nonjudgmental and welcoming, their sanctuary, a place to escape their relationships and inner lives. As the narrator describes:

We took our cocktails onto the terrace, so that we could see the bluffs and the sea and the islands in the east, and the return of Lawrence and his wife, their presence in the house, seemed to refresh our responses to the familiar view; it was as if the pleasure they would take in the sweep and the color of that coast, after such a long absence, had been imparted to us. (2)

Here, the family relaxes and takes comfort in their surroundings, a tangible escape from their daily lives, but they carry a sense of unease and emptiness when dealing, out of necessity, with the members of their family—a complete reversal of Sonny's situation. This is a portrait

of an insular community, a family unaffected by race, poverty, failing institutions, or hopeless childhoods. The setting here is as much a character as Harlem is—society is a struggle for Sonny and his brother, whereas the Pommeroy's have, though they've worked hard, been handed opportunities unavailable in Sonny's world. Kristin Maier expounds on this, noting that “As the vacation goes on, the hostility between the family members worsens, but whereas the rest of his family ‘would all go swimming and shed [their] animus in the cold water’ (474), Lawrence would stay on shore” (232). Unlike Sonny and his family, who must face conflict head-on, with no safety net available, or be swallowed up, the Pommeroy's can be temporarily absolved in this baptismal scene, hiding from their troubles in the embrace of comfort and luxury, though those troubles, in the form of Lawrence, are always looming over the horizon.

The Pommeroy's class is a source of trouble for Lawrence, and his relationship with his brother is the crux of the story. Lawrence is Sonny's opposite in almost every way. A passionless lawyer who lacks Sonny's sense of self and his tolerance of the flaws around him, Lawrence is defined only by his bitterness and inability to face reality. His life is spent running from commitment, as the narrator recalls:

When Father drowned, he went to church and said goodbye to Father. It was only three years later that he concluded that Mother was frivolous and said goodbye to her. In his freshman year at college, he had been very good friends with his roommate, but the man drank too much, and at the beginning of the spring term Lawrence changed roommates and said goodbye to his friend. When he had been in college for two years, he concluded that the atmosphere was too sequestered and he said goodbye to Yale. (11)

We see that Lawrence's obsession with “saying goodbye”—with change—suggests a spirit of personal growth his shallow family doesn't possess (in his eyes), but we can't fully sympathize, since the narrator is correct in his assessment that Lawrence is “[mistaking] circumspection for character” (12). His spontaneity is a defense mechanism for someone who is simply not cut out for life and its ups and downs. It is this inability to cope, with either his family's status or his own emotional hang-ups, that makes a meaningful relationship with him

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impossible. The effects of his family's inattentiveness become fully clear after the aforementioned fight with his brother on the beach, where he is hit on the head. Standing in the doorway with a bloody bandage, he says "'My brother did this....My brother did it. He hit me with a stone—something—on the beach.' His voice broke with self-pity. I thought he was going to cry" (13). He lets his guard down here for the first time, and it speaks volumes about how deeply he feels, both for himself and the family that has done little more than treat him as the burdensome elephant in the room. It's as close to a truly sympathetic moment as we get with Lawrence, who was clearly never shown affection, is starved for it, and is now hiding behind a cold and detached exterior.

One of the tragic elements of the brothers' relationship here is how much is projected upon Lawrence by the narrator. Though Sonny and his brother have troubles of their own, their relationship is at least defined at the end by a mutual understanding of two clashing personalities, whereas Lawrence and his brother are more similar than they perhaps realize, and ironically worse off for it. According to David Raney, "Lawrence is without question an unpleasant person but he is also a scapegoat, manifesting a side of the narrator that the latter does not wish to acknowledge" (70). It's noteworthy that we never hear much of Lawrence, or from him, or about him, beyond the thoughts projected on him by the narrator. For example:

The transference is most overt in the traditional family backgammon game. Lawrence does not play but looks on silently. The narrator tries to divine what he is thinking, and "through watching his face," he reports, "I think that I may have found out." For the remainder of the game he lists these thoughts in detail, all bleakly cynical and all, clearly, his own. (Raney 70)

There is a direct contrast here with the relationship between Sonny and his brother. The narrator of Cheever's story, who has no real need for Lawrence, is dismissive toward him from the start, comfortable with his station and satisfied with crafting a character for him borne of his own cynicism and using him as, as Raney notes, little more than a scapegoat. The environment in which this type of relationship can be fostered is in direct contrast to Sonny's family, which impressed the importance of blood as a way to keep "the darkness [from] coming" (325).

Both "Sonny's Blues" and "Goodbye, My Brother" are stories about dissatisfaction with one's status in life, how that status can define an individual or a family, and how status can be transcended by the presence, or lack, of meaningful relationships. Unlike the growth and redemption of Sonny's brother, nobody has really changed by the end of "Goodbye, My Brother," which sheds light on the family's inability to put forth the effort to create or maintain any real connection to one another. Socioeconomic class is a hindrance for the main characters of both stories, but in opposite ways. Sonny and his brother are forced by difficult circumstances to form a tight emotional bond, while the more privileged Pommeroy's, with few if any social obstacles in place, allow themselves to sink into complacency, investing their energy into maintaining their appearances and feeling little if anything for each other, a coldness that estranges Lawrence completely and leaves him feeling shallow and unrewarded.

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Evaluation: *This is a well-written, extremely perceptive paper, revealing of a great deal within and behind the scenes of these short stories, pertaining to the effects of social class on the families of these two works. Anthony also indirectly shows how these two writers—Cheever and Baldwin—were living in and writing about two different worlds in 1950s America.*

Seek Not in the World to Find Home

Agnes Strojewska

Humanities 115

(International and Regional Studies in Humanities)

Instructor: Antonio Iacopino

Assignment: *After the Honors Program study abroad experience in Argentina, students were to compose papers that 1) reflect upon their preconceptions of Argentina and Latin culture before the trip; 2) narrate an account of what happened during the trip; and 3) explain how the trip enriched them culturally and personally.*

Seek not in the wide world to find a home; but where you chance to rest, call that your house.

—Unknown

The week spent in Argentina blew by with the torrential speed of a tornado that swept me up in its warm, spiraling embrace and then set me back on my feet in Chicago with a cold blast of wind. It is now the following Thursday, and I still feel like I am standing in the middle of O'Hare airport, trying to regain my balance and steady my thoughts. I haven't spoken in detail about the trip with anyone: I have been saving my thoughts.

The day we arrived back in the States was a Sunday. I was supposed to attend a friend's wedding at 1PM. Saturday, as we were leaving Mendoza airport, I told the group I wasn't sure I would make it to the wedding as planned—I already expected to be far too tired from our three connecting flights. At this point, Antonio interrupted to say that if I did get to the wedding on time, I would not be able to stop talking about Argentina and what an amazing experience it had been. It had definitely been an amazing experience, he was right. But instead of talking about it, I haven't been able to say a single worthwhile word since getting home, no matter how much I've tried.

When people ask me how Argentina was, I recall the colorful city of Mendoza; the hot sun; the desert winds;

the vineyards and the taste of the food; the warmth of the sun and the people -- and I immediately fear that I will do it all a great injustice if I say anything. All I can manage to sputter out is, "it was wonderful, amazing," and other useless adjectives, which leave people staring at me and I at them in return, wide-eyed and dumb.

* * *

I was born in Warsaw, Poland, and moved to the States when I was five. My mother was a flight attendant in 1985 with me in the womb—it is probably why I feel more at home on an airplane flying over an ocean than I do in most places in the world. I am no stranger to travel. I know what it means to spend ten hours on an airplane. O'Hare International is an image burnt into the backs of my eyelids. For that matter, so are Warsaw International, Newark, Miami, and Frankfurt airports. I have spent time living in the cities of Warsaw and Chicago, and the suburbs of both. I have also lived on a Polish farm for a few months of my adolescent life. In short, I am familiar with cultural immersion: I know what it means to think in a different language, to blurt out sentences in the wrong tongue to the wrong person in the wrong country, and to have to make a mental switch each time I cross international borders.

Sometimes, the differences between countries can seem small: Poland and Germany are just like Wisconsin in many ways. Still, in some small way, each time I travel, I feel like a slightly different person once I set foot back on U.S. soil. At some point, if you spend a long enough time in a place and immerse yourself deeply enough in its culture, even the country's air seems to seep into your skin; by the time you return home, not only have you momentarily forgotten how to think clearly in English, but you carry on you the scent of another place, as if swept in on your skin. Within my memory, I can reach out and recall the warmth of a not-so-distant culture from across the span of an ocean. I have spent so much of my life traversing between countries that my roots have become sewn deeply into the Earth instead of any single place. Though I have spent a majority of my childhood in the United States, my overall life is a patchwork of culture and experience. I have become a product of these things

in my life, not of a single backyard or of a neighborhood street.

My life today is in the United States and I am majoring in psychology. I plan to transfer to the University of Illinois this fall 2011, where many opportunities to study psychology abroad are offered. I plan to take full advantage of these opportunities if only I am able to expand my knowledge of the world. But diversity is not a college credit course—it is an open heart and an open mind that is taught through experience. Being lucky enough to have experienced at least a few of the differences between cultures firsthand has, I hope, given me a more empathic understanding of what makes people work in the ways that they do—what makes us all so different from one another, and yet, all at once the same. Perhaps my experience with these differences in the world is what has made me so persistently seek out the people’s similarities: as if to sew together the different parts of my world and my life with a single thread of unity.

In the beginning, my intent was simply to come to Argentina to climb a mountain. I wanted to push my body to its physical limits so that I could see the reaches of my mental limits. But the Andes did not give me this lesson so precisely. I expected my muscles to stretch, but somewhere along the line, I had buried my idealism beneath books of science and had forgotten that my heart was a muscle as well—and that it was liable to stretch the farthest. I found my lessons when I wasn’t looking for them, as it always seems to happen. But, I am getting too far ahead.

Life is ten percent what happens to you and ninety percent how you respond to it.

—Lou Holtz

El Viaje, Primero Parte

Day 1

On the first day, Antonio missed his flight to Miami.

The first three hours of the journey to Miami without our professor held their own merit: I learned that I was travelling with people having a spirit of endurance and faith in good luck, especially Nick, who kept promising that Antonio would make it before we took off to Santiago. Bracing ourselves in the few collective Spanish lessons we could recall, we decided that come hell or high water,

we would manage. In fact, we decided we would even enjoy our temporary “freedom.”

I, however, was bracing myself in my own way. I was seated several rows behind the rest of our group, and so I was unaware that anything out of the ordinary had occurred. I eventually learned that Antonio would not be making it on the flight from Mike, who, seated a few rows ahead, stood up to make a request on behalf of the class, that a random passenger might give up their seat for our instructor. No one responded. I rose from my seat, wondering what had happened. I walked up the aisle over to the rest of the group to gather information. Nick appeared concerned, so I decided to try to speak to a flight attendant. I felt familiar enough that I figured I still had time to run off of the plane and get any information from Antonio. The two flight crew members I talked to informed me that I could not step off the plane, and that Antonio could not come aboard to give us instructions. And so, I reported back to our group with this, saying there was nothing more we could do. I returned to my seat.

Gathering my thoughts, I could not help hoping that we would at least easily find Eric in Miami, because he seemed to have greater experience with communicating in Spanish. Personally, with only a basic understanding of Spanish and the peso, I worried about whether we would have enough money to cover our expenses in Mendoza or Chile until Antonio was able to rejoin us. Still, I sent a text message to Nick before takeoff: “don’t worry, everything will be fine— tell the girls not to worry.” Immediately after, the same flight attendant who had refused to let me gather any information came by and demanded my cell phone be turned off. And so, our flight commenced on this note.

I did not know exactly with what merit I ensured Nick and the girls that there wasn’t a need to worry, but I did it anyway. At that point, I resigned to take it easy. I had no choice; I figured it was best to relax and wait until we arrived in Miami. By that time, we should have a better idea of what to do.

Upon landing in Miami, we ventured outdoors for some air before settling in to dinner. Here, I was to have my “final” cigarette: I decided earlier that this trip would be a perfect occasion to quit smoking—to let go of the last “crutch” that had supported me over the course of my life. It was like a metaphorical third leg helping me to stand

when things got awkward, to walk when I didn't know where to walk, to speak to others who were also having a cigarette at the same time and in the same circumstance. I had walked with this crutch for well over a decade.

Well, it was a profound thought, at least. While the tendrils of this epiphany still poked at the outer surface of my mind, quitting in Argentina didn't work out too well. By the third day of the trip, I was yelling, "I NEED NICOTINE!" Luckily, Antonio managed to inquire about a little kiosk in a pueblo just outside of our spa in Cacheuta where I managed to purchase my crutch. But again, I am too far ahead in my story.

Back in Miami, Eric found us during our wait at the airport between our connecting flights. We had finished our dinners at this point. I was having a glass of Cabernet to take the edge off of the lack of nicotine, Nick was tinkering with a Rubik's cube, and Mike had just finished his third meal. We all sat in awe watching Nick mess with the cube, putting us all to shame. It was our first opportunity to engage in conversation and things were actually going smoothly, at a relaxed pace. Eric found us in this state, and I, at least, was even more relieved to see him. In a newly relaxed mood, we left the dining area of the terminal and headed to our gate.

On the way, we bought a few bottles of water and some magazines. Rosie was sitting with me as I charged my phone near an outlet, and Cheryl sat talking on the phone. Ten minutes before our flight was scheduled to board, the boys (Mike and Nick) decided to wander over to use the restrooms before we were to head to our final gate checkpoint. A few minutes later, when they still had not returned, my eyes traced their path to the restrooms—but stopped short halfway. There, suddenly, I spotted a tall figure in a white shirt running over with his hands waving in the air. Antonio had made it! I couldn't help but to laugh—what luck! Ten minutes before our flight was scheduled to leave Miami, our group was reunited.

* * *

My trip into the southern hemisphere began and ended with Spanish films.

A third of the way to Santiago, I was browsing through the in-flight movie selection on the touchscreen monitor in front of me, seated next to Antonio. I paused

on a summary of *The Motorcycle Diaries* when suddenly Antonio looked over my shoulder and stopped me short, exclaiming, "STOP! You're watching THAT!" Well, okay, I thought. It was a movie I was considering watching anyway, so I hit select and prepared for a two-hour-long film that would have subtle effects on me until the last day of our trip.

The Motorcycle Diaries is a brief visual diary into the lives of two men who travel on the back of a motorcycle, carving a path for the world's medical and political futures through the Andes terrain. The film weaves intricately through South American politics, culture, and medicine while telling the story of the early life of Che Guevara and his companion. A minimalist quality lends the film an air of simple authenticity that is unapologetic, honest, direct, and passionate. Che Guevara pursues his medical journey with relentless drive and a naked passion for humanity. This was my first taste of the authenticity of life that is purely Argentinian.

Everyone was sleeping by the time I watched the credits roll. I turned off the screen and Antonio immediately asked me what I thought of the movie. Before having had a chance to process the film, my reply was something along the lines of, "uhhh, good." I didn't know then that for the rest of the week, the film would be scratching its way into the back of my mind as we drove between the mountains of the same landscape, prodding me every once in a while with the simplest question: "but, why did they call him Che? His name was Ernesto...."

Little did I know then, this thought would follow me until the last night of our trip, when my question would be answered. "Che," Antonio later told me, is a familiar term for Argentines: "it's almost like saying, 'hey, you,' to a guy."

In America, you wouldn't say "che" to a guy walking down the street if you suspected he was Argentine. But in Argentina, people don't say "excuse me, sir,"—they say "Che." To Americans, Che may as well have been Ernesto Guevara's actual first name; we don't see the difference. To Argentines, he is Che because he is an Argentine, and so he is part of a cultural family. A man named Che in Argentina is *every* man, and referring to each other in this way is like acknowledging a brotherhood: familiar and friendly.

Day 2

By the time I woke up, we were landing in Santiago. I looked out of Antonio's window and saw mountains.

I guessed that at this point I should have felt some excitement. This is what I have come all this way for, after all. Still, I have flown over many mountains. "It's okay," I thought to myself, "I will be thrilled about this later." I took some photos and prepared for our landing.

The sunrise in Santiago was pretty. It was a brisk but warm morning, and the sky was a pale gold. It was a small airport surrounded by relatively small brown hills of what looked like brown rock or dirt. As I stood from my seat, I paid the hills some brief attention, deserving of the curiosity they inspired, and then proceeded into the airport with the rest of the group. I was exhausted. We were all exhausted.

As we walked into the terminal, Nick saw a Ruby Tuesday and became excited over the familiarity—I, on the other hand, grew disappointed. *Ruby Tuesday? Here? How sad.* I recalled the days in Poland when McDonald's didn't even have a recognizable name. In the 90s, you couldn't get a greasy American cheeseburger if you tried in Warsaw. Now, Poland is overwrought with commercialism. I was hoping Chile would not be so affected. This Ruby Tuesday was encroaching upon my trip, and I moved past it quickly with some slight disdain. Not long after, we boarded our flight for Mendoza.

* * *

Landing in Mendoza, we immediately proceeded off of the plane and into the small airport, heading immediately into a long customs line. Eventually, having claimed our bags, we loaded onto a bus and into the city of Mendoza. The first thing I noticed was that there was a vineyard on the airport property. Next, I saw walls painted with political graffiti and tiny grocery shops with vegetables being sold in outdoor crates. This was not the least bit strange to me—in fact, I felt as if I was in some southern-hemisphere-extension of Europe. I was immediately comfortable.

Arriving at our hotel, we had a few hours to select our rooms and to change before we were scheduled to begin our city bus tour of Mendoza. Our hotel room was more like an apartment than a hotel; we had two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. Our windows slid open to reveal a huge wrap-around balcony the entire

length and width of our hotel "apartment." The curtains were long, white, and transparent; when you opened the doors, they blew in a warm breeze. Beneath the balcony was the midafternoon city street, moving slowly in the shadows of the sun. It was mid-day and most people were likely indoors, taking their siestas.

I was more glad for a shower after our 24 hours of travel than I can remember being in a long time. Because I was technically the oldest, the girls decided I should have the master bedroom. I offered to flip for it, but we decided instead that we would alternate this privilege each time we switched hotels over the course of our trip. This worked out perfectly with the three of us and three hotel stays. Rosie took the master suite at our second destination, and Cheryl took a room to herself in San Juan province. Following our trip, I am still impressed with how easily we handled this. I am used to girls being picky, but I was happily surprised that my two new friends were harmonious and easy to live with.

* * *

We decided that sleep would bring no benefit but to tire us out further, so we embarked on the city tour sans shuteye. Before the tour, we wound up going out to our first dinner as a whole group at a nearby plaza. After dinner, a man walked up to our table once we had finished eating. Little did we Americans know, this Spanish speaker was asking about Cheryl's steak. The man said some phrases in Spanish, whereupon Antonio inquired of Cheryl whether she was going to finish her meal. As she began to say no, Antonio uttered a few quick words, and before we could all blink, the man slapped the steak onto his bare palm along with her tomato, her salad, and a few bread rolls. I'm pretty sure he also walked off with a bottle of water, all in a matter of seconds. If nothing else, the man was efficient! Had Cheryl changed her mind a moment later, it would have been already too late.

After dinner, we took a bus tour of the city. To be honest, I remember very little of the tour. None of us had slept in over twenty-four hours by that point, with the exception of Nick, who had fit in a thirty-minute power nap. What I do remember is that this was the first opportunity I had to immerse myself completely in an attempt to decipher a native Spanish speaker's words. The entire tour was in Spanish, with Antonio translating its key points. Eventually, though, he dozed off along with the rest of us.

During the tour, we did stop at a few interesting locations. My favorite spot was a large plaza that I cannot remember the name of, now. I do recall, though, that it had a pretty fountain that at the time was adorned with a rainbow. I took something like fifty pictures of this phenomenon, for which later I suffered some admonishment back home to Chicago. "Someone really liked this fountain...!" people said as they looked through my photos. Yes, someone did. I was more fascinated with the trees in the park, though. There were over fifty species that I could see, and apparently many more. Pines stood next to palms, and the bark varied from brown and rough to smooth and yellow.

Our next memorable destination was the San Martin memorial. Antonio requested that we pay a lot of attention to the story of the events which led up to the making of the memorial. Nick and I were so tired at this point, though, that we were more fascinated with the height of the mountains around us and the hawks hovering above us in the sky. I could read about San Martin any time, I thought. Argentinian hawks deserved attention. Still, I do recall that the entire top half of the memorial had been fashioned from the metal of weapons used in San Martin's war. The story of the plaque itself was one about a man who was both an excellent war hero and a calculating politician.

* * *

Back at the hotel, we had time to ourselves for the rest of the night. We decided to go exploring and grab some dinner. Cheryl wanted to get a tattoo, so we wound up heading to a local tattoo shop that Antonio described to us. We set out, being given the following directions: "go down three blocks, make a right, and then a left." Obviously, we were lost ten minutes later. As if by chance, we happened to stop to find ourselves directly in front of an information booth. We didn't notice this at first, so when a young guy approached us, asking if we were looking for something and telling us to "step this way" into an alley, we balked. Then, we noticed the big "i" in a circle on his t-shirt, which stood for "information." We realized then that Argentines are a lot friendlier (and a lot better at English) than we had all anticipated. With the guy's help, we found our way to the shop.

The streets in Mendoza are wide and bright, adorned with sunny colors and European-looking street signs.

The shops lining the streets are tiny but well-lit and close together, their doors open well into the middle of the night. The streets are crowded until the late night, but people walk at a leisurely pace. The atmosphere is not rushed; it is warm, relaxed and inviting. The air is fresh but sweet, carrying scents of pastries and fiery asado. Small Fiats drive down sometimes paved, sometimes cobbled streets. They zoom quickly past but do not threaten to run you over when you cross a street. It is as if they share the space with pedestrians instead of fighting them for the extra inch on a crosswalk. At some intersections, there is a man dressed in a striped yellow and black referee shirt wearing a red clown nose and a hat or wig. He dances at the red light, twirling a baton. I was told he earns money this way. I stopped one of these men once to tip him and take a photo, on a later night. The atmosphere, like the temperature in Argentina, is warm.

* * *

I swear that if I ever marry a rich man, I will have him order catering from Las Tanajas, where we dined after visiting the tattoo parlor. The restaurant itself is huge. We could not even see to the back of it, standing near the middle. The great hall was filled with tens (perhaps hundreds) of tables. But this was no mess hall: it was a grand dining hall with chandeliers and golden adobe walls. Fish tanks lined the waiting area, and waiters wore pressed shirts and slacks. Near the back of the first great seating area rose a platform cut into one pale golden wall. On this platform, a band played, and a woman sang Argentinian tango and pop, which people cheered with their wine glasses and great amounts of enthusiasm and joy.

In the middle of the hall, there were three large buffets, probably thirty feet wide and twenty feet long. Lining the first buffet were desserts and fruits. In the center of this buffet, behind a long stovetop, stood a woman who fried crepe desserts with ice cream, fruit, and dulce de leche. She lit her pan on fire and tossed the crepe in midair, then transferred the finished dessert onto a plate.

The second buffet was filled with vegetables. I constantly questioned Argentina: "I don't know why they eat so much meat here, I haven't had a better tasting vegetable in my life!" Argentines have a knack for cooking; that is definite. Between the fresh, crisp produce

and the grilled zucchini, eggplant and assortment of fresh and cooked legumes, I could have forgotten meat had ever been a part of my diet. The third buffet was lined with everything from Chinese fried rice to fish and octopus, sweet and sour beef to potato and pasta salad; Italian cuisine to Japanese sushi. But what the guys loved the most was the “carne.” A long line of asado ovens lined the left-most wall of the restaurant, each oven piled high and deep with beef, chicken, steak, veal, mutton, goat, and possibly even peacock. Entire pigs hung from the ceiling on chains roasting over flames as the “asador,” a specialty meat chef, carved portions of the meat off of the animal and threw them on the plates of the people lined up to receive. Anything could be had here: chicken leg, breast, even beak. I never knew a cow had so many parts.

We returned home wine, dined, and exuberantly overjoyed. We all wound up at the girls’ hotel apartment before we parted ways, relaxing our full stomachs on the balcony in the soft Mendoza wind with our doors open, curtains gently swaying in the breeze. We threw a large furry hotel blanket on the balcony floor and propped our heads up on giant overstuffed pillows. We fixed our eyes into the clear night sky, reflecting on our wonderful night. Looking up at the bright, nearly full moon, smiles on our faces, we laughed into the night. Twenty minutes into our heavenly relaxation, seemingly out of nowhere, Antonio stuck his head out of the window twenty feet directly above us and hung his wet shorts directly over our heads: “Hey! Go to bed!” We quickly called it a night.

Day 3

On the third day, we rose bright and early after only a few hours of sleep to travel into Mendoza’s wine country. Having been to many vineyards in Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, I was never a fan of Malbec until Mendoza. After tasting some of the best wine I’ve had in a very long time, I bought three bottles of wine at the first vineyard after having taken in a tour of the beautiful winery.

The vineyards in Mendoza have fields upon fields of sweet grapes hanging high and low in the warm Argentinian sun, as if set out to bake. From these grapes are drawn incredible wines of all varieties, but especially deep reds like Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon. In the backdrop of the fields are enormous distant mountains: first brown, later topped with peaks of white snow. The sun is hot and pours down on vast fields of sweet fruit, irrigated with streams flowing down from the ice-capped

Andes delivering fresh water from the distance. There is not a cloud in the sky.

In the quiet moments between tours, we grew weary standing on our feet in the hot Argentinian sun. Each one of us had had an opportunity to be cranky by the third day after having had little sleep. Still, when we grew weary, we supported each other, physically and mentally. I leaned first on Rosie, then Nick, and finally nearly asked Cheryl to carry me. In the friendly silence, we grew to recognize and read each other’s strengths, weaknesses, pet peeves, and senses of humor. We began to fit together like pieces of a puzzle that we enthusiastically grew to become a part of. Between vineyards and photos, we tasted deep wines, ate bitter olives, and relaxed in the hot sun.

We finished our afternoon by having dinner at another beautiful vineyard and inn, where Antonio taught us the proper methods of drinking yerba mate. Mate is the traditional Argentinian drink, sharing fame with many South American countries. It is an herb that is served with hot water and sometimes sugar. Being invited to share mate is considered an honor: it is usually offered only when you are considered a friend. Listening to Antonio describing the tradition and rules of drinking mate was a humbling experience in itself. “Never touch the straw, so as not to offend the ‘servador,’ by accidentally stirring the contents” he said. The mate is arranged by the servador in a certain way before it is passed to a person in the mate circle. The servador decides who drinks and when. Even though we were only being shown the proper methods and it was our first experience with it, I still felt appreciation when the servador handed me the cup. The drink turned out to be bitter, but I quickly fell in love with it. I left Argentina with no less than a pound of mate, three drinking gourds, and two bombillas.

Later that day, we retired to the hotel and took advantage of the rooftop pool before embarking on a long walk to a dinner and tango show. Live dancers entertained us between tango serenades as we ate our dinners and shared an Argentinian Malbec that Eric chose. At the end of our night we walked peacefully back to our hotel, arm in arm. This was our last night in Mendoza, and it was another incredible joy.

*I beg you
do something
learn a dance step
something to justify your existence
something that gives you the right
to be dressed in your skin in your body hair
learn to walk and to laugh
because it would be too senseless
after all
for so many to have died
while you live
doing nothing with your life.*

—*Auschwitz and After*, Charlotte Delbo

El Viaje, Segunda Parte: Termas Cacheuta Day 4

On the fourth day, we travelled from Mendoza to beautiful Termas Cacheuta. Termas Cacheuta is a hot springs resort spa just an hour or two outside of Mendoza city, located in the outskirts of the Andes Mountains. This was when I finally grew excited about the mountains. As we neared the giants, I began to take photos through the window of our van. “Just wait, this is nothing!” Antonio would say. And he was right. When we arrived at Termas Cacheuta, we were given keys to our rooms, robes, and the opportunity to visit the hot springs. Changing into our swimsuits and donning our new white spa robes, we set off for the outdoors immediately.

The backyard of Termas Cacheuta was nothing short of heavenly. Walking through the garden doors overlooked by our master bedroom, we stepped out to see a vast field of green grass. To our immediate left was a porch that extended the dining hall, set with tables and chairs for relaxation. Farther in the distance rose an impossibly high tower resembling a palace next to an immaculately white and equally tall staircase that ended at a tall gate, which led into the nearby Cacheuta pueblo.

Directly ahead of the path lay a vast pool of crystal-clear turquoise-colored water, measuring probably sixty feet long and twenty-five feet wide. The hot sun beat down on the pool, naturally causing it to heat up to the temperature of the warm air during the day and retaining its warmth at night. The pool sat above a staircase that led down to the hot springs, and was lined on the right with giant palms overhanging the water. To the far left, lining the field was a stone wall carved from mountain rock,

on which stood tall pines. At one point, I climbed the staircase next to the tower to walk the path shaded with pines—it smelled exactly like a pine forest. I could not fathom, still, how a pine could grow next to a palm, and with equal majesty. Beneath the pines and in the distance stood a waterfall carved into the rock.

Past the pool and down two flights of stone steps were the hot springs. There were perhaps twenty in all, each a different temperature. Some of the hot springs were indoors, along with a few natural showers and a mud pit. Here, we would cover ourselves in pure brown mud and walk through a glass door to the outdoors, where we laid ourselves on hot stones and baked in the sun. Here, the surrounding hot springs led down to a gently flowing river below, which carved its way into the high mountain that surrounded us. After sunning ourselves on these stones, we would rinse off in the hot shower stations, grab our robes and soak our bodies in the warm hot springs, traversing between warm, hot, and cool springs. A few steps away, there was a cave that provided a natural sauna for physical refreshment. We thus spent the beginning of our day in luxury, receiving massages and bathing in hot springs.

* * *

In the early afternoon, our group headed out to the cliffs for some zip-lining and hiking. At first, I was scared to step near the edge of the cliff, not sure I would be able to imagine sliding down a metal cord suspended between two cliffs, overhanging nothing but sharp rocks and shallow river water. Cheryl, however, sprang into action. She was the first of our group to slide down the zip-line and to reel herself back over the chasm, giving the rest of us the courage we lacked. Still, I did not look down.

After zip-lining, we rappelled down the cliff to the bottom. Midway, we were told to stop and jump, horizontally, away from the cliff. This was everyone’s opportunity to take a good photo of each other, but it required lots of patience. I believe I was asked to jump ten times before I finally got my legs straight enough!

Having rappelled down, we each then free-climbed our way to the top. This was the most challenging activity because it required careful planning and movement. Yes, we were attached to our lives by a rope that was held by the man who led the excursion (and would potentially have to save us if we slipped), but that rope looked very

thin from a climber's point of view, and I wasn't sure I liked the idea of flopping face-first into a vertical wall of mountain if I slipped. Given my circumstances, I was impressed with my skill in purchasing the appropriate shoes for the climb, not to mention my dexterity.

Climbing was my favorite physical activity on the trip. This was finally my chance to test my strength against a mountain, and to see if my mind would be able to handle the fear and adrenaline. I don't believe I ever experienced anything like it before. To be honest, I think it may have been the first experience of a new hobby.

Having had our muscles twisted into active shape, we ran down the path back to the hotel and up a path to the hotel's massage huts, where we received our first massages during our stay. It was perhaps the most relaxing massage I have ever received: twenty-five minutes into it, my mind slipped into a sweet suspension, drifting somewhere between a cloudy reality and a dream. I awoke groggy and relaxed, all of my tension swept away with soft perfumed oils.

* * *

Still, the struggle of a smoker cannot always be quelled with such luxury. By midafternoon, I was yelling across the hall to Antonio: "I need a cigarette! I can't live like this!" One would think that hot springs and massages were enough, but no. And so, toward the evening our group embarked past our massage hut and up a trail. Mid-walk, Nick poked Antonio and said, "You know, we could have actually taken the other way, it's just up the street and to the right..."

"Okay, everybody stop," Antonio halted the group mid-step.

Flanking the back with me, Rosie formed her hands into the shape of what I can only now imagine was an atomic bomb, and whispered "kaboom!" to signify that our benevolent leader might have finally lost his cool with us. (I suspected as much, given that he was obviously in such dire circumstances that he kept calling Nick "Mike," and all of the girls "Cheryl.")

However, Antonio was not to be feared: he only took one breath and with a renewed humor gave us what would be our first rule of the trip. (This was besides Rule Zero, which was, "do not lose your passports or your limbs! Everything else can be managed.") Rule

one was briefly explained to us in a few short sentences: "do not take suggestions from anyone but me, and do not make suggestions to others." All our brains recorded from Antonio's speech, however, was that he had just established a dictatorship. And so, we continued on our way, new rule intact.

We followed a long stretch of railroad to a nearby pueblo. Along the way, we encountered random street dogs and random games of Frisbee, care of Nick. We ended our journey at a small kiosk, where I was able to satisfy my craving for nicotine. At last, I was fully relaxed. We sat around outside of the kiosk, chatting and observing our surroundings, trying not to act like tourists (and failing miserably). The kiosk owner was nice enough to bring out a few chairs for us and lend me a lighter, which I later discovered was referred to simply as "fuego." As dusk settled, we walked back, stopping at a children's park to live out something like a brief lapse back into childhood: ages ranging from nineteen to retirement, we played on swings and see-saws, laughing unabashedly.

We snuck back into our hotel through the gate at the top of the incredibly high staircase and ran down to take quick showers. We completed our night with a typically long Argentinian dinner and lively conversation covering everything from physics and psychology to the practices of religion and eating meat. One of my favorite things about Argentina was quickly becoming my fellow travelers and the time we spent together conversing over dinner.

* * *

After dinner, I walked out to the pool with Nick. We sat talking for a moment as he was asking me for advice about something. I launched into a deep dialogue about the application of context to one's personal surroundings. When I was finished talking, I looked at him and said, "Sorry, I know that probably doesn't help."

"No, it really does," he said. He looked like he meant it. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Sure."

"What's your major?" he asked. Before I had a chance to reply, he added, "cause you would make a great psychologist." I smiled.

Later, as I was heading back indoors, thinking

I would get some sleep after a long day, I walked over to the porch, where Antonio sat with Cheryl, locked in another discussion. I decided to pause for what I thought would be another brief interlude before heading to bed. A few minutes into their conversation, however, a sore subject was brought up. Antonio insinuated that Cheryl was feeling left out. I opened my mouth to reply that she shouldn't, but he stopped me. "Now, wait—you yourself said that you felt slowed down when you had to walk with Cheryl." I felt ambushed. Earlier the previous day, Rosie and I had talked about this. We regretted the fact that we were the only ones who were often willing to accompany Cheryl. When we did, the rest of the group would walk quickly ahead, leaving Cheryl and whoever walked with her out of their conversations. We would continue like this, alternating positions. Each time, someone was being isolated. Rosie had brought the issue up to Antonio, and Antonio later asked me how I felt about the matter. I agreed, to which he replied that we needed to develop more patience. Swallowing my words, I consented. So the next day, sitting down with Antonio and Cheryl and being struck so suddenly with this topic of conversation again made me halt.

"Now, wait a minute," I started to say.

"Okay, looks like you guys need to talk," said Antonio. "I'll be right back." And with that, he jumped up and ran inside.

Being presented with this discussion so suddenly, I felt like a fish out of water, hung out to dry. I took a deep breath and asked Cheryl to tell me how she felt. She began explaining that she felt isolated. Each time she walked with someone, she felt like a burden to them.

"I'm tired of walking with someone and being left behind," she said. "I don't want you guys to feel like you have to walk with me, but it is so frustrating not being able to do all of these things myself. You have no idea what that feels like. It isn't easy."

I felt bad, but I was soon on the defensive. She brought up another point about something random that I had said a few days prior. At the time, she had agreed with me, but now she was telling me it made her feel uneasy, two days later. It was a trivial remark that I cannot remember, now. Still, two days later, she was bringing it up, and it irritated me.

"Now, wait a minute, I thought. Why are you talking to me about this now?" This wasn't fair to me. As far as I was aware, I hadn't been isolating her at all, and

what she was bringing up on the side seemed trivial and insignificant. She said I was too brash. I was shocked.

"I feel like I'm being punished for something, Cheryl. I have been up late at night talking with you, not getting any sleep, listening to you, I have walked with you, and I haven't even noticed for a moment that you might be upset. You never told me two days ago that you were upset about anything I might have said. Besides, the things I say, sometimes they're off the top of my head. I am the sort of person who is quickly irritated, but it passes even more quickly. Why all of a sudden now, am I being attacked?"

"Well, it takes me a few days, sometimes, to process things," she said. I replied, "I know that Cheryl. But I'm not that sort of person. To me, this is unfair. Okay. You know what—I won't bring my thoughts up to you anymore. If it makes you feel uncomfortable, I just won't do it." I was frustrated. I lit a cigarette and let out a heavy, overwhelmed sigh.

"No, that's not what I want at all!" she said.

"Well, what is the problem, then?" I was irritated. "Look, why don't you just tell me what you want me to do, because I feel like this conversation is going nowhere." And it was. The conversation continued this way for a while with petty trivialities being brought up until we both feel silent. We weren't getting anywhere, and I had given up.

"I give up. I feel like this isn't about walking together, Cheryl, and if it is, then I'm confused about why I'm the only one who you're bringing this up to, if you feel isolated by everyone."

She was quiet, again. Then: "it's because I feel like you're the only one I can talk to about it," she said. "I don't know why, but I almost feel like you're the only one who would be willing to care enough to take responsibility, or be able to handle it."

I stopped. She was serious. I felt so appreciated. I looked at her, and I felt awful.

"You're right," I said. "I am completely willing to handle this. But you have to understand that it's hard for me. I have dealt with many things today. Mike yelled at me for no reason, I just finished talking to Nick about a problem he is having here, and overall people keep bringing things up to me. I feel like a lot of the time, I'm taking on the burdens because I care enough to do it, but please understand that I'm just on vacation, too."

She did understand.

“Look, the truth is, you’re right. I do feel slowed down when I walk with you,” I said. “But you were the first on the zip-line today! Why should we have to slow down for you?” I wasn’t trying to be cruel, I was making a point I felt that she had already agreed with. I wanted to push her to take action, to strengthen her— like she was pushing me to slow down and to understand.

“You don’t!” she exclaimed. “I hate when people treat me like I have to walk slowly. Yes, it takes me time to find obstacles with my stick, but I hate that whoever walks with me feels like they have to slow down and patronize me!”

“Cheryl, I don’t patronize you. I think you’re perfectly capable of everything, and I think you need to push yourself and whoever is walking with you, if you feel that way. I had no idea. What I hate is that whenever I walk with you, everyone else runs off. It happens to every one of us. When I walk with you, when Rosie walks with you, when Mike walks with you... the rest of them are twenty feet ahead and whoever walks with you is walking slowly. We’re all doing it.”

“I know,” she said. “That’s the problem. We’re not a very cohesive group.”

Antonio came back then, and started telling us about his own breakthrough he was having. Ten minutes later, he asked what we had come up with.

“Well,” I said, “I think Cheryl needs to push herself a bit more and the rest of the group needs to be more accommodating and not leave her behind so often.”

“Whoa! I don’t think Cheryl needs to push herself at all! The rest of you need to slow down. No one leaves her behind. Everyone—“ Antonio started.

“But that’s exactly how I feel!” Cheryl exclaimed loudly, very out of character.

Antonio paused. “Really?” He chose his words, “well, I’ll have to mention this to everyone. Obviously people need to slow down more and appreciate life around them.”

“Antonio,” Cheryl laughed awkwardly, “you do it too!”

“I do!?” He sounded shocked. “Well, I definitely need to slow down, then!”

And so we continued, filling Antonio in on the main points of our conversation and the real cause for the isolation Cheryl had been feeling.

That night, over the course of our conversation, Cheryl and I grew to form an understanding and a stronger

friendship. I did not come to Argentina expecting to form any bonds, but I formed many.

Day 5

On the morning of our second day in Cacheuta, we headed quickly down to our breakfast buffet to eat—we were soon heading out to go white-water rafting on the Rio Mendoza.

Following a quick group chat at the rafting center (whereupon Antonio established Reglo Numero Dos: Be inclusive!), we headed out in two cars to the Rio. After some brief instruction, we set out on our raft. Mike was afraid he may fall into the river, so I sat in front alongside Eric. One the river rapids, we were commanded by our rafting instructor to paddle forward, backward, not at all, or to jump into the center raft to shield ourselves, paddles erect. Our final instruction was “Festejo!”— this meant we were to raise our paddles into the air as high as we could and cheer. (This quickly became our favorite rule, and later, Appended Rule Number 5 for our group, which we used often in celebrating the rest of our trip.)

Today was the only day that we saw clouds in Cacheuta, and the river was cold. I learned this quickly when we flowed downstream— Mike was right to be worried about sitting first, after all: I fell into the river! At first, I was shocked by my immediate circumstance and at the temperature of the water— this was no pool in Cacheuta. The rapids were low, thankfully, so the river was not travelling as fast as it probably would have during the height of the rafting season. Still, the pace was quick, and the raft was quickly closing in over my head. Suddenly, I felt my flip-flop loosen from my foot. As Antonio looked between me and his camera, trying to decide whether to save his student or to continue videotaping, I was trying to decide whether my fifteen-peso flip-flop was worth more than a comfortable seat on the raft. After a second to process, I decided I needed my flip-flop. How else would I walk back to the car!? And so I chased after my shoe, and Antonio continued to record our adventure. After having skillfully captured my renegade flip-flop, I was pulled back atop the raft. The first words out of my mouth were, “where’s my paddle?”— which still surprises me.

* * *

In the evening, we headed to Cacheuta again in

search of a waterpark. During this time, Cheryl stayed behind to relax. Probably best that she did, though—this was the day Antonio made all of us eat cactus. As we walked through the water park, Antonio noticed a familiar plant. He plucked a cactus bud and told us all to grab one. “It’s good!” he said, as he took a cactus bud and opened it, putting the contents into his mouth to suck out the juicy fruit inside. To say the least, I am still recovering. I am happy to say that the cactus quills are finally almost completely out.

* * *

Antonio’s brother Felipe came to join us that night as we spent our last night in Cacheuta eating a relaxed dinner and mourning our impending departure the following morning. Antonio, however, had other plans for our relaxed evening dinner. He launched our entire dinner table into a deep discussion about seemingly unrelated topics like religion and the meat-packing industry, focusing on the correctness of eating meat. A question was raised eventually that left a lot of us troubled: do animals have souls? With Eric at the helm (being the logical, scientifically-bred retired physicist that he is), religious philosophy was quickly balanced with logic, and carnivores with vegetarians. To make his final, unforgettable point, Eric stabbed a grape whilst screaming—quite literally—bloody murder, emphasizing that if animals had souls, then grapes must also care when they are being crushed. Suffice it to say, the debate was long and intense. In the end, I am not sure whether any of us ate any grapes at all for the rest of our stay in Argentina. Later that night, I sat along the top of the outdoor tower staircase with Nick and Rosie, breathing in the fresh pine air and reviewing our photos of the trip so far. We could hardly believe it was nearly over.

*There is a pleasure in the pathless woods
There is a rapture on the lonely shore
There is society, where none intrudes
By the deep sea, and music in its roar--
I love not man the less, but nature more.
From these our interviews in which I steal
From all I may be or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe and feel
What I can never express, yet cannot all conceal.*
—Lord Byron, 1814

El Viaje, Ultima Parte: San Juan Province Day 6

The road to San Juan was long, and we took even longer getting there. Taking the scenic route, we stopped along the way to visit old Incan ruins, climb rocks, and take photos of ourselves on top of rocks. About halfway through our journey, we stopped in a desert-like zone. For miles and miles around us, there was nothing but cracked, dry earth and mountains in the distance. I looked out of the window. Seemed quiet.

As I stepped out of the van, an immensely strong wind immediately filled my lungs and made me squint, as I tried to control my hair which was flying wildly around my face. This was amazing. It looked so peaceful, but in fact, wind isn’t visible! And with nothing in the desert but dry, cracked earth, there was nothing to distinguish the wind. *How deceptive!* I thought.

Nick and Rosie began throwing a Frisbee after a while. But the first urge that overtook me was to run! I ran around with Rosie and Nick, choking on wind as I laughed. I looked back and saw Cheryl standing with Mike.

“Cheryl...this is amazing!” I was thrilled. “There is nothing around but miles and miles of cracked earth. I never thought a desert would be so beautiful.” “What does it look like?” she asked me. I enjoyed giving explanations to Cheryl. It gave me a chance to indulge in my writer’s mind. I told her that the earth beneath her feet was like clay, and asked her to touch it:

“Feel the cracks?”

“Yeah!”

I told her that we were surrounded by mountains on both sides of the road, but that they were very far in the distance. I couldn’t judge just how far, I told her, because there was nothing but flat ground all around us. “The sky

is bright blue, the earth is a light tan, and the mountains are brown. There aren't any clouds around! The sun is bright. Do you feel that wind?!"

"Yes!" she said, catching on to my excitement.

I thought about what I said to her the night before, about pushing herself and testing her strength. I was so happy, I just wanted to share this feeling with her.

"Come on, let's go!" she grabbed my right elbow and we walked forward. The farther we walked, the more I felt the increasing urge to run. I sped up our pace, until she was just waving her stick above the ground so as not to hit the cracks. There was nothing around, after all.

"Wow, I don't even need my stick out here, do I?"

"No," I said.

She folded it up.

"Hey..." I thought out loud, and paused mid-step. "Do you want to run? ...Do you think you can run?"

She thought for just half a second. Then: "Yes!"

She passed her stick to someone nearby, and I gave her my arm, and we started on a jog. We went slower at first, but a few steps in, I gained courage with her and pumped my legs faster.

"You don't even need me!" I yelled to her, and dropped away. She ran ahead of me, smiling.

As I pulled away, I took out my iPhone and began to videotape. I don't need the recording, though. I will never forget it.

When she slowed down and stopped, she bent over. She started panting and spit.

"I think I taste blood," she said.

I grew worried. Placing my hand on her shoulder, I asked, "are you okay?" I wasn't sure what we would do out here, if she wasn't.

She looked up at me and smiled.

"I haven't run in years!" she beamed.

It was one of the most beautiful things I'd ever seen, just then. I looked around me. It was just us. Probably no one felt what I did, then, but it didn't matter. I was there.

* * *

Hours in, twilight reached us quickly. As we rose in altitude, I could see the sun begin to set behind the Andes as the clouds reached out to us from the distance. They were so low to the ground, I thought. But actually, it was we who were up so high. The air was not perceptibly thinner, but along the drive I felt my ears pop several

times. I swallowed as I considered our position. Rosie fell into a sleepy lull next to me, and Nick the same next to her.

Alone with my thoughts for the first time in nearly a week, I began to review my place on the Earth. I was in South America, driving through deserts and mountains. I had climbed cliffs, rappelled down cliffs, zip-lined across cliffs and rafted in between cliffs. I had walked down city streets, railroad tracks and mountain paths. I saw nothing but mountains in the distance around me and with the sun quickly setting, I tried to capture the moment on film because I didn't trust my memory alone to recall the glow.

The stars would soon appear in the sky, with nothing to obstruct our view. We pulled the car over on the desert road for a brief moment to see if it was yet dark enough to see them. The wind blew heavily as I exited the car. I looked up into the sky—the stars were not out yet, it was still too light.

I ran off a small distance into the desert as the rest of our group stretched their legs. I tried to capture this moment; I was not sure I would experience it again. But if this was true, why did I not feel more than this?

In the past, whenever I would travel to distant places, I would always find some time to sneak off alone to contemplate nature and the state of life. Here, in the mountains, I could not recall that feeling at all. I tried to reach out with my mind to grab ahold of some kind of thought—but I came up empty. I had nothing. I sat back in the car, and stared out the window at the vast space and setting sun as we drove down the long desert highway. For the first time on the trip, I felt lonely. The feeling was profound and seemed to reach down to the bottom of my stomach. I swallowed again, trying to release the pressure of both the feeling and the heightened altitude. I began to write:

It is the sixth or seventh day in Argentina, and we are driving through the San Juan Province to our final destination. Sometimes I see mountains outside of my window, the sun setting behind their peaks. Other times, we drive through small pueblos that line this road.

Just now, Antonio took out his camera to photograph some people living in this tiny pueblo we are driving through. They stood right outside our bus, cheering and waving, excited that they were being photographed. People who probably don't own cameras, have never used the Internet, and live simply. I remember growing up and

living simply; missing nature increasingly as it slowly creeps away over the years, replaced with TV, Internet, and a life that grows constantly more advanced and complicated, filled with LCD cameras and iPhones.

Now we are stopping at a tiny man's tiny house. He has cowbells dangling from his porch. Do we need directions? ...No, I think Antonio is just taking a picture with him.

How often am I ever surrounded by nature or simplicity, anymore? When did I forget simplicity and choose to replace it with a science so callous that it chooses to dissect and define the particles in the air that I breathe, instead of simply enjoying the experience of breathing it? Science can weigh the lungs down, this way. How often do I recall the fulfilling freshness of nature that I can remember, except when I see it now, in simple daily living such as this? Now, I just take a picture of it with my LCD camera, not trusting my memory to recall it correctly—not even taking the time to remember the images.

I am twenty-five, and no longer five. Maybe this feeling comes with age; or vanity, maturity, responsibility, what-have-you— all adjectives that make my throat feel tight, as if a businessman's tie were being slowly twisted and tightened around my neck like an economic noose. Is that the future?

I can't remember that natural feeling now, of feeling childish idealism at the sight of mountains. I don't belong here. I live in a different world, a commercial world that creeps in on places like these and cannibalizes them, given enough time. Even if there is not enough room for us, we make it. "We" cannot even remember feeling natural or like authentic human beings. "We" being the economical, commercial trap I have fallen into—that I choose to perpetuate—because if I do not make my way in this kind of world, eventually my kids, should I have them, will be in my own shoes, having to make these same choices that I've had to make. No one should have to make the choice of leaving behind a fulfilling life for a profitable one. Where idealism wants to go, the metaphorical businessman's necktie pulls in the other direction. And so incurring debt now to gain an education which may only leave me paying off money for the rest of my suburban life may at least alleviate some of the stresses in my future. Funny, this didn't bother me before. But now I see mountains.

Student Reflections on Writing:

Agnes Strojewska

I do not consider myself a "good" writer; I write well enough to communicate. The purpose of writing can be argued ad infinitum—for me, writing is simply a useful means of communication, expression and understanding. Writing is an art form, and in art, there is no place for self-censorship. I have little to say about the system of prose, and I do not take myself any more seriously than a more talented writer. I only require clarity and honesty, each of these a beacon for further extrapolation of mechanics and style.

The impossibility of reducing effective writing to grammatical rules and the incongruity of merely aesthetic writing with literature both hint at a more metaphysical element of writing, in most cases sorely lacking. An English major friend of mine would postulate that such an elusive element presents itself to many in the motto "Sincerity, Truth, and Design." He says that Sincerity precedes both Truth and Design. Readers infer context and tone more readily than most writers can synthesize it—thus, insincerity is inexcusable. Precious few disinterested people produce writing of value, regardless of technical prowess or sense of taste. For this reason I am compelled to communicate to you what he would implore: first and foremost, write earnestly.

Antonio just turned around and said, "Agnes, you're in the wilderness right now!" How ironic! But I am only a visitor, and it is only a visitor in me.

I was hoping to regain something of idealism here, but I haven't yet. We are in the Andes, now. The clouds can touch us. It's getting dark. I wonder, is there a point in trying to pursue this career in psychology? If I can't get my foot in the door where I can turn our current healthcare system on its head, what is the point? I need to find that idealism.

But the air is fresher here... wonder, do I want my future kids to experience my career and money— or to experience this sort of nature, to be happy— but then to

have to jeopardize their experience by facing them with the potentiality of losing it to the commercial world? Losing it is the worst thing that could happen. So perhaps most of America has the right idea, never having given children the experience of natural living at all. In any case, I have to make this decision about my future this month. I have to find a good reason to sign my life over to debt for this education I'm about to pursue. This might affect me for a long time; \$30,000 seems like a lot of money right now, and I am beginning to weigh my options.

These were the sorts of cynical thoughts on my mind as we drove through the desert night. In the fall, I will transfer to the University of Illinois. I don't come from a rich family—it's just my mom and I, here. In fact, often, I am loaning money to my mom. I don't know what will happen when I move. But my mom worked so hard to get me here, to where I am: to the United States, the land of opportunity, as people used to say in the 1980s. I have my own, different thoughts about life in the States, but my mom worked hard for us. Besides, what will *my* future children do if I don't do this—if I don't go to school, get a good job, and start a life here?

I didn't know what to do. I had been losing my idealism for a long time. I had replaced it with science and a love for neurology. I hate the U.S. health care system, and especially the mental health care system. People are treated like objects on an assembly line, never getting the help they deserve. How many lives—*entire lives*—are unfulfilled and wasted on unhappiness because no one cares? How many people think that a television set, a prescription bottle of pills, and a doctor who listens for ten minutes before asking for a check “payable to” is all there is to life? But who am I kidding—maybe it will never change, and entering the field to have a hand in changing it may be fruitless. And so I decided I should focus on neuropsychological research, instead. No matter what I chose, I had to *choose*, and I had to do it soon—in four weeks, I would have to give a reply to the University of Illinois, whether or not I would accept their admission. That is the problem with trying to write the story of the rest of your life, before you know what you want to do with it.

As we continued traveling, I tried instead to focus on pretty things like the red earth beneath our tires, but instead I found myself mentally restructuring its mineral

composition. Yes, science had fully replaced idealism, I thought. How bleak. We pulled over a while later, and Antonio told us to get out of the car. It was the middle of the night in the desert. It was chilly, pitch black, and dead silent. I could see thirty feet ahead of me, at the most. I looked up. There was the Milky Way. I'm not even sure you can see it like this, in the Northern Hemisphere, I thought. Instinctively seeking out my own place, I ran a few dozen feet away from the rest of the group, so that I could have some quiet as I tried to contemplate this. Nick and Rosie were somewhere behind me, was all I knew. I needed to stretch my legs and not see anyone around me for a moment. I needed to focus on my own thoughts. Just then, I heard Antonio call out to our group, “please, just two minutes of silence. Just don't talk for two minutes—I just want you to listen to the silence and look at the stars.”

I walked away a bit further and stopped. I was surrounded by mountains in the desert plains. I looked up again. I saw a blanket of stars spread across the sky in a stripe. It looked like someone had taken a paintbrush and flung it across the sky, spattering it with white dashes and dots. Here was the Milky Way. It hugged the mountains around us, but I stood alone, wondering if they really were just stars, and why there must be silence. I appreciated silence a long time ago, but I've lost that feeling now. To me, it is just silence—no longer an experience.

All I could think about was that the milky white dash above me was the outer spiral arm of our galaxy, and that I could see where the meridian divided east from west. I knew this because I saw the Southern Cross constellation, and knew from my astronomy class that two of the stars lined up to point to the celestial pole, about four arcs away. One arc was the width of a fist; the stars were likely made of helium; the bright blue star was either the largest or the youngest; it was probably composed of hydrogen... and so forth.

I tried to restrain myself, to stop thinking about these things. What was wrong with me!? I was seeing the Milky Way, and all I could think about was the chemical composition of stars above me, and the minerals composing the dirt beneath my feet! I searched for a sense of magic, but I could not find it. Each time, my peaceful thoughts were replaced with the intrusions of science. I just wanted to enjoy this! I knew I was running out of my allotted two minutes.

I focused on the bright stripe in front of me and

struggled to conjure up a thought that wasn't about the temperature of a distant gas giant, or how long ago it may have existed. I cursed my most recent college breeding. I tried to clear my mind to focus on the magnificence of this bright stripe of lights in front of me, to view the simple beauty—but I couldn't. I failed. My two granted minutes were over, and all I saw were stars.

I wanted very badly to recapture my idealism that night, and I was incredibly disappointed not to have been able to do it. I stood there, still, looking up, hoping for just an ounce of mystery to find me. I wanted to feel the curiosity and the excitement; I wanted to feel the lightness of joy. I wanted to see something that I didn't understand, that I couldn't explain—something that made me believe that I didn't know a whole lot about the world. I wanted this galaxy above me and around me to make me feel small again—why couldn't I? More than this, I wanted to feel a bit of wonder left in the world. But, I couldn't even remember the feeling I was trying to achieve. It was long forgotten. I couldn't remember what wonder felt like. I remember standing there at that very moment, wishing I could remember.

Just then, I felt a hard tackle from the right. Rosie ran up and threw her arms around me in a giant, generous hug. It was completely warm and incredibly random, and she had a giant smile plastered on her face. "Oh my God! Can you believe this?! This is so beautiful! I have never seen anything like this!" And she threw her arms around my shoulders again. This was genuine. In that instant, I realized that the wonder was never mine to find—I had been looking in the wrong place. This joy was hers, and seeing hers was mine. I found myself later thinking, "I remember feeling that lightness, now." And I was happy for her. I was so moved that I just stood there, smiling.

I walked back to the car, knowing that I had found exactly what I was looking for. It was sweet, and though I missed feeling that way myself, Rosie and Nick's contagious excitement made me share it as if it were my own. This made me believe that perhaps this is how adults felt when I was young. I always pondered, then, why they didn't share my wonder at the world's magic, why they couldn't feel the same excitement. Maybe it's because the next best thing to feeling it, is seeing it.

That night, I found my idealism.

Nearly every atom in your body was once part of a star.

—Unknown

Day 7

The next morning we woke up early and had a wonderful breakfast in Posta Kamak, following an amazing dinner the night before. Truly, by this point I must have gained some weight, eating so much good food.

Besides spending a lot of time eating food, over the course of the next few days we spent our time windsurfing and horseback riding. Antonio brought us to his finca, where we picked fresh mint, tasted fresh peaches, and tried our best to steer clear of the beehives. We met Antonio's family, who welcomed us.

The night before our last, Lili and Guido, the owners of Posta Kamak, allowed us to help in making pizzas. Nick and I took advantage of an unformed crust and shaped a heart, in honor of Reglo Numero Cuatro: Amor! That night, we shared our pizzas, watched Antonio dance, and observed Saturn's rings through a telescope.

Day 8

Our last full day in Argentina was spent climbing mountains. Antonio and Felipe brought us to several mountainous peaks and canyons. We took dozens of photos in somewhat steep situations, and then drove deep into the canyons.

I believe that everyone has a place in the world that they feel is somehow special. This is a place to which they are drawn when they withdraw from the world to be alone or to share quietly with a friend; or to simply take a breath apart from the business of society. When you encounter one of these places, it is as if you have found shelter; the air might be still and the atmosphere nostalgic even though you have never been there before. There is something simply beautiful about such a place, if not in the image reflected in your eyes, then in the air around you. It becomes natural to you, as if it were already your own—like a second skin. You feel peace. This is when a memory buries its way into your heart and when your mind paints its picture. This is how you will remember this place. No matter how far away you will travel, it always stays with you.

When I first entered the canyon space, wind and sand swirled around me. As I looked around, I temporarily forgot that I carried Antonio's gift in my hands. We had purchased it as a group at a gift shop on our way into San Juan. We waited for the perfect time to gift it to him, and as our trip neared its end, some of us feared that we

wouldn't have the "right" time. Still, when I entered the canyon, I nearly forgot what I carried.

The canyons were creamy beige, and their sides were smooth. The wind and sand had worn them down over time into rounded peaks, high and curved on the edges. In the growing twilight, I could still see that the distant mountains we passed through were layered with different-colored rock: some gold, some yellow, some orange or red. The canyons formed smooth plateaus high above us, and we walked on dusty paths that wove in between the high walls. Sand blew around us as we huddled in the crevice of a mountain nook. Here, we gave Antonio his gift from all of us: a mate gourd and a bombilla he had been eyeing at the gift shop. As the wind picked up and the sun was setting, we shared mate.

Here, I created one of my painted memories. These canyons became one of the mysterious places in the world to which your mind travels even when you cannot. It is even more special though, when it is given to you. Quietly sharing this place, and within it our mate and our friendships, was our own gift.

* * *

That night, Antonio's family along with Lili and Guido joined us for dinner at a local restaurant. I brought one of the better bottles of wine I had purchased on the second day of our journey, to be shared after dinner. I ordered pumpkin sorrentino, which became my favorite Argentinian dish. We ate at a leisurely pace, dinner interspersed with leisurely conversation about everything from fish to Marxism.

Here, Antonio and Eric were discussing socialism. They seemed to be having a debate, when they looked at me and said— "okay, what do you think?" Well, I was unfamiliar with socialism. Still, I listened to both arguments. Somewhere along the line, someone mentioned Che Guevara. This is when that nagging thought crept up on me again.

"Now, wait a minute. What's up with that? Why do they call him Che? His name is Ernesto!" This got a good laugh out of every non-American at the table. Here, Antonio and his sister-in-law, Gabi, explained to me that "Che" was a way of familiarly addressing an Argentine. I still didn't fully understand, but I caught the general drift.

Following our dinner, I opened the Gradum from the first vineyard we had traveled to. There was enough in the tall bottle for each glass. As we toasted, each of us went around to describe what we enjoyed most about our trip, which quickly turned into speeches of what we were most thankful for.

Many of us thanked each other, and many thanked our hosts. Many were appreciative of the warmth of everyone around us, and many loved the nature. All of us loved the country and the experience, and we each thanked one other individually in our own ways. I was thankful for rediscovering a sense of idealism. But even more so, I was thankful for the people that helped me. Leaving, that night, I felt a little as if I were leaving my own country and my own family.

At some point before we left, I was searching desperately for a lighter in my purse, but couldn't find one. I asked Antonio if he had an idea where I might get a hold of one, or how I could go about asking for one. He said, "go inside, ask the guy in the back!" Besides "festejo" and "amor," Antonio's big idea was to give us an utterly non-touristic experience of Argentina. I was almost completely comfortable with this, at this point. I was ready to walk into the kitchen and ask for some fuego.

Then, Antonio and Felipe called after and stopped me. "Say Che!"

"What? No! I can't do that." I felt it would have been disrespectful. I was obviously white... and blonde.

"No, it's fine! Watch, I'll show you," and Antonio did. He walked right into the back of the kitchen. As he was walking, he was tutoring me on the finer points of Argentinian: "Say Che, but don't say 'tiene' like I taught you in class. That's crap. Say 'tene.'"

I thought about this as we walked back to the kitchen.

"Listen," he said.

"Eh, teneunfuego? Encendedor?"

I was handed a purple lighter.

"See how easy that was?" he asked, as we walked out.

"No, you said 'eh!'"

"No, you've got to listen! I said Che!"

Well, maybe I didn't catch *all* of the finer points of the Argentinian dialect, yet. At least I acquired a passion for learning Spanish, if only to be able to return to Mendoza and San Juan. Certainly in one week, I learned more

about Spanish than I did in four consecutive years of high school and half of one semester in college. I even walked off of the Santiago airport with a complicated Spanish novel. But Argentina was more than just a Spanish field trip— here, I discovered genuine warmth and kindness in its people. I know I will perk my ears for the next time I hear “Che” – I will be waiting for it.

El Viaje, La Ultima Dia Days 9-10

On our long connecting flight home from Santiago to Miami, Antonio sat in the row behind me. Again, I flipped through the films on my individual screen. Suddenly, looking over my shoulder, Antonio loudly declared, “That one! That’s the one you’re watching! I don’t care if you don’t get any sleep, watch that movie!” And so, there I was again. I hit select, and settled back in my seat as *Secreto de Sus Ojos* began to play. The movie was a long one, and I was tired. I waned in and out of consciousness as it played. I had to rewind several times to make sure I had read the subtitles and understood the plot correctly. I vowed to watch the movie again at a later date as soon as it ended. Something about it was quietly inspiring, though I couldn’t put my finger on what that was yet. I pulled the LAN Airlines sleep mask over my face and caught two or three hours of much-needed rest.

I woke up to flight attendants rolling breakfast carts down the walkway. Antonio woke up shortly after me.

“So what did you think of the movie?” he asked.

“Uhhhh, good.” Ten days later and on the return flight, this was still the best movie critique I could offer.

“Really? No thoughts?” He sounded surprised that I didn’t have more to say.

He went on to share his ideas about it, asking me questions about what I understood and what I didn’t, helping me to fit together the pieces that I seemed to have lost in between. One thing he mentioned was the telling look shared between the lead actress and the actor. “I don’t know what it’s called in English. In Spanish, it’s ‘la Mirada,’” he said. From what I understood, la mirada is like the spirit seen inside a person’s eyes. An English dictionary will define that as “gaze,” but English seems to be missing the point.

Spanish culture, and especially South American and Argentinian culture, isn’t this easily defined. We

cannot put a neat, specific box around it. It cannot be written about in an essay of five pages or of fifty pages. It cannot be captured in a quote or a poem. It cannot be stated briefly, in answer to the common question, “How was Argentina?” This is why I haven’t said anything to anyone about Argentina. It is not so easy to say. It is simply *life*. Beneath Argentina is authentic spirit. It finds its way into your own heart and comes home on your skin, brought down upon your shoulders with rays of sunshine and open arms. In Argentina is a life that begs to be lived, shared in each pair of eyes. Today, I still wish that the warm wind of Argentina hadn’t set me down so briskly in Chicago. But it wasn’t merely Argentina that affected me; it was the people with whom I shared the journey. My fellow travellers share their own secrets, I think, each with their own set of eyes.

Rosie’s joy and generous nature is reflected in her calm gaze. Her eyes smile most of the time, which brought me a sort of quiet comfort. It was as if I already had an old friend on the trip with me, easy-going and relaxed. Mike’s eyes are quick, heavy, and penetrating. Although he might come off a bit tough-skinned, there is a depth in his reflections sometimes that isn’t always easily matched. He provided comfort to Cheryl on a few occasions, and was always a willing companion to the rest of us.

Eric’s gaze is reflective and easy-going. During any number of dinner conversations, I was able to see a deep focus come into his eyes which quickly gave way to his piercing intellect and sharp wit. He was always a pleasure to share ideas and laugh with. Nick’s eyes might seem quick, but they’re friendly. They carry warmth that gives hugs without having to reach you. Although incredibly resourceful and intelligent, Nick’s greatest trait is that he is one of the few kinds of friends that everyone needs: reaffirming and simply good.

Cheryl’s eyes may no longer see in the way that mine do: they may not convert light into colors and shapes, and I have heard that she may sometimes doubt herself because of this obstacle; but I believe that her eyes see more clearly than many of ours do. What Cheryl’s eyes cannot see is just reflected surface light— but what most of us forget to see is the undercurrent of life beneath these reflections. There is a sense which I believe we have exchanged in purchasing our vision. I cannot name

it, but I know that it is more penetrating than common eyesight. It sees much deeper than the reflected layers of light on a face. In comparison, it is my vision that is weaker than this type of sight. When Cheryl looks at me, I know that she sees me—and sometimes I forget that she really *cannot* in the way that I imagine. But if you look into her eyes, you will eventually find yourself looking past them and seeing eyes within her—and you will find that they are penetrating. Cheryl’s eyes are not like mine, but they are far from simply blind.

As for Antonio—a special thanks. When I began the trip, I was admittedly concerned that I would have to sit next to my Spanish teacher for eight hours during a flight to Santiago. Instead, on the way back, I found myself sitting next to a friend. This is the sort of friend that shares your ideas and your ideals—but it is also someone who has done way more than you in life. I have only had a handful of teachers in my life who I can say that I have truly learned from. I have learned from textbooks and lesson plans, but rarely from people. When I first sat down with Antonio on the flight to Santiago, he told me that he had lived in Argentina, Germany, and India before moving to the United States. As he ordered his vegan salad, he told me that before he became a teacher, he had been a monk. Now he will be moving to Argentina to live on a self-sustaining farm. I learned from Antonio that a real person lives a *real* life: an imperfect, unplanned life according to his or her own principals, happiness, and dreams. I learned that the scientific answer is not *always* the correct answer. Mostly, it was a simply great comfort to see someone living his life according to his own purpose, and not apologizing for doing it. These are not lessons that are taught in a classroom, they are lessons that are picked up on by listening to and seeing someone else’s story. This kind of lesson is not the kind that is forgotten at the end of a semester, but one that is applied over a lifetime: I learned from Antonio that idealism is not dead; and I learned from Argentina that life should not be lived as if one *is*.

It is unlikely that I should ever forget this trip. The experience and each and every one of the people involved have made this one of the most memorable and touching “complete” lessons of my life. I want to cling to each memory and to each person for as long as I can. But, the

rest of the experience has taught me simply to “just let go,” sometimes. To put it simply, to live and to *fully* live are different things: to fully live means to live with an open heart, and empty hands. At the very end of the last journey, your heart is the only thing that you will be able to take with you—all you have to do is keep it full.

Evaluation: *Agnes’ analysis and narrative is engaging and outstanding. Her clear descriptions of the surroundings, the people, and her fellow students are impressive, and above all, her introspective capacity is admirable.*

A Ship to Cross the Sea of Suffering¹

Gregory Taylor

Courses: English 100 and Reading 099
Instructors: Barbara Butler and Judy Kulchawik
Assignment: Write a personal narrative.

Having a disability, I did not have the opportunity throughout life of a happy educational experience. I am dyslexic and could not read and write. I was going through life feeling inadequate and dumb. My fourth-grade teacher said I was dumb and wouldn't do anything worthwhile in life. So who was I to argue with the teacher? I began to believe it. I couldn't do my schoolwork and homework. My classmates and friends would tease me. I always tried to do my best and to be a good person. I loved school very much, and it was heart-wrenching that I could not perform.

At the age of eighteen, I was introduced to Buddhism. I was so intrigued with the philosophy that I chanted to learn how to read. It was my first benefit that I received as a practicing Buddhist. Immediately, my mother noticed this change in me, and she encouraged my siblings to practice this Buddhism with me.

I was a fair reader and the literature that I read inspired me even more. I began to feel more confident in myself as a human being. In addition, I applied for various jobs. While in high school, I worked at the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, building tires. After high school, I applied to the Cook County Sheriff's Department and was sent to the Academy for six months of training. While there, I and my fellow cadets were assigned to various duties throughout the county jail. On my wing, there were some inmates planning to escape. I and my fellow cadets figured out their plans, and they were not able to escape. We received a special commendation award while we were still in the Academy.

After the Academy, I worked in various divisions, including maximum security and men's division. I remember working in Cermak Hospital when they brought John Wayne Gacy in. I was one of the officers assigned to him. I would bring him food. I wasn't particularly thrilled about the assignment, so I requested a move to receiving, which gave me more experience as a police officer. That position entailed booking, receiving and sending bonds and warrants and habeas corpus.

In 1985, I got married, and my wife joined the United States Air Force. Because I learned how to read, I was able to get a job selling insurance to the GIs. I would advise them about the military benefits due their spouse and family if they died. In the event that the soldier was killed, his or her family members would have been

¹ Title of a letter in the *Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Volume 1, Page 33.

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compensated for their loss. Unfortunately, the amount of insurance was inadequate for a spouse and their children. At the time it was only \$50,000, which isn't enough to manage a household.

The GIs and their spouses had a real incentive to acquire adequate amounts of insurance that would be sufficient to their family needs. Very often, I would be challenged by the client and I would encourage them to go see the jag, and they would come back and say to me I was right. In fact, they found out while being in the military, you had to die right, meaning you could not be found negligent when it came to an accident that involved your death. It had to be a legitimate death claim; for example, you could not have been intoxicated. That is considered to be a wrongful death, and the government would not pay the claim.

In June 2000, I had a stroke that made me regress to first-grade reading level. Once again, my life was devastated; it affected me psychologically, gave me a speech impediment, and impaired my comprehension and understanding. I tried speech therapy, but it was too painful. Still, I knew I had to find some way to interact with people. So I got into the adult continuation classes and computer classes — anything that would make me interact with people.

I also volunteered as a receptionist at the Buddhist Center, answering the telephone, taking messages, and greeting the public. There was this lady by the name of Ms. Tukes, a nurse who was very encouraging to me. We became quite acquainted with one another. She was someone that I could trust and confide my deepest fears over my dilemma of being a stroke victim as well as my inability to read. She listened to me and encouraged me to consider going to college. She was a skilled nurse with deep compassion who took me under her wings and advocated for me to get into college. To have such compassion, I cannot find the words of gratitude. To this day, I am deeply indebted to Ms. Tukes. She was the ship that helped me to cross the sea of suffering.

Evaluation: *Gregory writes a powerful and poignant personal narrative. An eloquent speaker and charismatic student in our learning community, Gregory invites the reader to empathize with him as he crosses the "sea of suffering."*

Tainted Water

Nicole Thomas

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Kathleen Dyrda

Assignment: Write a 2,500- to 3,000-word literary analysis of Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, using the novel as primary source for your argument and at least four secondary sources to support parts or all of your argument. Use MLA style to document all references.

Water floods the pages of Joseph Conrad's novel, *The Secret Agent*. It hovers about Stevie in a "golden mist" that outlines his jaw (Conrad 9); it flows from the mouths of orators with "torrential eloquence" (Conrad 38), and it sloshes in the mind of Comrade Ossipon as he is "mentally swimming" before the Professor (Conrad 59). The bodies, the words, the minds—the very lives—of the novel's characters are damp with its moisture. And as it flows throughout their lives and their city, it is tainted by their filth. Unable to cleanse London of its moral decay, the water saturates it, its dark waves eventually threatening to drown the very people whose desperate struggles fill it with their muck. Water imagery in *The Secret Agent* is intertwined with the filthy state of life Conrad depicts in his novel, and as it encroaches upon the characters, it comes to represent their amoral struggle to survive in the city.

The London that Conrad imagines exists under a layer of dirt and grime. Verloc's shop, for instance, is "one of those grimy brick houses," from which he advertises old and soiled smut (Conrad 3). The Professor, meanwhile, lives "in a small house down a shabby street, littered with straw and dirty paper" (Conrad 50), and Conrad writes of an "early spring" day as being "raw, gloomy ... the grimy sky, the mud of the streets, the rags of the dirty men, harmonized excellently with the eruption of the damp, rubbishy sheets of paper soiled with printers' ink" (Conrad 63). But the squalor of London goes beyond its physical filth. Verloc stares out his window and sees the city not only as a "cold, black, wet, muddy, inhospitable accumulation of bricks," but as having "things in

themselves unlovely and unfriendly to man" (Conrad 45). People are "grimy with everlasting toil" (Conrad 144) and misery, windows have "the sightless, moribund look of incurable decay," and abandoned furniture is not just trash, but is somehow "unhappy, homeless ... outcast" (Conrad 66). Indeed, Stephen Bernstein describes the city as being "cruel, devoid of grace, a monument to arrogant human aspiration" (286). London is filthy with not only the dirt of the body, but also of the soul, and as Normand N. Holland explains, it "becomes inner madness rendered as outer setting."

The same moral corruption and inward misery that blackens the streets also begrimes the lives of the characters. Nearly every character, for instance, employs some method of deception to reach his or her ends. Verloc and Winnie create lies of omission: Winnie leaves out that she never loved him, and Verloc declines to inform her of his secret and dangerous profession. Eventually, their many secrets implode the family, leaving Verloc stabbed to death, Winnie drowned, and Stevie blown to pieces. The other characters are no better. Chief Inspector Heat, in all "his courage and his fairness" (Conrad 74), tampers with evidence and falsely accuses the anarchist Michaelis in the effort to save his own skin; Vladimir fabricates a terrorist plot in order to create a panic he can manipulate, and Comrade Ossipon pretends to love the freshly widowed Winnie so that he can rob her of her wealth.

Yet for all their deceptive manipulation of people and events, no one is happy. The Verlocs are closed off and distant from one another, lying in bed each night staring at the ceiling, both burdened with their own secret worries and misdeeds. Chief Inspector Heat is constantly frustrated by his superior (who is also unhappy, both in his marriage and in his work) after being promoted to a department he does not like or understand. And Comrade Ossipon ends the novel "marching in the gutter" with his "broad ... bowed shoulders" and hanging head, rapidly descending into madness and drink (Conrad 246). No one receives any joy from their wrongdoings, leaving each of their souls as dirty as the streets they walk on.

Perhaps, if this were a redemptive story, a great flood of biblical proportions would come to wash these characters of their black burdens underneath waves of cleansing water. Conrad does allude to such a thing,

though not with any ideas of redemption in mind. His flood rains down on the day of the Greenwich attack:

[The window] panes streamed with rain, and the short street ... lay wet and empty, as if swept clear by a great flood. It was a very tiring day, choked in raw fog to begin with, and now drowned in cold rain. The flickering, blurred flames of gas-lamps seemed to be dissolving in a watery atmosphere. And the lofty pretensions of a mankind oppressed by the miserable indignities of the weather appeared as a colossal and hopeless vanity deserving of scorn, wonder, and compassion. (Conrad 80)

Conrad's flood is oppressive, rather than redemptive. It snuffs out the light and suffocates man's high-minded ideals underneath misery and darkness, leaving us feeling both pity and contempt for him, emotions that the story of *The Secret Agent* will continue to mix together. This torrential downpour is not enough to wash the city clean, and so it can only drown it. Water becomes saturated with the city's corruption and becomes a living, slithering extension of London, taking on a sinister darkness that slowly leaks into the characters' lives.

We can best see evidence of water's corrupting influence during the Assistant Commissioner's journey into Brett Street, when some of the most foreboding imagery in *The Secret Agent* occurs. The very atmosphere is "immoral," and he can feel "a sense of ... evil freedom" (Conrad 118) as he descends onto the "sullen, brooding, and sinister" street (Conrad 120). His journey "was like the descent into a slimy aquarium from which the water had been run off. A murky, gloomy dampness enveloped him. The wall of the houses were wet, the mud of the roadway glistened" (Conrad 117). Water is everywhere, and it is enclosing him, changing him. He begins to walk in the shadows, hiding from other officers. He turns up his collar and twists his mustache into a villainous style (Conrad 118). The Assistant Commissioner, a figure of justice, turns criminal when submerged in the tainted waters of *The Secret Agent*.

This is the effect water has everywhere in the novel—it drips into the characters, changing them, corrupting them, until it forms an ocean to envelope, smother, drown

them. And they are all struggling to swim through it. In this way, water in *The Secret Agent* becomes a symbol Conrad uses to express the effects of living to survive on a human being: it is an oppressive and corrupting influence that drowns.

As we look through the waterlogged *The Secret Agent*, we can see many examples of these corrupted and drowned individuals. One of these is Mrs. Neale. She is the "charwoman of Brett Street," a "victim of her marriage with a debauched joiner" (Conrad 143), and a woman "oppressed by the needs of many infant children" (Conrad 144). Her apron is "grimy with [the] everlasting toil" of her life, and she is as wet with her misery as she is dirty with it (Conrad 144). Her breath is damp with "soap-suds and rum," and carries with it all "the anguish of the poor" (Conrad 144). The liquid rum she uses to drown her misery also corrupts her, as we see when she kneels "on all fours amongst the puddles, wet and begrimed, like a sort of amphibious and domestic animal living in ashbins and dirty water," and uses her piteous situation to play on Stevie's emotions to manipulate him into giving her money to support her children—money she will most certainly use on more rum (Conrad 147). In her struggle to cope with her cruel and backbreaking situation, Mrs. Neale has succumbed to the dark waters she is forced to swim in.

The story of Winnie Verloc is a similar tale. From the very beginning she fights for her survival. At first she must outlast her father, a verbally and violently abusive man who was "wounded in his paternal pride ... since one of his kids was a 'slobbering idjut and the other a wicked she-devil'" (Conrad 192). Her childhood memories are of beatings, fear, and fierce and painful protection of her brother.

After her father's death, Winnie next struggles to endure her "crushing" and "exhausting" days working at the Belgravian mansion, "the endless drudgery of sweeping, dusting, cleaning, from basement to attics; while the impotent mother, staggering on swollen legs, cooked in a grimy kitchen, and poor Stevie, the unconscious presiding genius of all their toil, blacked the gentlemen's boots in the scullery" (Conrad 192). Winnie gasps for breath as she tries to keep her family above water until two men float simultaneously into her

life, each ready to rescue her from her drowning. One, her beloved butcher, “was a fascinating companion for a voyage down the sparkling stream of life; only his boat was very small. There was room in it for a girl-partner at the oar, but no accommodation for passengers,” while the other, the sluggish and meaty Mr. Verloc, has a “barque [that] seemed a roomy craft,” though, “there was no sparkle of any kind on the lazy stream of his life” (Conrad 193). Unwilling to leave her family behind, Winnie takes advantage of the man “with gleams of infatuation in his heavy lidded eyes, and always with some money in his pockets,” feigning her own infatuation in exchange for a few easy breaths (Conrad 193). She saves her family from their drowning, but not without swallowing much of the tainted water she is swimming in.

Unfortunately, her victory is only temporary. In order to separate herself from her loveless marriage, Winnie, as observed by William Alejandro Martin, adopts “a veneer of emotional stupidity which hides the pain of her resignation” (Martrin 35), keeping from him her true self and giving him only what she has to. Her distance keeps Verloc from understanding the deep, maternal love she feels for her brother and her from noticing all the signs in Verloc’s life that point to his dangerous profession and his deteriorating and desperate state. She never thinks to protect Stevie from Verloc, the man she has sold herself to for her brother’s very protection. She never thinks Verloc could be a threat to her beloved Stevie.

But he is, and the brutal violence of this surprise cracks Winnie’s mask and snaps her sanity, letting all the water rush in again. She begins to “feel a little swimmy in her head” (Conrad 210), and “her throat became convulsed in waves” (Conrad 212). Winnie loses her fight to survive and to keep her family afloat: Stevie is blown up, her mother is in a charity home, and Winnie is a murderer. She cannot handle the realization, and the waves of her defeat engulf her; “she flounder(s) over the doorstep head forward, arms thrown out, like a person falling over the parapet of a bridge” (Conrad 213). The air she breathes into her lungs “had a foretaste of drowning,” and she can feel a “slimy dampness envelope her” (213). These images of inundation follow her throughout her last journey down Brett Street and foreshadow her end—drowned in the ocean, “an impenetrable mystery seem(ing) destined

to hang forever over this act of madness and despair” (Conrad 242). After all her years of struggling, Winnie Verloc becomes just another body at the bottom of the ocean.

And she will not be the last. Already, Comrade Ossipon is following her, “marching in the gutter” as he drowns himself in drink, just like Mrs. Neale before him (Conrad 246). Comrade

Ossipon, the one fish that seemed to thrive in the dark waters of Brett Street, spending his days flitting from one mistress to another, playing the role of the poor, idealistic anarchist to win their hearts and their money. He pays little attention to his corruption. His laziness and his lies never seem to hinder him or oppress him in the same way that Winnie’s secrets burden her, or in the way that Mrs. Neale’s work breaks her.

Until, that is, he takes his trade too far and applies it to the vulnerable and desperate Mrs. Verloc. When Winnie encounters the lascivious Ossipon in the street, she sees him as her savior from the gallows. Together, they are to run away and create a new life far from all the terribleness of her existence. She has always fancied Ossipon, and in her mind, believes he cares for her, too. However, as George A. Panichas writes, “Ossipon’s motives are neither sincere nor benevolent: he is thinking of material benefits, the business value of the shop and the amount of money the widow of Mr. Verloc has in the bank.” Though he believes she is freshly widowed (and not by her own hand), he does not hesitate to swoop in and play her for what she is worth, his callous impatience tangling him in Winnie’s unexpectedly mad and bloody situation. Believing Winnie an insane degenerate, and offering her no pity or care, he devises an expertly crafted scheme that leaves her alone on a train and him with her every penny.

This truly was the highest execution possible of his craft. Ossipon accomplishes in but a few hours what would normally take him years to do with other women. But this expert execution of corruption does nothing but induce his drowning. After hearing of Winnie’s death in the paper, he becomes secluded and mentally troubled, completely obsessed with his knowledge of the secret to the “impenetrable mystery ... destined to hang forever over this act of madness and despair” (Conrad 242). To

cope, he deluges himself in drink and descends into the wet gutters of the city, where the rest of drowned walk.

Water in *The Secret Agent* takes on an unfamiliar role. Rather than using it to represent life or rebirth, Conrad uses it as a way to show the oppressive and corrupting nature inherent in a life of survival, and, as Daniel R. Schwarz argues, “exposes the folly of a world where life is reduced to a Darwinian struggle for survival.” He washes the city in water, flooding its alleys and inundating its homes, but instead of cleansing London of its physical and moral filth, it wets the city in a slimy, stagnant pool made of London’s own corruption and strife. The characters of *The Secret Agent* tread these waters, using any means necessary to stay afloat. Their watery environment corrupts them, and they taint it in return, creating a never-ending cycle of contamination. Mrs. Neal, Winnie Verloc, and Comrade Ossipon are caught in this cycle and drown, their stories, as Conrad writes, “deserving of scorn, wonder, and compassion” (Conrad 80).

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Evaluation: *Nicole’s work is original, insightful, and well-researched. Her writing is clear, her style poetic in dealing with complex material, extending Conrad’s imagery in offering commentary on the novel. She has pulled together her central thesis in a clear manner and neatly ties up all aspects of the paper.*

Deceptions and Perceptions: Hollywood's Tale of Bonnie and Clyde

Maxine Weinman

Course: Literature 112 (Literature and Film)

Kurt Hemmer

Assignment: *What are the most significant events from Bryan Burrough's discussions of Bonnie and Clyde in Public Enemies that are not depicted in Arthur Penn's film Bonnie and Clyde?*

When producer and film star Warren Beatty and director Arthur Penn screened *Bonnie and Clyde* for Warner Brothers studio head Jack Warner, he definitely did not share the same affection for the film as they did. In fact, he hated it. In *Star: How Warren Beatty Seduced America*, author Peter Biskind writes, “[Warner] was famous for his reviewer’s bladder. ‘I’ll tell ya something right now,’ he said, turning to Penn, ‘If I have to go pee, the picture stinks.’ . . . [F]ive or six minutes in, Warner excused himself. He returned to his seat for another reel, and then he relieved himself again. And again” (114). Warner declared *Bonnie and Clyde* to be “the longest two hours and ten minutes I ever spent. It’s a three-piss picture!” (qtd. in Biskind 114). With such disdain from the studio head and scathing reviews from film critics, *Bonnie and Clyde* was set up to flop. It was scheduled to be released at drive-in theaters, have a short run, and disappear. However, it did not disappear; it exploded. Critics changed their minds. A fashion trend was started among young women who coveted Faye Dunaway’s beret. Young audiences fell for Dunaway and Beatty’s portrayals of the title characters, despite the fact that Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow were criminals. Bryan Burrough’s book *Public Enemies* gives the facts. Bonnie and Clyde were not at all what Penn’s movie made them out to be. In exploring the differences between the real Barrow Gang and the fictional Bonnie

and Clyde, one may pick up clues as to how *Bonnie and Clyde* became such beloved villains. In order to depict Parker and Barrow in a more flattering light, the events and characters depicted in Penn’s *Bonnie and Clyde* were changed drastically from the facts.

The opening scene of *Bonnie and Clyde* depicted the first meeting of the title characters. Clyde was a sharp-dressed charmer who caught the attention of a beautiful but bored Bonnie by trying to steal her mother’s car. A walk around town, a Coca-Cola, and one look at Clyde’s gun was all it took for Bonnie (and the audience) to fall for him and begin her life of crime. In actuality, Barrow and Parker’s courtship was not nearly as easy. Barrow was not the dapper sweet-talker who audiences watched Beatty portray. He grew up in poverty, dropped out of school at sixteen, and made his living as a North Texas burglar (Burrough 24-25). Parker was “a bored waitress, a drama queen with a failed marriage who viewed Clyde as a ticket out of her humdrum existence” (Burrough 24). They met in 1930, and while they did strike up an immediate romance, it was hindered by the fact that Barrow was arrested for burglary just days after their first encounter. It was not for another two years that Barrow and Parker finally got together and started living on the run (Burrough 25-26).

Barrow and Parker did not travel alone. Like in *Bonnie and Clyde*, they were accompanied by Barrow’s brother and sister-in-law, Buck and Blanche. In the film, Buck (portrayed by Gene Hackman) was crass, obnoxious, and seemingly unable to hold a conversation at a normal volume. Next to Buck, Clyde was more desirable in both looks and demeanor. On the other hand, *Public Enemies* paints a much different picture of Buck compared to his brother: “The boys were a study in contrasts. Where Buck was a lethargic, monosyllabic figure who talked little and drank lots, Clyde was small, peppy, and bright, a fast talker with rosy cheeks who loved guns” (Burrough 24). It was almost as if the filmmakers thought that Beatty’s good looks and alluring confidence would not be enough to keep the audience on Clyde’s side, and brought in a character who made him look more handsome and seem even more charming.

A more staggering difference between the book and film is Estelle Parsons’s portrayal of Blanche Barrow, who

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was louder than her husband and much more obnoxious. She was an uptight preacher's daughter who disagreed with her husband's lifestyle, yet fawned over him like he was the most exquisite man she had ever met. Bonnie and Blanche clashed in personality, and Bonnie was visibly annoyed every time Blanche opened her mouth. The prudish and annoying version of Blanche in *Bonnie and Clyde* had more in common with Mary O'Dare, the Barrow Gang member Raymond Hamilton's girlfriend, who traveled with the Barrow Gang and was left out of *Bonnie and Clyde*. In describing her, Burrough writes:

It was the first time another woman had joined the gang since Blanche Barrow, and while Bonnie had tolerated Blanche, she loathed Mary O'Dare. Almost everyone connected to the gang did. By all accounts O'Dare was immature, a sarcastic, gossipy girl who couldn't understand why Bonnie and Clyde preferred sleeping in the car and bathing in ice-cold creeks to staying in a nice hotel. (224)

The scene in *Bonnie and Clyde* where Blanche asks for her portion of money even though she had no part in the robbery was not entirely accurate. Although this did happen, Blanche was already long gone from the gang, and it was O'Dare who made the selfish demand (Burrough 226).

Barrow and Parker had a handful of other accomplices not portrayed in *Bonnie and Clyde*, namely W. D. Jones and Henry Methvin. The fictional character of C. W. Moss served as both in the film. Jones lent both the style of his name and his physical and personality traits to C. W.'s character. Burrough described Jones as "Clyde's gofer, a pimply Dallas teenager" (23). Methvin was the other inspiration for C. W. In *Bonnie and Clyde*, after telling Bonnie and Clyde to stay as long as they want, C. W.'s father meets with Frank Hamer over ice cream. This scene had no dialogue, but we come to find out that he was striking a deal to essentially hand over Bonnie and Clyde's lives to keep his son out of jail. Methvin's father did try to bargain for his son's freedom in exchange for helping in the killings of Barrow and Parker, but the circumstances were quite different. The senior Methvin met late at night, not with Hamer, but with Bienville Parish Sheriff Henderson Jordan to discuss the betrayal.

Hamer did not come into the picture until the deal was essentially done (Burrough 353).

In fact, almost everything *Bonnie and Clyde* suggests about Hamer is inaccurate, from his looks and personality to his involvement with the Barrow Gang. On film, Hamer comes off more like Sheriff Jordan: "a prototypical backwoods sheriff, an easygoing, sun-burned fellow in a fawn-colored Stetson" (Burrough 352). Burrough paints a different picture of Hamer:

Everyone in Texas knew of Frank Hamer. Hamer was a Lone Star legend, a cantankerous forty-nine-year-old former Ranger. . . . A big man, six-foot-two, just over two hundred pounds, Hamer was seen as the walking embodiment of the 'One Riot, One Ranger' ethos, a stereotypically quiet loner who bridled at authority, shot first, and asked questions later. Long a darling of the Texas press, he was the kind of celebrity lawman who befriended movie stars (352)

Early in the film, Hamer has an embarrassing encounter with Bonnie and Clyde in which they playfully handcuff him, take pictures with him, and desert him in a rowboat after he spits on Bonnie. From that point, he wants revenge and plots to hunt down and kill Bonnie and Clyde. The real Hamer never had such an encounter, and had no revenge to seek. Court papers "suggest that the key figure in the plot [to kill Barrow and Parker] was not Hamer. It was . . . Henderson Jordan" (Burrough 352).

Regardless of who was responsible for the plot to kill Barrow and Parker, their ambush was very different from the final scene in *Bonnie and Clyde*. In the film, Clyde pulls his car over and gets out to assist C. W.'s father with a flat tire. After C. W.'s father dives under his truck, Clyde realizes what is about to happen. He has mere moments to exchange a loving glance with Bonnie before they are riddled by machine gun fire. The audience watches as Bonnie and Clyde are "mowed down in a hail of slow motion bullets like grotesquely tumbling marionettes" (Biskind 108). In actuality, Barrow never exited his car, nor did he have any clue that he was about to be slain. It should also be noted that when Barrow's car was shot up with 150 bullets (Burrough 359), it was not carrying Parker and fresh produce like in *Bonnie and Clyde*. In the

fateful car were two Browning rifles, “three submachine guns, six automatic pistols, a .38 caliber revolver, two sawed-off automatic shotguns, [and] a couple of thousand rounds of ammunition...” (Biskind 108). Had audiences seen this, it is very possible that they would not have felt the same sympathy for the executed characters.

It was not without notice that *Bonnie and Clyde* did not accurately tell the story of the Barrow Gang. Biskind writes:

Beatty and Penn, [screenwriters] Benton and Newman, downplayed the historical outlaws’ vast arsenal, and instead blamed the violence on the lawmen. With the Vietnam War very much on their minds, they wanted to dramatize both the inordinate firepower at the disposal of the authorities, and its asymmetrical, that is, disproportionate use against those who were (relatively) harmless (108)

A perfect example of how authorities were turned into the enemy is in the falsified story of Hamer. How could anyone take his side? He was seeking fatal revenge over an embarrassing picture. Clyde would never have pushed him out in that boat if Hamer had not mistreated Bonnie by spitting in her face. It should also be noted that Penn did not only use the authorities to make audiences side with his main characters. Beatty and Dunaway were hands down the most attractive actors in the movie. It would be difficult not to trust someone with a charming smile like Beatty. When you add in the written personalities of Bonnie and Clyde, their flaws do not seem as bad when compared to the supporting characters. Think about the character of Blanche. She was, in fact, a voice of reason. She knew robbing banks was wrong, that she and her husband were running with a bad crowd. Her morality, however, was overshadowed by her over-the-top annoying nature. She was so irritating that audiences *wanted* to disagree with her. So why would Penn change character traits and skew situations to blur the line between good guy and bad guy? Penn sums it up by saying, “I thought we had to launch into legend . . . as if to say, ‘They’re not Bonnie and Clyde, they’re two people who had a response to a social condition that was intolerable’” (qtd. in Biskind 109). His vision worked. After *Bonnie and Clyde*, Barrow and Parker *were* launched into legend. They became

martyrs, murdered by police without a chance to plead guilty. The facts did not matter anymore. To America, Barrow and Parker were not just criminals anymore. They were Bonnie and Clyde.

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Evaluation: *Maxine truly impressed me by pointing out the crucial differences between the film and reality while explaining how the film was truly a product of its time.*

Boogie-woogie Blues and Bebop Voices in *Montage of a Dream Deferred*

Christopher West

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Alicia Tomasian

Assignment: Write a literary analysis research paper
citing at least five secondary sources.

Langston Hughes conceived *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, published in 1951, as one extended work, an interconnected series of poems. In it, he continues his lifelong experimentation with infusing African-American musical forms with his poetry, not just as its subject matter, but adapting the stanzaic forms, rhythmic structures, and moods of the music as well. In his introduction to *Montage*, Hughes explains that

This poem on contemporary Harlem, like be-bop, is marked by conflicting changes, sudden nuances, sharp and impudent interjections, broken rhythms, and passages sometimes in the manner of the jam session, sometimes the popular song, punctuated by the riffs, runs, breaks, and disc-tortions of the music of a community in transition.

The invocation of bebop in the poetry—the fast, dissonant, harmonically complex jazz style of the 1940s—helps underscore the discontent and anger over the deferred dreams of the people of Harlem but also frequently lends it a cool, humorous distance from its subjects. Bebop-like phrases add their mocking, cynical accents to the recurring boogie-woogie theme, itself subtly repurposed from its usual upbeat mood. Further, the overall flow of the work—the sudden and free-associative transitions from one poem to another—derives strongly from the flow of bebop itself.

By establishing this musical framework, Hughes is able to achieve continuity and a sense of development for the cycle (a challenge, given the abrupt and fragmentary

feel of many of the poems). The reader has the sense of there being an ongoing soundtrack for the work, even in poems where music is not mentioned. The overall effect is indeed like a jam session in its suggestion of improvisation; *Montage for a Dream Deferred* would seem to be ideal for (and was perhaps intended for) ensemble performance. Hughes' use of very driving, dissonant, and angry styles of music in this work suggests an answer to its recurring theme: What are the consequences of a dream deferred?

Montage was originally published with six section headings, beginning with “Boogie Segue to Bop.” (Although this is somewhat misleading in terms of *Montage's* content, as we will see, it draws the reader's attention to the most significant musical motifs of the work, and highlights the novel prominence of bebop.) The musical, multilayered nature of *Montage* is immediately established in its opening poem, “Dream Boogie”:

Good morning, daddy! (C)

Ain't you heard

The boogie-woogie rumble

Of a dream deferred?

Listen closely: (F)

You'll hear their feet

Beating out and beating out a-- (C)

You think

It's a happy beat? (ll.1-9)

In the first stanza, Hughes provides both the work's central, recurring phrase and its ground bass. “The boogie-woogie rumble” now has, added to its usual lusty energy, something both thoughtful and slightly ominous, linked as it is to “a dream deferred.” The poem's musical origin is clear: Steven Tracy illustrates the familiar twelve-bar blues form of the poem by superimposing the chord chart of a blues in C (here shown in the right-hand column parallel to Hughes' text). The first four lines would be sung, more or less one line per bar, over the first four bars of the tonic C chord, the next two lines over the subdominant F chord, and so on (Tracy 228). The reader, in the instant of completing the second stanza (seventh and eighth bars over C, normally a place of lowest harmonic tension), is jolted off balance by a--cool?--mocking?-interjection: “*You think / It's a happy beat?*”(ll. 8-9), whose rhythm clashes with the blues' scansion. This is so jarring that it's clear a new voice has been introduced,

rather than the original speaker/singer interrupting herself. Tracy points out that in “Dream Boogie,” the first voice is feminine, since the address “Daddy” is used; a black male resident of Harlem of that era might address another male as “Daddy-o” (231).

The trochaic rhythm recovers its stride on the ninth bar, with the dominant G chord:

Listen to it closely:	(G)
Ain't you heard	(F)
something underneath	(C)
like a--	

What did I say? (ll.10-14)

Now the tension is unmistakable, as the reader mentally fills in the line with Hughes' key phrase, and is again aggressively challenged. The poet is making the “something underneath” impossible to ignore.

Sure,
I'm happy!
Take it away!

Hey, pop!
Re-bop!
Mop!

Y-e-a-h! (ll.15-21)

The poem, in its imitation of a turnaround and tag ending common to both blues and jazz, projects a sense of sarcasm from the first, “boogie,” voice, and is answered with be-bop phrases from the italicized, aggressive second voice. Hughes has, in this first poem, set much of the tone for *Montage*. The boogie-style blues, while retaining its energy, has been divested somewhat of its stereotyped “happy Negro” association and given its own sense of irony, an undercurrent of sorrow and resentment that rumbles throughout the work; Robert O'Brien Hokanson states that this poem relates the boogie theme to the double consciousness of African-Americans—the need to show a separate face to the white world, and also perhaps to compartmentalize one's dreams from one's everyday persona (120).

The bebop-style interjections, more overtly angry, will re-echo the sardonic, questioning point of view

throughout *Montage*. Blues and boogie-woogie had long been featured in Hughes' work, dating from “The Worried Blues”(1926) and the many poems of his that are essentially twelve-bar blues lyrics. But as Gunter Lenz observes of *Montage*, “For the first time, jazz (not blues) is a formative principle (not only subject matter or vision of life) of a whole book of poetry that redefines black urban modernism” (275).

Eric Lott avers that, originally, bebop's “relationship to earlier styles [was] one of calculated hostility” (qtd. in Lowney). But are we then intended to read this interrupting bebop voice as being in conflict with the viewpoints associated with the boogie rhythm, or other voices, in *Montage*? Perhaps only in the sense that, historically, blacks in the U.S. had tended to display a submissive and jovially simple mask to the dominating culture to conceal their sorrow, anger, and contempt. Bebop—neither the actual music nor Hughes' poetic idiom—is submissive. But note that Hughes has *not segued permanently* here from boogie to bebop jazz as sole musical motif; he has, after all, linked his theme, that of the dream deferred, strongly to the rhythm of the boogie-woogie blues, and the rondo-like recurrence of this boogie theme throughout *Montage* lends a strong underpinning to its structure. Rather, the openly rebellious tone of the bebop voices is built on this vital thematic base (or bass). Lenz explains:

The fact that Hughes features especially the most recent form of jazz [for 1951], the bebop of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonius Monk, and uses its ‘conflicting changes, sudden nuances, sharp and impudent interjections, broken rhythms’ as the structural principle of his book does not only demonstrate the improvisational, dynamic, expressive quality of black culture. It also *represents black music itself as a political act of cultural liberation* from white domination and of affirmation of a viable black urban ghetto culture and public sphere. Indeed, *bebop was a radical response to the political frustration in a racist society....*” (274) (emphasis added)

Hughes is serving notice at the beginning of *Montage* that, in accordance with bebop's radical political and cultural statement of that era, he is segueing to an angrier, more self-aware, more politically critical level of commentary, and joining it with a poetic translation of bebop's sonic and structural vocabulary. The boogie-

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woogie blues and bebop voices are thus distinct but complementary, not antithetical, strains throughout *Montage*; they help to illustrate the range of human responses to life lived under systemic injustice, from a more stoic determination to thrive despite bigotry, to open anger and bitter cynicism. With these musical motifs identified, we can continue to examine how they contribute tone and structure to *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.

Like a musician playing variations on a melody, Hughes returns to the boogie theme in five other poems, each in its own emotional register. These are spaced throughout *Montage*. The first after “Dream Boogie,” “Easy Boogie” makes the most joyous use of the theme. It has a heartfelt eroticism, this time from a male perspective:

Down in the bass
That easy roll
Rolling like I like it
In my soul.

Riffs, smears, breaks. (ll.5-9)

The musical terms for improvised material stand in here for lovemaking, with a wink at the old practice of censoring such a passage with asterisks. But some of the disquiet of the theme introduced in “Dream Boogie” is still present here: “Easy Boogie” describes the steady beat of the bass as “Walking walking walking / Like marching feet” (ll.3-4), echoing the description in the earlier poem “Parade” of the threatening (at least to white police) marching of many black people. Tracy points out that while “Easy Boogie” and subsequent “boogie” poems may not fit exactly into the twelve-bar blues format of the first poem, “[t]hese poems...are tied together by the rhythm and spirit of boogie-woogie—a rhythm and spirit that Hughes clearly intended for us to hear” (230).

It is also important to remember that Hughes intended *Montage* as one complete work; poems reference images that have occurred earlier, and the context and transition of each poem from one to the next, though often abrupt, is significant. A case in point, the next boogie poem, “Boogie: 1 a.m.,” is carefully positioned between two poems dealing with class relations within the black population. It reinforces the opening of *Montage* by stating “I know you’ve heard / The boogie-woogie rumble / Of

a dream deferred (ll.2-4), but continues delicately with “Trilling the treble / And twining the bass / Into midnight ruffles / Of cat-gut lace” (ll.5-8). The preceding poem, “Low to High,” is an angry plaint from a poor black speaker toward others, more successful, who’ve escaped from the ghetto:

Now you’ve got your Cadillac
You done forgot that you are black.
How can you forget me
When I’m you?

But you do. (ll.5-9)

In the response, “High to Low,” an educated black callously objects that

We have our troubles, too--
One trouble is you:
you talk too loud,
cuss too loud,
look too black (ll.2-6)

and so on. “Boogie 1 a.m.,” poised in between, elegantly suggests that though the bass line of the less educated or successful black and the treble of one more successful create dissonance as distressed and complicated as “cat-gut lace,” they are nonetheless aspects of the piece as a whole—or symptoms of the larger problem facing African-Americans. Tracy elaborates, “Here the right-hand treble notes and the left-hand bass notes are united in performance, just as the mind and soul or thought and feeling of blacks are meant to be united in a common cause: the recognition of the dream deferred and the organization into a unified front to confront the problem of blacks in America”(234). It seems as if Hughes has carefully placed his boogie theme here, with its connotation of chugging along in the face of injustice, as an inducement toward solidarity.

Hughes follows the class-conscious “High to Low” narrator’s efforts to “uphold the race” (l.21) with “Lady’s Boogie.” The lady in question (of unspecified race, but whom we assume to be black from the context) “ain’t got boogie-woogie / on her mind”(ll.3-4), but the narrator bets that if she’d listen, “she’d hear, / Way up in the treble / The tingle of a tear” (ll.6-8). Again, music becomes a powerful metaphor for an emotional state. Hughes seems

to be saying that, though one can suppress the vital, joyous aspects of one's African-American culture in an attempt to be accepted in white-dominated society, there is a price, and perhaps grief is not so easily suppressed. The poem's final "*Be-Bach!*"(l.9) seems like a derisive snort; Tracy reads this bebop exclamation as mocking the pretensions of a repressed social climber (233). Onwuchekwa Jemie, more charitably, suggests this means that educated blacks aspiring to white culture could, if they listened, "hear the music of a dream deferred even in the Bach" (72-73). The irony of Hughes' placing a "boogie-suppressing" lady in a boogie-woogie poem supports Jemie's belief that "the music of the dream is inescapable: it is heard by high and low, by blacks everywhere and in all circumstances" (72-73).

"Nightmare Boogie" returns to the "rolling bass, / Whirling treble" (ll.10-11) of the boogie-woogie theme, but now as soundtrack to a fever-dream. The dreamer sees "a million faces / black as me!" (ll. 3-4). But in a moment of horror, "All them faces / Turned dead white!" (ll. 7-8). We could read this as the simple fear of the dreamer being outnumbered in a hostile white world. Jemie points out (76-77) that this poem follows "Passing," wherein, in their new white neighborhoods, "the ones who've crossed the line / to live downtown / miss you, / Harlem of the bitter dream, / since their dream has / come true" (ll.11-16). But the actual *change* of color of each face from black to white seems to mean that the real fear, again, is of being forced to give up one's own culture, to have to "act white."

Finally, in "Dream Boogie: Variation," it's as if we've followed the "tinkling treble / Rolling bass" (ll.1-2) flowing through *Montage* to its source, a piano player with "High noon teeth / In a midnight face" (ll. 3-4), only to find:

Looks like his eyes
Are teasing pain
A few minutes late
For the Freedom Train. (ll. 9-12)

The font of this music is infused with the sorrow of lost dreams. Hughes is saying plainly here that even complete mastery of one's art, through which suffering is transmuted to beauty, is not enough—freedom for the pursuit of happiness is a necessary condition for a fulfilling life. A dream deferred too long is ultimately tragic.

If the boogie blues in *Montage of Dream Deferred* connotes, among other things, the sorrowful resentment of a people, as well as its vigor and perseverance, Hughes' use of bebop phrases and structure more explicitly expresses anger and rebellion—just as bebop did historically. Bebop, as noted earlier, was a reaction to the commercial, increasingly formulaic swing jazz of the 1930s and 40s. It rebelled against the sentimental big-band arrangements of the time with much unresolved dissonance, melodic phrases that broke down dividing lines between sections of a tune, and extreme tempos. It could be nearly simultaneously furious and coolly cerebral.

It seems inevitable that Hughes would employ aspects of this music in his poetry, especially since *Montage* deals with the community where bebop evolved. The rapid alternation of voices, often conflicting, within and between poems mirrors the rapid dialogue of dueling soloists "trading fours" in a bebop tune. And Hughes' "sharp and impudent interjections" are often scatted bebop phrases like "*De-dop!*" These are usually italicized, as the more acerbic, critical, and mocking voices in *Montage* tend to be, and so the reader conflates the two, associating bebop tag phrases with sardonic commentary, and vice versa.

In the third poem of *Montage*, "Children's Rhymes," anger at the unfairness of the state of African-Americans is expressed as bluntly as anywhere in the work--through the rhymes of Harlem's children:

*By what sends
the white kids
I ain't sent:
I know I can't
be President.* (ll.1-5)

and

What's written down
*for white folks
ain't for us at all:
"Liberty And Justice--
Huh--For All."* (ll.20-25)

The phrases (also italicized) that follow--"*Oop-pop-a-da! / Skee! Daddle-de-do! / Be-bop!*" (ll.26-28) seem playful but remain charged throughout *Montage* with the anger of what precedes them. That this anger is Hughes' intended connotation is supported by the mordant humor of the

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origins of the word “bebop” provided by his fictional character Jesse B. Simple, from the long series of stories Hughes wrote for the *Chicago Defender*: It comes from the sound of “police beating Negroes’ heads....Every time a cop hits a Negro with his billy, that old stick says BOP! BOP!!...BE-BOP!.... That’s where Be-Bop came from, beaten right out of some Negro’s head into them horns and saxophones, and guitars and piano keys that plays it...” (qtd. in Farrell and Johnson 60). Hughes uses this italicized questioning voice with the bebop edge to great effect throughout the work. In “World War II,” he is able to multiply his scorn for the jingoistic refrain, “What a grand time was the war!”(ll.1). with

Echo:
Did
Somebody
Die? (ll. 9-12)

“Likewise” looks at Jewish merchants in Harlem, and how they’re resented by the Afro-American residents: “Some folks blame high prices on the Jews” (l. 12). The “*Hey! / Baba-re-bop! / Mop! / On a be-bop kick!*” (ll. 23-26) points up the bitter humor inherent in one persecuted group’s prejudice toward another and enhances the effectiveness of the solemn lines that follow: “Sometimes I think / Jews must have heard / the music of a / dream deferred (ll. 27-30). (Hughes deftly reintroduces awareness of his central musical theme here, without quite naming it.)

This “bebop voice” can laugh at human nature, not too scornfully, as in the various poems dealing with bebop musicians themselves—the “[l]ittle cullud boys with beards” (“Flatted Fifths” l.1) striving to be icons of cool, but running scared of the draft. For all that Hughes revels in bebop’s mocking anger, he’s careful not to be too self-righteous with its cutting tone, as seen in “Jam Session”:

Letting midnight
out on bail
pop-a-da
having been
detained in jail
oop-pop-a-da
for sprinkling salt
on a dreamer’s tail
pop-a-da

wherein, as in “Flatted Fifths,” he deflates some of the proud image of the bebopper as culture hero. “Jam Session,” though, is complex in its ambiguity, and if the musician is the dreamer here, upon whose tail harsh reality has sprinkled salt, then the jam session at midnight “out on bail” is solace, and the Gillespie-like interjections seem to console as much as mock.

“What? So Soon!,” like “Jam Session,” exemplifies the quick bebop-ish trading of voices: the first speaker, bemoaning his mate’s latest pregnancy, says that “Fate must have / Some kind of trickeration / to populate the / cullud nation!” (ll. 3-6) and is answered by a

Comment against Lamp Post
You call it fate?

Figurette
De-daddle-dy!
De-dop! (ll. 7-11)

We also see here the sort of ambiguous transition between sections associated with the bebop style: is “*Comment against Lamp Post*” part of the same poem, exactly? These blurred segues reinforce Hughes’ intention that *Montage* be viewed as a single whole, rather than just a collection.

John Lowney explains that “the dialogic sequencing of poems throughout *Montage* suggests the way in which Hughes is dramatizing a Harlem ‘community in transition’ through his translation of bebop’s rapid rhythmic and harmonic changes. The sudden, unpredictable shifts in voice, mood, and dramatic scene convey a sense of anxiety, fragmentation, and urgency.” This is easily observed almost anywhere in *Montage*. For example, the dolorous “Blues at Dawn” (yet another musical strain, a traditional twelve- or eight-bar blues lyric *not* partaking of the “dream deferred” boogie theme) is followed by “Dime”:

Chile, these steps is hard to climb.
Grandma, lend me a dime.
Montage of a dream deferred:
Grandma acts like
She ain’t heard.
Chile, Granny ain’t got no dime.
I might’ve knowed
It all the time.

The aching slowness of the grandmother on the stairs seems even slower when paired with the skittish impatience, easily imagined, of the child in line two. The narrator's voice frames the scene by stating again the oft-restated theme in the third line. Hughes gives us three viewpoints in eight lines, and magnifies this tiny drama, not without humor, by letting us see it through our awareness of the dream deferred. We jump suddenly into the rapid rhyming banter of "Argument [2]," where a fight over skin color is in progress, quickly won by the voice who exclaims, "*Black is fine! / And, God knows, / It's mine!*" (ll. 8-10); and then abruptly downshift in tempo to "Neighbor," wherein two neighbors soberly disagree in their assessment of a third. This changes key to the plaintive, desperate woman of "Evening Song," whom everyone has presumably judged already, trying to sell sex to survive. After several such jump cuts between close-up scenes, Hughes periodically pans or pulls back his narrative eye for perspective, as he does in the next poem, the almost haiku-like "Chord":

Shadow faces
In the shadow night
Before the early dawn
Bops bright.

It is very easy to think of *Montage* in these cinematic terms (as Hughes of course intended as much as his jam session analogy): a movie with a prominent soundtrack, which, no matter how disjunct the scenes, provides a sense of continuity every time a phrase like "dream deferred" or "Bops bright" cues a volume swell. Lowney's "sense of anxiety, fragmentation, and urgency" is certainly evoked, a la bebop; but—and this is one of the triumphs of the work—there is also the sense of a unifying communal voice emerging from the collective rumble of all the different voices Hughes presents. There is terrible sorrow in it, and the sound of great strength being choked off.

And there is anger. The most powerful utterance of the bebop voice first encountered in "Dream Boogie" comes at the end of "Harlem [2]," in which the narrative voice famously asks the question, "What happens to a dream deferred? / Does it dry up / like a raisin in the sun?" (ll.1-3) After seeming to concede defeat with "Maybe it just sags / like a heavy load" (ll.9-10), the poem concludes abruptly, "*Or does it explode?*" (l. 11)

That is the voice of rage. The bebop voice has

finally offered up the most likely answer to the question implicit in the boogie theme of the dream deferred. African-American servicemen returning from WW II, the families of those who gave their lives—*any* person of color—had every right to expect respect, and an end to the third-class citizenship they had endured for so long. Instead, they returned to cityscapes that were becoming increasingly ghettoized, like Harlem, and the same sort of discrimination they suffered before the war. That there was too much righteous anger for such a state of affairs to continue without resistance, violent or otherwise, was obvious to many at the time. Langston Hughes heard as much in the rumble of boogie-woogie and the raging dissonance of bebop, and made the music an essential part of *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.

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Evaluation: *In rich and clear prose, Chris applies his years of experience as a professional musician to a reading of bebop in Langston Hughes' Montage of a Dream Deferred. He uses, in part, his own knowledge of music to teach his readers how Hughes overlays poetic and musical forms to create tension as well as cohesion in the collection.*

Hemingway's Confusing Dialogue in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place": Mistake or Style?

Katie Witrzek

Course: English 102 (Composition)

Instructor: Barbara Butler

Assignment: *Write a literary research paper.*

Being able to immerse oneself completely in a story enhances the reading experience and allows for a deeper connection to be formed. When the reader is unsure of who is speaking in a story, it is natural to go back and try to figure it out so that they are sure that they are reading the story correctly and receiving the message that is meant to be received from the author. Since there are four separate sections in Ernest Hemingway's "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" where the dialogue is not labeled with which of the two waiters is speaking, the story was emended in 1965 by Charles Scribner Jr. in order to correct the problem. However, this separated literary critics into two groups: those that favored the original text and those that favored the emended version. Although each critic brings up a strong argument, Ken Ryan points out that in order for an artist's work to even be "rightfully considered for emendation," it needs to be proven that the supposed "error" is actually an error and not how the author intended for the story to be written (78). Since Hemingway never confirmed nor denied that an error was made, the question of which waiter said what (and when) still remains. Through Hemingway's frequent style of "less is more" writing, he was able to leave "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" open to interpretation because the theme and message of the story can be seen in both waiters, no matter which way the dialogue is arranged.

The story focuses on the interactions between the two waiters, young and old, because what they see, hear, and discuss are the ways that the reader understands what is going on around them. Throughout the story, it is clear that there is an extreme difference in the viewpoints and values of the younger and older waiters. The older waiter can sympathetically relate to the old man in the story that needs a clean and well-lighted place to come and drink at night because he, too, fears the darkness and is plagued with insomnia (Bennett 115). He discusses his lack of

confidence and youth with the younger waiter while the younger waiter, on the other hand, states that he is "all confidence" (Hemingway 154). The young waiter is in a rush to get home to his wife that he believes is waiting for him, but the older waiter is in no hurry and understands that the old man would rather drink in the café than at home because drinking at home magnifies the loneliness that the night brings (Bennett 115). The younger waiter does not seem to take the time to stop and appreciate life, but focuses on the "roles" that he plays as provider and husband (Bennett 75). The main differences between the two waiters are that the younger waiter one living a life dealing with all confidence while the older one attempts to conquer despair, and the younger waiter focuses on having "everything," while the older waiter focuses on life being nothing, or "nada" (118).

An ironic twist that is not stated, but quietly suggested by the slight similarities between the younger waiter, older waiter, and the old man in separate sections of the story is that the younger waiter is viewing his future in the older waiter and the old man. Warren Bennett suggests that with the younger waiter:

Situations become ironically transferred. The old man's despair and loneliness without a wife, the older waiter's insomnia and need of light...At the very moment that he is playing the heartless and uncompromising judge, he is also reality's dupe and victim. Whatever he has said about the others may soon be said about him...His all-confident intentions will be reversed. His recognition of another truth is imminent. (Bennett 79)

Hemingway is able to slip in the theme here that everything in life is nothing and that everyone is heading toward nothingness and eventually death by relating the young waiter to the two other men in the café. Ken Ryan even points out that William B. Bache noted that Hemingway doesn't give any of the characters actual names, and that this omission of names "implies that these characters should be regarded not so much as identifiable persons but as symbols...the three characters are actually parts of an implied progression from youth through middle age to old age" (83). Further evidence that Hemingway uses the characters in the story as symbols and as reinforcements for the theme of the story is found in the manuscript of "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place." Originally, Hemingway had made no "descriptive

distinction” between the older and younger waiters, but on page six, he added the word “older” in front of one of the waiters when he was talking to the younger waiter about having youth (Bennett 617). Warren Bennett offers an explanation for this change by suggesting that Hemingway originally didn’t have any “preconceived significant distinction” in mind for the two waiters but may have discovered one due to the “dramatic context of the situation” when the two waiters began to discuss the old man’s attempted suicide in the story (618).

Those that have been attempting to decipher who said which lines in the four main exchanges under question have used the characterization of the older and younger waiters to aid them. The first interaction occurs in the beginning of the story between the two waiters when they are watching a soldier and a girl walk by in the street:

“The guard will pick him up,” one waiter said.
“What does it matter if he gets what he’s after?”
“He had better get off the street now. The guard
will get him. They went by five minutes ago”
(Hemingway 152).

According to George H. Thomson, Joseph Gabriel presents evidence in support of both sides of the argument. He discusses Colburn’s view that most readers will believe that it is the older waiter that is worried about the soldier and the girl getting into trouble with the guard because the elderly are more associated with having concern for the well-being of others over being associated with promoting sexual behavior (Thomson 40). Additionally, Gabriel mentions that the younger waiter “has already shown his interest in sex,” when he talks about wanting to get home to his wife that is waiting for him in bed, and the older waiter has shown “solicitude about the old man,” which supports the idea that the older waiter would be concerned for the soldier and the girl getting into trouble (Thomson 40). On the other hand, there is support for the older waiter speaking the line about the soldier getting what he’s after because the older waiter believes that the world is nothing; and in a meaningless world, taking chances and risks in order to try to have a moment with some meaning makes sense (Thomson 40). In this case, the younger waiter would be speaking the line about the guard catching the soldier and the girl. Gabriel’s support for this is by calling attention to the fact that the younger waiter doesn’t have deep insights and stays mostly on the

surface, so he would be concerned with things that are “prudential and practical” (Thomson 40).

Other arguments have been made using characterization, but literary critics also try to pick up hints from the writing patterns and style of Hemingway himself to make connections. The characterization of the younger waiter leads the reader to believe that he does not have a very sophisticated way of speaking and that he lacks the “eloquence” that the older waiter possesses. Thomson describes the line about the guard going by five minutes ago as “choppy,” which would suggest that it was spoken by the younger waiter (40). When it comes to the way that Ernest Hemingway wrote “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place,” C. Harold Hurley notes that there are certain recognizable patterns that allow for the reader to differentiate between the two waiters (19). Two of the patterns lead to the belief that the younger waiter spoke the line about the soldier having relations with the girl. The first pattern that Hurley recognizes is that “in the first three scenes, the younger waiter asks the questions and the older waiter provides short answers” (19). Hurley’s second pattern is that “in the first two scenes the ‘one waiter said’ tag, used nowhere else in the story, refers to the lines spoken by the older waiter” (19). Bennett also discovered a pattern similar to the first that Hurley lists when he discusses the structural pattern of the story. He found that there was a pattern in dialogue of a serious question being asked, followed by verbal irony from the older waiter, then a dropping of the subject, and then another serious reply (Bennett 72). Although the older waiter does not use verbal irony in this situation and it doesn’t follow Bennett’s example exactly, if one were to follow the pattern of the younger waiter asking the questions and the older waiter answering, the younger waiter would have had to have asked the questions about the relations.

There are two instances in “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” where it is unclear whether or not the speaker has switched or if they have just taken a reflective pause. The first takes place after the younger waiter pours the old man another drink. When this waiter joins his colleague again, the following conversation occurs:

“He’s drunk now,” he said.
“He’s drunk every night.” (Hemingway 153)

Thomson points out that it is widely believed that since

Hemingway's Confusing Dialogue in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place": Mistake or Style?

the younger waiter was the subject of the last sentence that was written right before this exchange, it is the younger waiter that must have also spoken that first line, but this does not provide any information about who spoke the second line (Thomson 38). When the Delaware typescript of "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" was found, there was a "significant development in the long debate over the story's dialogue..." (Bennett 107). When comparing the holograph to the typescript, it was found that Hemingway originally wrote:

"He's tanked now," he said.

"He's stewed every night." (Bennett 108)

If the same waiter spoke both lines, he wouldn't change the expression for "drunk." However, having Hemingway change both words to "drunk" could still have the dialogue go either way. The same waiter could have said both lines because the same expression was used, but since the original used two different slang terms, there is some support for the argument that the younger waiter spoke the first line and the older waiter spoke the second (Bennett 106).

Other critics have read what Warren Bennett had to say, but several of them believe that his claims do not provide enough evidence and that the same waiter (the younger waiter) said both lines. David Kerner brought up a suggestion made by Otto Reinert in his analysis of the story. Reinert proposed that it is the younger waiter that speaks again in the second line because, based on what Hemingway has led us to infer about him, it would be plausible that, after a "reflective pause," the younger waiter speaks again because he likes to hear himself talk and wants to make sure that what he says is heard (Kerner 48). A major debate, however, is whether or not Hemingway made an error in this section. Otto Reinhert writes: "[The inconsistency] arises from Hemingway's violation of one of the unwritten rules of the art of presenting dialogue visually. The rule is that a new, indented line implies a new speaker. It is a useful rule, but it is not sacrosanct" (Ryan 81). Literary critic John V. Hagopian opposed the idea that Hemingway did not violate the "rule" that indented speeches always alternated, "unless of course the contrary is explicitly indicated" (Thomson 37). His position was knocked down, though, when MacDonald (in 1973) found four examples from short stories and three or possibly five from novels where Hemingway had two

consecutive indented speeches that belonged to the same character "without any other indication than the logic of the context" (Thomson 37). David Kerner took it even further in 1980 by finding at least twenty-five examples of this writing technique in five novels and seven stories, so it was not implausible that Hemingway may have done so once again (Thomson 37).

Further support for the belief that the younger waiter spoke both lines aims to demonstrate how this style of writing is more reflective of how people actually talk. MacDonald expanded on what Otto Reinert proclaimed about the "rule" about indentation not being sacrosanct by saying that these "rules" are not laws, but reviews of what other authors have done in the past (Ryan 81). Although most authors typically follow the convention of indenting to indicate a new speaker, that doesn't mean that all writers do or should always adhere to this style of writing (Ryan 81). Since Ernest Hemingway once told his son, "Never use more words than you have to," David Kerner's reasoning for why Hemingway would use this style makes sense (Ryan 81). He explains: "[I]f a speaker pauses between consecutive speeches, why must the novelist throw in a dead expository phrase, breaking the rhythm of the dialogue, merely because [the reader has been conditioned] not to expect a certain perfectly natural irregularity?" (Ryan 81). This style would lead to a flow that reflects the kind witnessed in conversations in real life, without breaks after every statement. Going along the same lines as this, Kerner also noted that "*genuine* dialogue is not 'uniformly metronomic,'" and Hemingway uses this technique of including a reflective pause once more in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" almost as though he is making a point to have it be noticed (Ryan 81).

The second time in the story that Hemingway makes readers question whether the same person is speaking or not happens very closely after the first occurrence. The story reads:

"He must be eighty years old."

"Anyways I should say he was eighty." (Hemingway 153)

In both this example and the previous one, the second line is just a little more than a confirmation of the first line (Ryan 82). All four of the lines in question could be removed from the story without the reader losing any important information that they could not have received

from another line in the story (Ryan 82). Since this is such a short story, each of the lines had to be chosen carefully by Hemingway. The fact that he put in two instances where no new information was provided and the same line was basically repeated, the reader must acknowledge the fact that they must be there for a reason. This could support either argument, though. Either the younger waiter is stating things twice so that they really sink in or so that he can hear himself talk, or the younger waiter speaks one line and the older waiter speaks the other which shows that they both know these two things about the old man.

The final area of the story that is under debate is in the section where the younger and older waiters are talking about the old man's attempted suicide. The part that is analyzed and reviewed by several literary critics is in the beginning of the conversation:

"How did he do it?"

"He hung himself with a rope."

"Who cut him down?"

"His niece."

"Why did they do it?" (Hemingway 153).

After this part, there is a line that is known to have been spoken by the younger waiter because he mentions his wife waiting in bed for him. Colburn uses this as a starting point and when he traced backwards, having each alternate line represent a different speaker, he found that it was the older waiter that knew the details about the old man's suicide attempt (Ryan 80). However, he found an obvious inconsistency when he traced forward and found that it was the younger waiter that knew the details (Ryan 80). George Thomson found that when he looked at the original manuscript of the story, the line starting with "I know" did not exist at first (34). Looking at the comment about the niece, Thomson saw a pattern from the four preceding speeches that followed the statement-and-response structure, so following that pattern the niece comment had to have been made by the younger waiter (35). Since Thomson believed that the next statement was also made by the younger waiter because it was replied to by the older waiter, he hypothesized that Hemingway noticed this inconsistency and went back and added in the "I know" line, which Thomson claims that the manuscript shows because of the spacing (35).

In the first part of this section under examination, Thomson offers an explanation as to why he thinks that it is the younger waiter that spoke the third and fifth

line, beginning with assuming that the older waiter is "thoughtful, disillusioned, and has an ironic attitude toward the confidence and callow worldliness of the younger waiter" (38). His other evidence is based upon the use of the word "they" in the fifth line. Even though it was stated that it was the niece that cut the old man down, the word "they" is used because it is impersonal and thoughtless, which is common in every day breezy conversations (Thomson 38). Thomson believes that the younger waiter would engage in these types of conversations more often than the older waiter based on the information that Hemingway presented the readers with (38). Since it has been noticed that the younger waiter typically asks the questions while the older waiter answers, as was previously mentioned, it would make sense that the younger waiter would be the one asking questions in this scenario, too. It was also previously mentioned that the old waiter sympathizes with the old man, whereas the young waiter wants to hurry him out of the café so that he can go home to his wife. If this was the only information given to the readers, the logical answer to who knew about the attempted suicide of the old man would be the older waiter because the younger waiter doesn't appear to care for him and is too involved with his own life.

After giving his own opinions on the dialogue confusion, Paul Smith ended his article in *The Hemingway Review* with this:

...from the moment Hemingway received this typescript in the fall of 1932 until a quizzical college teacher raised the question in 1956, the confusion of the waiters' dialogue never crossed his mind. And the question, in spite of all the answers, still abides—Why not? (Smith 38)

When Judson Jerome wrote to Hemingway in 1956 about the dialogue problem, Hemingway replied with a short, signed letter stating that he read the story again and it made perfect sense to him (Thomson 34). According to Bennett, it is classic Hemingway to express a lot by giving a little (Bennett 624). Through characters that were given no names, and in a story where not much happens, Hemingway was still able to present his theme by writing a story consisting of two men that have opposing views, stances, and concepts of life (Bennett 71). Because of the feeling given to the reader through "image and understatement" about the old man, the older waiter, and the younger waiter, the themes of confidence

Student Reflections on Writing:

Katie Witrzek

Writing has always been my way to slow my thoughts down, to process important life events, and to let my imagination run wild. My writing process can be considered selfish, in a way, because every single piece that I write is for me. My "secret" to being able to successfully compose a well-written college essay is to not think of it as something that I have to turn in for a grade, but instead as my way of proving to myself that I understand the topic that I am discussing. Writing comes somewhat naturally to me, but that does not mean that I don't have to work at it and constantly make sure that I am not taking this skill for granted. I am my biggest critic, and that keeps me motivated to further develop as a writer.

There are writers (Ernest Hemingway, J.D. Salinger, Jack Kerouac, to name a few) that make me feel as though I am stealing a piece of their imagination and their soul as I read their words. I truly admire these writers and study their writing styles in order to improve my own, which I was able to do in this essay on Hemingway's "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place."

I owe a special thanks to my high school English teacher, Mr. Tony Romano. He was the first to prove to me that I had talent as a writer, as well as the one who made me really appreciate all forms of literature, including poetry. I also want to thank Harper College professors Tom DePalma and Barbara Butler for being so helpful and supportive. And, my grandma for always believing in me!

versus despair and that there is a hard truth that must eventually be faced that everything is nothing, including men, are easily understood (Bennett 71). In reference to his original text, Hemingway is known to have said, "I guess the story that tops them all for leave-out was 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place.' I left everything out of that one....May be my favorite story" (Ryan 88).

Through Hemingway's frequent style of "less is more" writing, he was able to leave "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" open to interpretation because the theme

and message of the story can be seen in both waiters, no matter which way the dialogue is arranged. When trying to decipher which waiter is speaking when, the reader is goes through a similar experience that the old man and the older waiter are go through, both of which "bear uncertainty...confusion, and ambiguity" as the reader "attempts to fashion some pattern of meaning out of the chaos of the dialogue" (Bennett 614). It is part of human nature to find some kind of certainty, some kind of answer, but this story's inconsistencies do not provide that and leave readers with a similar discomfort to the one that the older waiter faces every night (Ryan 89). This may have been Hemingway's plan all along: to provide a story with repeating lines about **nothing** new, and to have readers search for **nothing** that is to ever be for sure known with **nothing** new to use as a source of comparison in order to find answers. Nada y pues nada y pues nada...

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Evaluation: *Katie offers a sophisticated analysis of Ernest Hemingway's short story, and by focusing on the dialogue, Katie penetrates and elucidates Hemingway's meaningful "less is more" motif.*

Afterword: A Passion Play (When Prose Sings)

Nancy L. Davis

When asked to write an essay on “good writing” for the current issue of *The Harper Anthology*, I felt a combination of delight and trepidation. Delight because why wouldn’t a teacher of writing and a practicing published writer delight in such an opportunity? Trepidation because what could this writer possibly add to past and current volumes of inspired writing on the subject of *good writing*? Textbooks, articles, essays, collections of essays, how-to books, blogs and pamphlets abound with such information, practical advice and copious examples. What could I write that would be worth the journey?

Just that: the *journey*. The rhythm. The singing. The swing. That thing. That swing thing that Duke Ellington quipped: “It don’t mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing.” I have to credit my husband with making this connection. A jazz and blues guitarist, he critiques my fiction, nonfiction and poetry while routinely being on the lookout for spunk, spirit, swing.

What is swing? It embodies rhythm, to be sure. And rhythm sings. Singing comes from deep within—not the throat—the conduit—but the diaphragm, that elusive anatomical part that is hard to find, let alone use. My daughter sings. Over the years, she has had to learn and practice the difference between a head voice and a chest voice. Head singing is higher, warbling, breathy. Chest singing is rich and complex, seemingly bottomless. When a singer begins to tap into these two voices, drawing up and breathing through the diaphragm, she is quite literally finding her voice. Such singing sustains; it does not disappoint. It reaches into the soul, dare I use that word that I often chastise my students for choosing. Billie Holliday sang deeply, no doubt using her chest voice. To hear her sing “Strange Fruit” is to hear

her dredge from a reservoir deep within, the sorrows and horrors humankind has perpetrated upon others. It is that wellspring of knowledge and experience and practice of craft that allows listeners to connect, to cross the bridge over to her side. Listeners are audience. Audience is critical to art, music, dance, writing, and theater.

Swing also sings attitude. Janie Crawford in author Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* speaks attitude. Janie lives her heartbreaks, to be sure. But her honesty is her wellspring of authenticity. It is her authenticity—assurance of self—that gives her attitude and the strength to live her life according to *her* rhythms, not those of others. Her natural rhythms are “off the beat.” So confident does she grow about who she is and how she chooses to live, she knocks others off balance since they are accustomed to living life on the stronger, more typical or expected beat. She comes to know well the internal rhythms of her character, that which makes her different, that which allows her to rise above oppression and disrespect. By novel’s end, she is so comfortable living her life to a lilting swing-time rhythm, that the gossips still trying to shape her are at last silenced or at least dismissed. “Here was peace. She pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder. So much of life in its meshes! She called in her soul to come and see” (286).

Likewise, the pool players in Gwendolyn Brooks’ iconic poem, “We Real Cool,” sing attitude—so much attitude they “Sing sin” (5) and fall off the edge to “Die soon” (8), their contrapuntal rhythms too fast and frequent for their own good at such a young age. It is the swing in the lines of the poem that tell us to beware.

Then there is the narrator in Alice Walker’s powerful and evocative essay, “Am I Blue?”, who questions the ethics of eating meat. “I am eating misery,” she concludes (146), and we conclude the same because her voice, pulled up from deep within, speaks to us, whether we are practicing vegetarians or not. We recognize that her writing voice and her argument stem from a long and thoughtful process, and so we believe her, though we are free to disagree with her.

What can we conclude about swing thus far? Swing sings; swing sways; swing sings deep; swing sways real; we know writing swings when the audience connects

Afterword: A Passion Play (When Prose Sings)

with authenticity. Swing sings attitude, and attitude helps shape a writer's *voice*. Is the voice real, believable? Does it come from a wellspring of truth? That truth can be philosophical; it can be truth of character; it can ring true to one's life experiences; it can be intuited truth, dreamt truth.

So it is with a student essay or fictional piece or poem. While it is a fact that students often must write assignments whose guidelines and parameters are written by others—their teachers—it is also true that if they want to mine the most from the assignment, they must find a way to make it theirs. If they investigate deeply enough, if they care to find something tangible and authentic in the assignment that they can at some point *own*, the journey becomes themselves, and they find their voice.

Isn't this the case with life in general? Be it a first job, a first love, a first true friendship, a first travel experience, a first classroom experience, there are commonly held reflections about those experiences that one can make. But it is the particular, the specific, the owned moment that makes the passage authentic for said individual. So it is with writing. Find it, investigate it, own it, and it too will swing for you.

Some final thoughts: the revered and brilliant Brazilian composer, Antonio Carlos Jobim, wrote dozens of songs that have become classics—some with lyrics, some instrumental. One of my favorites is “The Waters of March” because the lyrics “sing” even without the melody, something rare in song lyrics, I believe. In these opening lines, listen for the deeply felt rhythms of life they express, the authenticity and simplicity with which they sing, the syncopating *swing*: “A stick, a stone, it's the end of the road; / It's feeling alone, it's the weight of your load; / It's a sliver of glass, it's life, it's the sun; / It's night, it's death, it's a knife, it's a gun; / A flower that blooms, a fox in the brush; / A knot in the wood, the song of a thrush” (1-6). Part of the success of these lyrics is the building of the phrases, like the currents of a March stream. It is also the cumulative and circular effect of life experiences: life and death, glass and sun, knife and gun. Too, it pulls in the ever-so-important lushness of the word sounds themselves. True, this is a translation from the Portuguese, a language rich in sound onto itself. But the English translation pleases. “Brush” and “thrush” not

only are obvious perfect rhymes, they share consonance—and a sibilant consonant sound at that: *sh*. This is a rich way to end a line. It is full of life, whole and amply-bodied. The lyrics go on to suggest that a life is not worth living without the struggle that gives it meaning. Yet the way I have just written that is pedestrian. Listen again to Jobim's lyrics, the way deeply felt knowledge is revealed in specific words and phrases that hold meaning and emit sounds in so rich a way as to embody the very life they describe—the tension and release of everyday living, the yin and the yang: “It's the will to survive, it's a jolt, it's a jump. / Blueprint of a house, a body in bed; / Car stuck in the mud, it's the mud, it's the mud” (18-20). The mud is the struggle, the test, the literal stuff of life: water mixed with earth. “A fish, a flash, a wish, a wing; / It's a hawk, it's a dove, it's the promise of spring; / And the riverbank sings of the waters of March; / It's the promise of spring, it's the joy in your heart” (Jobim 21-4). The joy in your heart is the swing.

Now, take all the good writing lessons you have integrated over the years from schooling, practice and living. When you feel that “joy in your heart” as you write, you will have found palpability, authenticity. Own it. Revise it. Feel it. Craft it. Don't be afraid to stress the downbeat. Reach deeply into your gut, the navel, the center of your being—the omphalos, the ancient Greeks called it—center of the world, the focal point. Your writing may be technically perfect, but if you haven't found what makes it real, it won't mean a thing to what counts in the world.

Good luck. Listen hard. Let the swing sing, and enjoy the syncopated rhythms that help your writing wake up to life.

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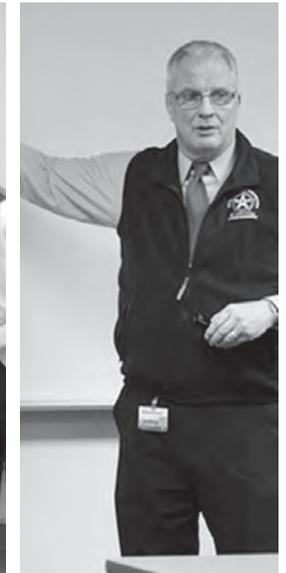
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